

2 PAPERS *relative to the* REMOVAL *of the* SEAT *of* GOVERNMENT,

CANADA.

No. 1. (No. 55.)

No. 1.

COPY of a DESPATCH from Governor-General the Right Hon. the Earl of
ELGIN AND KINCARDINE to Earl GREY.

Government House, Montreal, May 29, 1849.

(Received June 19, 1849.)

(Answered July 11, 1849, No. 392, page 22.)

MY LORD,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith for your Lordship's information, the copy of an address presented to me by the Legislative Assembly on the subject of the removal of the seat of government from Montreal, with a copy of my reply. This address was founded on resolutions moved in the Assembly by the Honourable Mr. Sherwood, an eminent member of the Conservative party, and Attorney-General for Canada West, in my late administration.

I have, &c.,

The Right Hon. Earl Grey,
&c. &c. &c.

(Signed) ELGIN AND KINCARDINE.

Encl. 1 in No. 1.

Enclosure 1 in No. 1.

To his Excellency the Right Honourable JAMES Earl of ELGIN and KINCARDINE, K.T., Governor-General of British North America, and Captain-General and Governor-in-Chief in and over the Provinces of Canada, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and the Island of Prince Edward, and Vice-Admiral of the same, &c., &c., &c.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,

WE, Her Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Canada, in Provincial Parliament assembled, humbly beg leave to approach your Excellency with feelings of respect, and to represent—

That the time has arrived when a different and much more satisfactory arrangement may be made as regards the place of convening Parliament than at present exists.

That it was the cause of complaints on the part of many of the inhabitants of Upper Canada, that the Parliament was, in 1843, removed altogether from within the limits of their province.

That it was suggested at that time, as each province had enjoyed the advantages of having a separate legislature within its limits, from the first establishment of its representative form of government, down to the time of the union, that after the union it would be an act of common justice only for the representative of the Sovereign to convene Parliament alternately at Toronto, in Upper Canada, and at Quebec, in Lower Canada; but the Legislature to whom the subject was submitted thought otherwise, and advised Montreal as the place to be selected, which advice was received and acted on. Within a very short period of time, however, we have seen the building in Montreal occupied by the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly, rented and fitted up as it was, at a great expense to the country, wilfully burnt before our eyes, and the libraries belonging to the respective houses, and their records and proceedings consumed with it.

That such then, being the state of the case, and with the view of removing every obstacle that may have a tendency to hinder, or in any way interfere with the well working of the union, we most respectfully beg leave to recommend to your Excellency to adopt the suggestion referred to, that after the present session, your Excellency will be pleased to convene the Parliament alternately at Toronto and Quebec, during periods not exceeding four years at each place. The first sitting under this arrangement to be held at such of the two places mentioned as your Excellency in your discretion may deem most advisable for the general good. That the plan now submitted to your Excellency is not without precedents in other countries, and that it can now more easily than at any antecedent period be carried out, inasmuch as all former records and proceedings in Parliament have been destroyed.

That each branch of the legislature will now have to commence anew again, and with a view to alternate sittings as herein recommended, their records and proceedings ought henceforward to be made out in duplicate, so that one copy may be deposited in the vaults of the Parliament House at Toronto, and the other within the walls of the Citadel of Quebec, where they will be secure from the ravages of fire, and from the attacks of external and internal foes.

That the Parliament buildings at each of the cities of Toronto and Quebec are the property of the province; that they are commodious and comfortable, and can be made ready for the reception of the legislature at comparatively small expense. That under this arrangement the members of the legislature will have a better opportunity of ascertaining and understanding by