

That in the year 1816 the bishop and clergy of the Church of England were constituted corporations by Royal Letters Patent, one corporation for Lower, and one for Upper Canada, for the management respectively of the Clergy Reserves, for the benefit of their own Church within the then existing two provinces, and that these corporations were beginning to put in train the efficient and advantageous administration of the said Reserves, when their proceedings were interfered with, and finally stopped by the transfer to the hands of the Commissioner of Crown Lands of the direction of the Clergy Reserves, and the introduction of the system of sales conducted by that functionary, in the manner of effecting which the most grievous and most extensive detriment in all perpetuity was done to the interests of the Church.

That the exclusive claim of the Church of England to the benefit of the Clergy Reserves implied, as has been here made to appear, in different measures of the Crown and Parliament of Great Britain, continued unchallenged and unquestioned till after the year 1820, and that when the efforts which were made to assert a rival claim produced a great amount of painful ferment and agitation in the country, the clergy and members of the Church of England, in maintaining what, according to their clear and settled convictions, was their right to the whole profits of the Reserves as the patrimony of the said Church, forbore from contributing to the excitement of the public mind upon the subject by any inflammatory appeals, or any coloured representations to suit the interests of their own party.

That in the year 1840 a vast concession was made to the parties adverse to the claims originally recognized as existing in the Church of England, by the enactment of an Imperial Statute for the division of the profits arising from the Clergy Reserves, under the provisions of which statute two-thirds of the proceeds of the lands then sold, and two-thirds of one-half of the lands still unsold, were allotted to the Church of England in this province.

That notwithstanding the facts herein already set forth, and the great inaccuracies of many of those representations proceeding from other quarters, upon which this legislative measure appears to have been based, the clergy and lay members of the Church of England in the province peacefully submitted to this arrangement of the long-agitated questions respecting the Clergy Reserves, and accepted it according to what they had all reason to do, as the final settlement of those questions, and the extinction, once for all, of all discussions and differences upon the subject; and that to this settlement they considered, and so Your Majesty's petitioners do now consider, the faith of the Government to be pledged.

That from the date of passing the aforesaid Act of 1840, up to the close of the year 1849, no discontent was manifested in any quarter on account of the provisions of the said Act, and that up to the present moment there has been no agitation of feeling in the province upon the subject.

That under all these circumstances it has been impossible for Your Majesty's petitioners to view otherwise than with the keenest sense of injury, and the deepest feelings of astonishment and alarm, a proceeding of the House of Assembly during the late session of the Provincial Legislature, in which resolutions have been passed, and an address to Your Majesty has been voted, to the effect that this reservation of land for the maintenance of religion should be alienated from its sacred purpose, and applied to the promotion of education and other secular objects.

That, although Your Majesty's petitioners had patiently submitted to the great and unlooked-for diminution of the revenues of the Church of England created by the Act of 1840, and to a variety of what they have conceived to be vexatious and injurious proceedings in the administration of the lands, tending still further to impair and lessen those revenues; although they had brought themselves to acquiesce in an arrangement which, with the addition of all these disadvantages, presses with particular hardship upon their Church in Lower Canada, in which the whole extent of the seigneurial tracts of country comprise no Clergy Reserves whatever, yet they cannot but apprehend that the proposed confiscation even of the remnant and pittance of endowment which had been left to them will create extensive and permanent dissatisfaction among the members of the Church at large in the province, nor can they fail, in the most earnest and solemn manner, to deprecate an act of spoliation which would be disastrous to the most sacred interests of human society, and openly hostile to the propagation of the truth of God.

That the Church of England population of Lower Canada is believed to approach, in numbers, to the entire aggregate of all other Protestant denominations within that portion of the province, and that it consists, at the same time, to a very great extent, of the occupiers of poor and backward settlements, who mainly depend for the ministration of religion upon the charity of the Society in London for the Propagation of the Gospel, the revenue up to this date, derived from the Clergy Reserves, supplying but a very small portion of the expenditure made, upon the most frugal and parsimonious scale, for this object.

That whenever the assistance of the above-mentioned society shall be withdrawn, an arrangement which steps have been taken gradually to accomplish, the revenue from the Clergy Reserves, in whatever degree it shall have been improved, will form an extremely inadequate provision, and one which need not in any quarter be grudged, for the mainte-