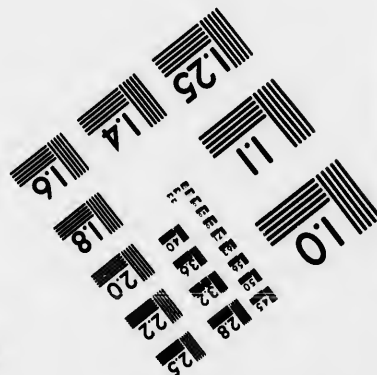
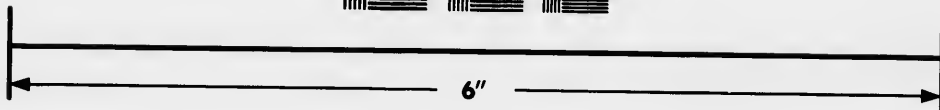
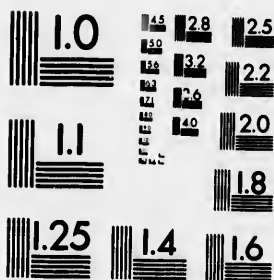


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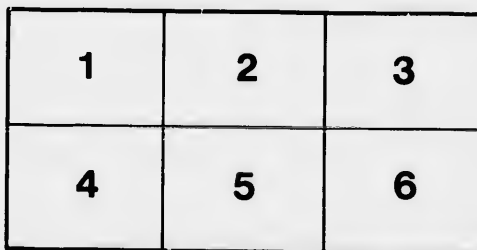
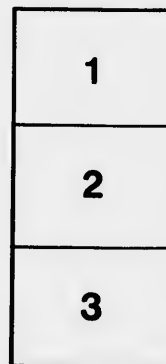
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LETTER,

ADDRESSED TO

Wm Mitchell

LOUIS JOSEPH PAPINEAU, ESQUIRE,

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

“ but man, proud man !
Drest in a little brief authority ;
Plays such fantastic tricks before high Heaven,
As make the Angels weep.”

SHAKESPEARE.

BY FREDERICK J. M. COLLARD,
BARRISTER AT LAW.

1835.

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W. and Mrs. Pitt Mitchell
Quebec 6 Nov 1848

TO LOUIS JOSEPH PAPINEAU, ESQUIRE, SPEAKER OF
THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

SIR,

THERE is not at this moment in the Province, a man who claims so large a share of public attention, or who occupies so pre-eminent a station in public opinion as yourself; not only do you form the subject of conversation in all circles, but men, who never before mingled in politics, now reason on the probable consequences of your words and acts, ordinary occupations have been suspended, the artizan forgets his labour—the professional man his studies—pleasure even ceases to allure—and the great magnets of public attraction are now the Hall of Assembly—and you, the governing spirit that presides there.

Allow me, Sir, to ask, what has led to the pre-eminence which you thus possess? Why are you at this moment, “the observed of all observers,” is it because of your commanding talent—your high principle—your liberal views—your pure patriotism—or your public virtue? Is it for your consistency of conduct—your generous disregard of self—or for the sacrifices you make of your own private views

and interests, for the public weal? These are the virtues for which we reverence public men, it is by these qualities that the Statesman becomes eminent, and it is by the practice of these virtues that the true Patriot and lover of his country is known. Are these then Sir, your distinguishing characteristics, or rather can any thing be more opposed to one and all of these, than your whole public conduct, if you are pre-eminent, it is guiltily so, if all eyes are turned upon you, it is not with reverential love and admiration, but in disgust and abhorrence;—if there is a being, who concentrates in his own person, all that public hatred, scorn, and contempt, can bestow upon him, to you, Sir, do I apply the emphatic language of the Prophet, and say—thou art the man!

If there is an individual lost to all sense of honor—dead to every feeling but that of self-interest—guiltily intent upon his own advancement, and disregarding alike the means of his elevation and the men who contribute to it, desperately reckless of fame—active in sedition—pre-eminent in disloyalty—again do I say—thou art the man!

