

# P A P E R S

RELATIVE TO

## THE AFFAIRS OF CANADA.

### From Governor-General the Right Hon. the Earl of Elgin and Kincardine to Earl Grey.

CANADA.

COPY of a DESPATCH from Governor the Earl of ELGIN AND KINCARDINE  
to Earl GREY.

Government House, Montreal,

April 30, 1849.

(Received May 15, 1849.)

MY LORD,

I REGRET to state that rioting, attended with some consequences much to be regretted, though happily with no injury to life, or, except in one instance, to person, has taken place in the city of Montreal during the last few days. I hasten to furnish your Lordship with an account of what has actually occurred, lest you should be misled by exaggerated reports conveyed through the United States.

2. In consequence of the unexpected arrival of vessels with merchandize at the Port of Quebec, it became necessary for me to proceed, on a short notice, to Parliament, on Wednesday last, in order to give the Royal Assent to a Customs Bill which had that day passed the Legislative Council; and I considered that, as this necessity had arisen, it would not be expedient to keep the public mind in suspense by omitting to dispose, at the same time, of the other Acts in which the two branches of the local Parliament had at an earlier period of the session concurred, and which still awaited my decision. Among these was the Act to provide for the indemnification of parties in Lower Canada whose property was destroyed during the Rebellion in 1837 and 1838, with respect to which, as your Lordship is aware, much excitement has unhappily been stirred.

3. I herewith enclose, for your Lordship's perusal, a printed copy of the Act in question, and I shall not fail by the first mail to furnish you with full information respecting its character and objects, the circumstances which led to its introduction, and the grounds on which I resolved, after much reflection, to sanction it. No money can be paid under it as indemnity for a considerable period, so that Her Majesty's power of disallowance can be exercised with effect, should Her Majesty be so advised, notwithstanding the course which I have taken. As I am writing this Despatch in haste, with a view to its transmission by way of New York, I shall confine myself for the present to a statement of the proceedings by which the peace of the city has been disturbed.

4. In order, however, to render this narrative intelligible, I must premise that for some time past the House of Assembly, as at present constituted, has been the object of bitter denunciation, and not unfrequently of reckless menace, on the part of a certain portion of the press of the province, and more especially of that of Montreal. Your Lordship will probably recollect that the body in question is the product of a general election which took place about 18 months ago, under the auspices of the political party now in opposition, and after a dissolution, to which I had recourse on their advice, for the purpose of strengthening them in their position as a Government. The result of this measure was in the last degree unfavourable to those who had recommended it; not, however, so much so in Lower Canada, where the complexion of the representation was little affected by the dissolution, as in the Upper Province, where several constituencies, among which were some of the most popu-

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