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NEWFOUNDLAND.

COPIES of Addresses received from the Legislative Council or Assembly of Newfoundland, or from Public Bodies or Individuals in that Colony, relative to the State of Affairs there.

(Mr. Gladstone.)

Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed,
12 August 1839.

NEWFOUNDLAND.

RETURN to an ADDRESS of the Honourable The House of Commons,
dated 12 July 1839;—*for*,

COPY of any ADDRESSES received at the Colonial Office from the LEGISLATIVE
COUNCIL or ASSEMBLY of *Newfoundland*, or from PUBLIC BODIES
or INDIVIDUALS in that Colony, relative to the State of Affairs there.

Colonial Office, Downing-street, }
26 July 1839.

H. LABOUCHERE.

(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed,
12 August 1839.

SCHEDULE.

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ADDRESSES FROM THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY OF NEWFOUNDLAND
TO HER MAJESTY.

— No. 1. —

TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

NEWFOUNDLAND.

Addresses from the
House of Assembly.

May it please Your Majesty,

WE, Your Majesty's loyal subjects, the Commons of Newfoundland, in General Assembly convened, have most humbly and reverently to approach Your Majesty, to acknowledge, with the most profound feelings of gratitude, the attention which Your Majesty has been graciously pleased to give to the complaints of the people of this Your ancient and loyal colony of Newfoundland.

We have now particularly to express our deep sense of Your Majesty's solicitude for the protection of the people of this colony, in permitting their complaints against the state of the administration of justice to be inquired into by Your Majesty in Council; and we have to express our full, complete, and perfect satisfaction at the result of that inquiry.

Your Majesty's loyal subjects of Newfoundland, being either natives of the United Kingdom, or their immediate descendants, have at all times entertained the strongest desire to be governed by the laws of England; the rights and immunities of British subjects they value beyond all price; they feel anxious to preserve them for themselves, and to transmit them unimpaired to their children; it was, then, a cause for unmixed joy and delight to find these mild and merciful laws, and the incomparable constitution of England, confirmed to them by the just decision of Your Majesty, aided by the advice of Your Majesty's Council.

It is with feelings of indignation, which we cannot command language sufficiently strong to express, that we have heard that statements have been made to Your Majesty and to the other branches of the Imperial Government, imputing to the people of this colony disaffection and disloyalty to Your Majesty's sacred person and Government, as well as resistance and disregard to Your Majesty's laws. In justification of the people of Newfoundland, and in reply to these unfounded and ungenerous imputations, we fearlessly assert that in no portion of Your Majesty's wide-spread dominions are the people more sincerely, devotedly, and unanimously attached to Your Majesty's royal person, throne, and Government, than are Your Majesty's faithful subjects of Newfoundland. And we further state, without fear of successful contradiction, that, within the recollection of some of the oldest inhabitants, and which takes in the time of the French war, the late American war, and down to the present period, the high crime of disloyalty to the Crown and Government of England was not, even in one solitary instance, exhibited in Your Majesty's courts in Newfoundland against a British subject; but, on the contrary, the people came forward on those occasions, and are even more ready now to come forward, were it necessary, to risk their lives and expend their fortunes in support of the sovereign and just rights of Your Majesty, and in upholding and cementing the union and connexion with the parent country.

The House of Assembly, the representatives of the people of Newfoundland, not only repudiate the foul charge of disloyalty, but further claim for their constituents a character which they have justly earned, of submitting and acting in obedience to the laws; they also claim for them a moral and religious character, not inferior to that of the people of any other portion of Your Majesty's dominions.

Newfoundland is nearly as large as England; the inhabitants are settled in various harbours along the coast, far distant from the capital and from each other, and we regret to say surrounded, with little exception, by the unimproved wilderness; there is not, except in St. John's, a fort, garrison, or soldier; and

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Addresses from the
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the civil force to preserve the peace in these distant settlements does not exceed one or two constables, and in many harbours not even one constable; yet, notwithstanding, a civil or criminal process issuing from Her Majesty's court at St. John's, can be executed without difficulty in the most distant parts, and most populous districts in the island. As an example, we humbly beg to call Your Majesty's attention to one case amongst others which occurred during the heat and excitement attending the general election of 1836; a number of persons were charged with a riot at the election that took place at Harbour Grace, in Conception Bay; that warrants were issued for the apprehension of the parties accused from the Supreme Court at St. John's; one constable proceeded to what was then and is now stated to be a "disturbed district," arrested all the parties, and brought them a distance of upwards of 30 miles, to St. John's, where they were delivered over into the hands of justice. This is only one example from hundreds we could adduce, to prove the readiness with which Your Majesty's subjects in Newfoundland submit themselves to the laws, even at a time when it was universally considered that these laws were administered corruptly, partially, and unjustly.