Painful is it indeed to confess, that a man such as you, should have attained eminence, even by any means, because the knowledge that you possess power carries with it a conviction of the weakness or wickedness of those by whose means you have obtained it. It is well known, that there are men over whom you exercise an influence, almost despotic, who think but as you think, see but as you see, act but as you command, and who are invariably *de l'opinion de Monsr. l'Orateur*, and it is indeed subject matter of regret, that these men are to be found in that body, who arrogate to themselves, the title of "The Representatives of the People." that they should show so utter a disregard to public principle, as to yield a blind subserviency to an

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unprincipled leader, that the acts of those whose only rule of conduct should be regard to the public welfare, are so diametrically opposed to reason and justice, as to suffer their deliberations to be swayed by the voice of one man, would be a state of things earnestly to be deprecated, even if the individual possessing this power was distinguished for public virtue, and honored by public confidence. But when you, Sir, are that leader, when it is your influence that thus predominates, wretched indeed must be the state of the country, whose honor and whose welfare is confided to such representatives, and truly defective that system of law, which originates with such legislators.

I do not intend, Sir, in this letter, to review your past political life, or to bring again into notice, the errors and inconsistencies which have ever distinguished you as a public man, I will not overwhelm you with the deep, the damning catalogue of your crimes, for an abler pen than mine has given them publicity, and already do you stand condemned in the mind of every thinking man, as the great bar to all public improvement, and your own country's worst and bitterest foe. My intention is briefly to review your public conduct since the opening of the present Session of the Provincial Parliament, and point out to you the addition which you have made to the large stock of public hatred, you had before accumulated in your own person, and the new claims which you have acquired to the gratitude and good will of the British portion of the population; and, Sir, as I have before asserted, in arraigning you at the bar of public opinion, I seek for no stronger testimony against you, than your own acts, I ask for no more conclusive proof of your unworthiness, than the evidence which you daily furnish against yourself.

Previously to the assembling of the Provincial Legislature, I thought proper to address a letter to His Excellency the Governor-in-Chief "upon the power vested in the King's Representative, to accept or reject the Speaker presented to him by the House of Assembly." I therein ventured to anticipate your election to that office, and advocated your unqualified rejection, if so chosen. I placed before His Excellency in that publication, as the reasons upon which such refusal could be grounded—not merely your general political character, but the seditious tendency of your writings—and, above all, argued from the treasonable doctrines openly avowed and advocated in your "address to the Electors of the West Ward of Montreal," your total unfitness for the office to which you would lay claim. It has, however, pleased His Excellency to allow the choice made by the Assembly. I will not pretend to enter into the motives which actuated his Lordship, but he no doubt knew the character of the honorable body who had chosen you—he probably thought, by the non-exercise of the prerogative a Session might be obtained, and the concurrence of the Assembly procured to some few useful laws—at any rate, I believe it is generally confessed, even by your own partizans, that your allowance took place solely on the score of political expediency. The reasons which then existed for your rejection have not been affected by your assumption of office—they are still in force, and have even acquired additional weight from your conduct during the present Session—conduct so totally at variance with the dignity of the office which you hold—so unworthy of the station to which you aspire—so truly derogatory to the character of a Legislator and Representative of the people, that those who were before inclined to respect your person, while they condemned your

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opinions—who wished to throw the veil of pity and of charity over your manifold errors, in consideration of what they thought your patriotism—and who refrained from naming you, perhaps upon the principle of not wishing to “paint the devil blacker than he is,”—are now loud and unanimous in their execration of you. You have in a singular degree united the opinions of the British population; for whatever might have been the differing shades of politics among them, yet upon one subject they are now decidedly unanimous—namely, that of bestowing upon you more public hatred, joined with more real contempt than I believe ever before fell to the lot of a single individual.

