

These interests are indeed of great magnitude; and on the course which Your Majesty and Your Parliament may adopt, with respect to the North American Colonies, will depend the future destinies, not only of the million and a half of Your Majesty's subjects who at present inhabit those Provinces, but of that vast population which those ample and fertile territories are fit and destined hereafter to support. No portion of the American Continent possesses greater natural resources for the maintenance of large and flourishing communities. An almost boundless range of the richest soil still remains unsettled, and may be rendered available for the purposes of agriculture. The wealth of inexhaustible forests of the best timber in America, and of extensive regions of the most valuable minerals, have as yet been scarcely touched. Along the whole line of sea-coast, around each island, and in every river, are to be found the greatest and richest fisheries in the world. The best fuel and the most abundant water-power are available for the coarser manufactures, for which an easy and certain market will be found. Trade with other continents is favoured by the possession of a large number of safe and spacious harbours; long, deep and numerous rivers, and vast inland seas, supply the means of easy intercourse; and the structure of the country generally affords the utmost facility for every species of communication by land. Unbounded materials of agricultural, commercial and manufacturing industry are there: it depends upon the present decision of the Imperial Legislature to determine for whose benefit they are to be rendered available. The country which has founded and maintained these Colonies at a vast expense of blood and treasure, may justly expect its compensation in turning their unappropriated resources to the account of its own redundant population; they are the rightful patrimony of the English people, the ample appanage which God and Nature have set aside in the New World for those whose lot has assigned them but insufficient portions in the Old. Under wise and free institutions, these great advantages may yet be secured to Your Majesty's subjects; and a connexion secured by the link of kindred origin and mutual benefits may continue to bind to the British Empire the ample territories of its North American Provinces, and the large and flourishing population by which they will assuredly be filled.

Magnitude of
interests involved.

Advantages deriva-
ble by the Mother
Country from these
Colonies.

LOWER CANADA.

The prominent place which the dissensions of Lower Canada had, for some years, occupied in the eyes of the Imperial Legislature, the alarming state of disorder indicated or occasioned by the recent insurrection, and the paramount necessity of my applying my earliest efforts to the re-establishment of free and regular government in that particular Colony, in which it was then wholly suspended, necessarily directed my first inquiries to the Province of which the local government was vested in my hands. The suspension of the constitution gave me an essential advantage over my predecessors in the conduct of my inquiries; it not merely relieved me from the burthen of constant discussions with the legislative bodies, but it enabled me to turn my attention from the alleged, to the real grievances of the Province; to leave on one side those matters of temporary contest, which accident, or the interests and passions of parties, had elevated into undue importance; and, without reference to the representations of the disputants, to endeavour to make myself master of the real condition of the people, and the real causes of dissatisfaction or suffering. It was also a great advantage to me in one respect, that the ordinary business of the government of the Province was combined with the functions of my inquiry. The routine of every day's administrative business brought strongly and familiarly before me the working of the institutions on which I was called to judge. The condition of the people, the system by which they were governed, were thus rendered familiar to me, and I soon became satisfied that I must search in the very composition of society, and in the fundamental institutions of government, for the causes of the constant and extensive disorder which I witnessed.

First Inquiries
directed to Lower
Canada.

The lengthened and various discussions which had for some years been carried on between the contending parties in the Colony, and the representations which had been circulated at home, had produced in mine, as in most minds in England, a very erroneous view of the parties at issue in Lower Canada. The quarrel which I was sent for the purpose of healing, had been a quarrel between the executive government and the popular branch of the legislature. The latter body had, apparently

Erroneous views
entertained in
England.