We can further refer Your Majesty to the official documents annually transmitted from the local authorities to Your Majesty, which will show the account of criminal prosecutions and convictions, and must prove the peaceful and moral character of the people of Newfoundland.

Should Your Majesty desire to have further information on this subject, we pray Your Majesty to command our late beloved and venerated chief justices, Sir Francis Forbes and Richard Alexander Tucker, to make a report thereon to Your Majesty; and we would unhesitatingly appeal to the expressed opinions of these learned, wise and good men, as a full defence against the calumny so unjustly heaped upon Your faithful subjects of Newfoundland.

May it please Your Majesty,

There is nothing more calculated to bring the administration of justice into disrepute with the people of any colony, than to find persons placed by Your Majesty on the judicial bench, who so far forget their duty as to mix themselves up with the disputes of contending political parties; and it is to be lamented that individuals should be found in this small community placed in these responsible stations, who so far forget their duty to Your Majesty and to the people, as to lend the sanction of their names and stations to the foul and unfounded charges made against the loyal inhabitants of this colony.

We cannot conclude this humble Address to Your Majesty, chiefly intended to defend the people of Newfoundland from the foul charge of disloyalty, without expressing our sincere sorrow and regret that any portion of Your Majesty's subjects inhabiting Your North American provinces, should be so far misled, as were the people of Canada, to make the slightest opposition to the Government of Your Majesty.

It affords us the most sincere pleasure to state that we have reason to believe that, even in the provinces lately disturbed, the vast majority of the clergy and people remained steady to their allegiance, and that even those that were led to open acts of resistance to Your Majesty's Government, were not fully aware of the enormity of their offence, and had no wish to throw off their allegiance to Your Majesty; and we have now every hope that those misguided individuals, impressed with gratitude for the indulgence of Your Majesty, they will become Your Majesty's grateful and attached subjects.

We have most sincerely to congratulate Your Majesty on the complete suppression of the temporary insurrections in these provinces; and we have also to acknowledge Your Majesty's great anxiety to promote the general interests of the North American provinces, and to secure the permanent connexion with the parent state, by placing over them at this crisis a nobleman so competent to heal the distractions and to detect the defects of the existing constitutions of the colonies, a statesman so distinguished as the present Governor-general, Lord Durham.

And we have furthermore sincerely to congratulate Your Majesty on the signal success which has already attended his Lordship's mission; and we cannot avoid expressing our decided opinion that there is no part of his Lordship's proceedings more calculated to confirm the people of these provinces in loyalty

loyalty and attachment to Your Majesty's Government, than in the manner in which he has carried the well-known wishes and commands of Your Majesty into effect, by exercising the highest attribute of royalty in extending mercy and indulgence to the misguided individuals in Canada who subjected themselves to the highest penalties of the law.

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Addresses from the
House of Assembly.

House of Assembly, }
16 Oct. 1838. }

(signed) *Will. Carson,*
Speaker.

— No. 2. —

TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

May it please Your Majesty,

YOUR Majesty's faithful Commons of Newfoundland, in General Assembly convened, most humbly and respectfully approach Your Majesty with renewed sentiments of love and loyalty for Your Majesty's Crown, and attachment to Your Royal person, most respectfully soliciting the attention of Your Majesty's Government to the humble representation of this House on the subject of the Supply Bill of the seventh Session of the Legislature, laid before Your Majesty by Your Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies, by delegates deputed from this body.

The House of Assembly are induced to renew their prayer on that subject by the occurrences that have transpired during the present Session on the Supply Bill of this year, in their anxiety to use every legitimate and constitutional means to uphold their just privileges against the reiterated encroachments of the Legislative Council.