It had, as I have before stated, been questioned by your friends (many of whom were constrained to act as your apologists) if, after the declarations made by you in your before referred to “address,” you could or would present yourself, (even if elected Speaker,) for the approbation of a Governor whose authority you had pronounced to be “null in the hearts of all honest men.” Many believed that you still classed yourself among those whom you thus designated, others—that you had some regard for your own expressed opinions—and some (God help the weakness of their judgment) imagined that your Address was but the out-breaking of a fiery spirit and a too ardent love of liberty—they believed that your pure and lofty patriotism never would suffer you to become a suppliant, even in form, to the man whom you had solemnly pronounced “an ignorant and despotic soldier,” a perverter of the law, and the “accomplice of magisterial butchers;”—but, Sir, you have proved by your act that whatever may have been thought by your friends and apologists, that I, at least, had not miscalculated the *calibre* of your patriotism, or undervalued your honor or

public virtue. It is asserted, Sir, and I believe truly (for we judge of men by their past acts) that you were a suppliant for those honors which other men are accustomed, (if only for form's sake,) to remind those electing them of their unfitness for—but what are forms to you? what are courtesies to a man who despises them too much to practise them even to his superiors, except upon constraint? But perhaps, Sir, you knew, as well as I do, the men whom you then addressed, and it is more than probable that (in order to save time) your election as Speaker and the Convention Petition were agreed to at the same time. And if the members who compose the majority had already sworn allegiance to you, secure of their support, what cared you for a factious minority?—composed, too, of men of “British or foreign origin.” Well, Sir, you were elected and invested in the trappings of office—you proceeded to the Council Chamber, and with “bated breath and whispering humbleness” informed the Governor, whose authority, “though null in the hearts of all honest men,” you thus acknowledged, that the choice of the Assembly had fallen on you, and humbly prayed His Excellency to approve that choice! O, could I have entered into the recesses of that heart—could I have penetrated into the workings of that mind, what bitterness, what rancour, what malice should I there have seen!—how fain would you have exchanged the language of supplication for that of abuse and insult—how eagerly would you have returned the look of cold contempt with which you were regarded by an ebullition of those stormy passions which at that moment preyed upon your inmost soul. But this satisfaction was denied you—your Governor sat before you, the substitute of Majesty—the Representative of England's King: to him was delegated the power and authority of his Royal Master, and

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even your bold front quailed before him. I saw you, Sir, and never will the recollections of that day be obliterated from my memory—never shall I forget that countenance, the faithful index of the mind within—the wandering eye seeking for sympathy in those around—the quivering lip—the pallid cheek.—By Heaven, had you been one atom less a public criminal than you are—had you not been the bitterest foe that my country and countrymen ever knew—had you not been the unceasing calumniator of Britain and Britain's Sons,—even I could have pitied you. It was lamentable to behold a human being thus degraded—pitiable to see a fellow creature thus striking a fatal blow at the poor remains of reputation left him. You asked, Sir, for *approval*, and in reply you were told that His Excellency *allowed* the choice of the Assembly. Where were the customary forms?—where the reliance upon your talent, zeal and integrity?—where the anticipation of your faithful discharge of the duties confided to you? All—all were omitted. Your election was confirmed without further ceremony or courtesy—the usual privileges accorded to you in the briefest language—and thus ended a ceremony without parallel in the records of the Colony.

You now, Sir, entered upon the more immediate duties of your office, hitherto the presence of your superiors in birth, talent, and station, had somewhat restrained you, but once more among kindred minds, surrounded by your own satellites, you soon proved to us that we had correctly anticipated the result of your return to the Hall, where the sittings of the Assembly are held. It was no new thing to us to see, that the Speaker who ought by virtue of this office to be the *Moderator* in the popular branch, was the most violent partizan in it, that the dignity of his office was never for a moment consulted when party

spirit or national animosities called for his intervention—we were prepared for what has occurred, and we fully anticipated all the abuse which it has since pleased you to lavish upon the British, the Council and the Executive—swiftly did speech follow speech, declamation succeeded to declamation, and we now, Sir, have ceased to wonder at your marvellous powers of invention, but are still lost in astonishment at the strength of your lungs, and your untiring powers of vituperation—If to slander be an accomplishment, verily thou art a first rate Professor—if frantic rant be the test of oratory you are, indeed, an accomplished Orator—if bold and impudent assertion be the criterion of reasoning, your logical powers are, indeed, unrivalled.—You commenced, Sir, your career of this Session with a speech upon the state of the Province—it is like all your parliamentary efforts—a string of impudent falsehoods, gross and malicious abuse of the Council and Executive, and contains a series of false reasoning mixed up with the usual quantum of empty declamation. To prove the first of my positions, I need only point out the assertions made by you—“That a whole people were embarrassed and groaning under the weight of their afflictions,” that “the measures of the House had received the approbation of the constituency in the proportion of ten to one,” and that “the concurrence of all the Members with whom communication was practicable” has been asked to the Petition agreed to by the Convention. Scarcely had this last assertion been made by you, when it was positively and unequivocally contradicted by an honorable and respected Member of the House, resident in Quebec, who not only denied that any communication had been made to him, but stated that he was not even aware of the nature or contents of that Petition upon which he was immediately to vote—so much, Sir, for your veracity. These, however, are but a few of the false assertions contained in that Address, and they are merely selected as the most prominent. As a specimen of your vulgar abuse of the Council and Executive, let us take the following:—“An Administration remarkable only for inconsistency and the daily commission of error”—“A Council who conceive that they were appointed for the especial purpose of evil, who through the means of fawning effected their entry into that body, and maintained their position by the repetition of acts of oppression,” and that the Province “was

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under the rule of a Soldier governing with ignorance, with passion, and with a partiality towards the Soldiery to the extent of conniving at the utmost atrocities." Why, thou insolent defamer of thy betters! thou slanderer of all that is great and honorable! how didst thou dare to make an assertion so unsubstantiated by the slightest proof. Was it because a gallant British officer on the memorable twenty-first of May, by a prompt suppression of Riot, saved the properties and lives of hundreds of citizens, and afterwards received the well-merited thanks of his Commanding Officer for an act which perhaps prevented the City of Montreal from being given over to the attack and plunder of bands of organized thieves and bullies? or was it upon the information given to you by that sapient body the "Town Council of Quebec,"—those men who stand convicted not only of a gross departure from their municipal functions, by interfering in political matters; but who in defiance of all law, honor and justice prosecuted an *Enquete* in which the military were a party, as foully, as partially, and as falsely as any have been conducted which disgrace the records of the Inquisition, and who in their besotted ignorance, imagined that the Commander in Chief would, upon their recommendation, break a Standing Rule of the Service, and, in compliance with the wishes of some six or seven impertinent intermeddlers deprive a British Regiment of their side-arms!!! or were these assertions made because your own door was, during a popular commotion, (of which you alone were the cause) guarded and protected by a British Sentinel? Was it from one or all of these causes I ask, that you uttered the slanders in question? or was it because your ambitious mind brooks no superiority? and that conscious of debasement you would reduce every one to your own level? Why is it that you would instil into the minds of British subjects any other feelings than those of esteem and respect for those brave men who have so often been their defenders? Why is it that British officers are so peculiarly selected as the objects of your low and scurrilous abuse? Is it that their honor and bravery are a tacit reproach to your want of those virtues? Why is it that the Governor of this Colony is so often singled out by you in his military capacity? so repeatedly designated "a Soldier?"—from the basest and worst of motives, from a desire to create distinctions which ought never to exist, from a wish to generate

disunion between the Civilian and the Soldier, and from a vain and futile hope to depreciate the character of that Army whose honor is, like its flag, spotless and unstained. As a specimen of your inventive powers, joined with unparalleled impudence, let us take the following extract from the same address:—"The English in the minority are worthless characters when they would arrogate to themselves privileges which they deny to their fellow subjects." What are the privileges, Sir, of which you speak, or upon what opinions or acts of the "minority" do you base so false an assertion? Read, Sir, in the Declaration of the Quebec Constitutional Association, the causes which have induced that minority to form Societies for mutual protection, and learn what they demand before you impudently ascribe any unworthy motives to them.—They ask (I use the printed form of words) "a fair share in the representation of the Province,"—"an enjoyment of equal rights and privileges with all classes of His Majesty's subjects," and pledge themselves to effect these ends only by Constitutional means.—These "*mauvais sujets*," Sir, as you are pleased to style us, will yet teach you a lesson that you will long remember;—they belong to a people who are accustomed neither to national or individual insult—too long have they permitted you to trifle with their generosity; but you have, sir, at last aroused a spirit among them that will never relax till they have hurled you from your guilty eminence, an object of public scorn, and a monument of miserably blasted ambition.

Your next Parliamentary effort, Sir, was on the Governor's Speech at the close of the last Session. Nothing could touch you more nearly than that Address because of its striking applicability to yourself. You knew that if ever an individual had been raised from his original insignificance by fortuitous circumstances, you were the man; and we cannot wonder that its truth was its least recommendation, and that it was characterized by you as "excepting the one delivered in 1810, by General Craig, without example." In the same address you again took occasion to assert that "the minority deserved the appellation of factious" when they dared to ask the Imperial Parliament to interfere with the Colonial Legislature: truly, what mighty daring is there in this!!—a population of one hundred and fifty thousand souls have been frau-

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dulently deprived of the intended benefits of the Constitution—they have been tricked, cheated, (call it what you will, sir,) out of all share in the representation, and they are styled factious because they dare to solicit the intervention of the Imperial Parliament—because they assert that the wrongs under which they labour demand redress, and ask it of the only authority competent to give it. I suppose, sir, that the opinion of Lord Mansfield, that "a country conquered by the British arms becomes a dominion of the King in right of the Crown, and therefore necessarily subject to the Legislature and Parliament of Great Britain," as well as that of the great Chatham, "that the Legislative power of Great Britain in her Colonies is sovereign and supreme;" of Grenville "that protection and obedience are reciprocal;" of Burke "that it is necessary for Great Britain in controlling Provincial Legislatures to *coerce the negligent—restrain the violent*—and aid the weak and deficient, by the overruling plenitude of her power;" of the great Philosopher and Moralist, Johnson, who says "They who accept protection, stipulate obedience." I suppose, Sir, that the opinions of these men must be all erroneous when placed in opposition to your own. What are the names of Grenville, of Pitt, of Burke, of Johnson, Mansfield and Chatham when compared with that of Louis Joseph Papineau. *Qui sont ces messieurs exclaim nine-tenths of our Canadian Legislators, nous n'avons jamais entendue parler d'eux, mais nous connaissons tout Monsieur l'Orateur.*

Before I dismiss this Speech, allow me to ask you, sir, (for it is reported you have travelled in England) what style of society you lived, in that you prate so glibly upon the relative distinctions of Master and Servant. Who told you, Sir, that the Governor of Lower Canada was the Servant of the Colonial Secretary? or how did you obtain the precious information? in England or in Canada? from the voracious Hume, or the talented Roebuck? from the late Envoy of the Assembly or from your own Agent for the County of Yamaska? Allow me Sir, to set you right upon this point—the Governor is the Servant of the King, as you are that of the Assembly; and one at least of the parties amply verifies the old Proverb of "like master like man."

We now come, Sir, to the debate in the Assembly on the appointment of an Agent, and to your recommendation of Mr. Roebuck for that Office. I have nowish to to under-value the talent or information of this gentleman, because I am not aware that he possesses either the one or the other. I only know that he is a young man and a very junior member of the House of Commons, where at least he appears to be but little known, and still less valued. You have, however, (with your usual discrimination) thought proper to compare him with Mr. (now Lord Stanley.) Are you aware, Sir, that Lord Stanley is not only a man of high birth, sound experience and great attainments; but that his political talent is considered even by the first men in England pre-eminent. Do you know, Sir, that he is not only the most ready debater in the Commons, and one of the most eloquent men of the day, but that he adds to all these advantages lofty and irreproachable character and great personal and political influence—this is the man, Sir, with whom you compare Mr. Roebuck. Truly it is sickening to the last degree to hear you speak of your superiors, to listen to the comparisons drawn by you of political men, and to witness the frantic zeal with which you attack all that is noble by birth or character and attempt to degrade them to the level of those whom you eulogize.—Stanley to Roebuck—Ossa to a Wart—Olympus to a Mole-hill—Manners Sutton to Louis Joseph Papineau. I know not, Sir, what incipient honors the Colony may have in store for Mr. Roebuck, but as Lord Stanley has been recently honored by induction into the high office of Lord Rector of the University of Glasgow, something of the same sort may be attempted here, for the man whom you have made his political Rival. Perhaps (nothing is impossible in these reforming times) Mr. Roebuck may succeed in getting the Jesuits' Estates placed at the disposal of the Colonial Legislature; if so, amidst the rage for public improvement which would inevitably follow such an event, it is to be hoped that the Education of Members of Parliament would not be forgotten,—a College might be founded for their especial benefit, where the very necessary arts of reading and writing at least might be taught, since it is evident that in Canada they do not as Dogberry asserts “come by nature.” This College, once formed, the honors paid to Lord Stanley, in Glasgow, could be accorded in Canada to Mr. Roebuck,

and the public may be favored through the medium of the moderate and impartial "Canadien," or the veracious, classical, and elegant "Vindicator," with a pompous account of the inauguration of John Arthur Roebuck, Esqr. M. P. and Agent of the Assembly, in England, into the high and honorable office of Lord Rector, or to use a more republican phrase, President of so illustrious a College of Blockheads—truly

"The force of fancy can no farther go."

I now come, Sir, to your grand and crowning effort of the Session, namely your Speech on the "Answer of His Excellency to the demand of the House for their contingencies." Distinguished as you are for your marvellous powers of invention, and known as you have ever been for your capability of misrepresentation, this was an effort even beyond yourself. What shall we say to the opening assertion—"that the House had for many days proceeded with great calmness and moderation in the discharge of its duties." Let us take some of its acts as a specimen. It elected you its Speaker,—struck His Excellency's Speech of last Session from its Journals,—answered the Speech from the Throne by ridiculous and impertinent Resolutions,—imprisoned a high public functionary of the Crown for refusing to break his official oath; and lastly, grossly abused and insulted the Head of the Executive. This, Sir, is a perfectly new definition of "calmness and moderation," and is not, I believe, likely to be a very generally received one. You ask with much *naïveté*—"what reasons had the Governor for suspecting a violation of the promises made by the House of Assembly?" I answer several, and very cogent ones. His knowledge of the men who compose it—the total want of public honor and principle displayed by the majority, and the fact of his having been formerly deceived by them.—These, Sir, would, I believe, be considered by any rational man, as amply sufficient grounds for doubting even "The honor of the Representatives of the people." You state in the same Address that the "Local Legislature was left to make laws relative to Roads and Bridges alone." What a blessing, Sir, would it be to the country, if for once, you had spoken truth. The records of the Colony would not then have been disgraced by the "Act for the subdivision of the Province into Counties,"—The "Militia Laws,"—The "Acts of Incorporation,"—that premium upon ignorance,

the Statute permitting "Masters of Schools to affix their crosses when unable to write."—The "Members indemnity Bill,"—and above all, that Act for the legalization of murder called "The Jury Bill." But, Sir, I will not further follow you through your endless maze of falsehood—nor longer recapitulate the crimes which sink you below the level of the meanest criminal. To work your reformation is, I fear, impossible; for you have too long enjoyed security—too long practised evil with impunity; but do not imagine, Sir, that you possess a privilege,—that a prescriptive right is vested in you to malign all that is great and good, and that no tongue will answer—no voice expose your falsehood. Rely not upon the power your office gives you; for, I at least, fear not the brief authority with which you are invested. Shielded by a conscientiousness of right—knowing that I discharge a duty, I have not hesitated to hold you up as a public criminal to public inquiry—mine is no hireling pen, paid to defame you.—I am not connected with the Government which you vilify—hold no office—touch no public money. My motives in thus addressing you are above suspicion. I write not anonymously—that which I believe, "to all the world I dare avow;" and, sustained by the testimony of a self approving conscience, I fear not the consequences which this letter may entail upon me.

Rash and presumptuous man—think not that mine is a solitary opinion—believe not that I stand alone in my thoughts. My voice is but a faint echo of the feelings which animate the whole British population towards you. There are hundreds, nay thousands of my Countrymen, ready to express the same sentiments with as prompt a zeal, with equal fidelity, and I am proud to say, from the same pure motives which actuate me.—"Your day of reckoning is at hand, tremble to think on it." The power which shall hurl you from your guilty eminence is gradually concentrating itself and it will burst upon you with overwhelming force. Then, Sir, in your day of adversity, recall the prophetic warning which I now address to you, and when you behold the men at whose hands Retribution is dealt to you, remember my assertion that **WE ARE A PEOPLE UNACUSTOMED TO BEAR PATIENTLY EITHER NATIONAL OR INDIVIDUAL INSULT.**

FREDERICK J. M. COLLARD.