But, may it please Your Majesty, while the House of Assembly are thus determined respectfully to maintain the privileges of the people entrusted to them, they have proved by their moderation, their earnest desire to produce an amicable adjustment of the unhappy differences that exist between theirs and the second branch of the Legislature.

The source of these differences would seem to be the desire of the Council, now in the ninth Session of the Legislature, to renew their opposition to the manner of the granting the supplies for the public service in Newfoundland by the Assembly, which they had originated during the seventh Session, even to the rejection of the entire supplies of the country, and which manner of granting the same had been founded on the well-established precedents of former Sessions.

May it please Your Majesty, in all the former Sessions of this Legislature, without exception, the Bills of Supply passed into laws exhibit provisions of miscellaneous appropriation, nor had Your Majesty's august predecessor, of happy memory, in any single instance withheld his Royal sanction to the practice; and the present Assembly, in these renewed exertions to sustain those precedents, only seek to uphold a course of proceedings which the concurrence of former Councils, and the sanction of a former monarch, had enabled their predecessors to bequeath them as consecrated rights.

Your Majesty will thus perceive, that while "the constitution of the Legislature of Newfoundland is modelled on that of the Imperial Legislature with regard to money grants," it has been tacitly admitted, not only that the origination by the Crown for money grants as in the Imperial Parliament, but also the granting the supplies for the year in a series of Bills, as in the British provinces on the continent of America, was inapplicable to the circumstances and condition of society in Newfoundland.

Your Majesty's faithful Commons of Newfoundland could, for instance, have no objection to the assimilation of their practice on this subject to that of the Imperial Legislature, by the referring to the Crown the origination of all money grants, if, in a reciprocal spirit, they were granted that wholesome control over the colonial public servants possessed over the British Ministry by the House of Commons; nor should they object, on the other hand, that their supplies should form the subject of separate Bills, as in the British North American continental provinces, did the relations between the Councils and the Assemblies there and here bear any parallel.

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Addresses from the
House of Assembly.

In Canada and New Brunswick the development of the internal resources of these countries, and particularly the fostering care exhibited by the British Government towards their agricultural improvement, at the expense of the Imperial Treasury, have produced, long since, a native gentry to compose the Councils there, having all their interests in common with the interests of the body of the people. In Newfoundland, on the contrary, the policy heretofore pursued by the parent Government was at first to forbid residence, then to restrain settlement, anon to decry agriculture; in fine, to fetter the resources, and cramp the energies, and blast the prospects of the people, has produced the natural result. Native gentry there is none; a resident landed proprietary there does not exist, and consequently society in this colony is reduced to two classes, the one mercantile, composed not of native, but stranger "merchants and adventurers," and indeed to a considerable extent even these non-resident, to whom may be added the officers of the Government, all strangers too; the other, the humble fishermen, whose destinies are riveted to the soil of their nativity.

May it please Your Majesty, the interests of the mercantile class of society in Newfoundland by no means bear that intimate analogy with those of the fisherman, which, in the provinces referred to, subsists between the several classes of the people. The native inhabitants of Newfoundland are sighing for the promotion of agriculture for the full development of the internal resources of the country. The merchant sees in the accomplishment of their wishes the grave of his monopoly; for if agricultural produce be raised in the country, the profits of the merchant, in the importation of provisions, must proportionably decline. The native inhabitants of Newfoundland, regarding its soil with affection,—it is the natal place of his grandsire and his children, and he looks upon it as destined to envelope the last relics of his mortality,—pants for its improvement; the adventurer only desires the accumulation of wealth for its ultimate removal, to the great depression of the people from whose means it was derived, the aggrandisement of a distant land.

Thus, may it please Your Majesty, has it been judged advantageous in this country to suffer the supplies to appear in Bills of miscellaneous appropriation, thereby exhibiting a difference from the systems pursued both in England and in the neighbouring provinces, corresponding with the difference between their respective political and social constitutions.

In the present year, Your Majesty's faithful Commons, with these views, renewed the temperate assertion of their right, so well and so justly established; but again has their exercise of that right been obstructed by Your most Gracious Majesty's Council; and, determined once more to seek redress by soliciting in humility the protection of Your Majesty, and in order to afford no pretext for the embarrassment of the country by the ultimate rejection of the whole supplies of the year, until the result of Your Majesty's most gracious consideration of our claims had been learned, this House, immediately upon that interruption, acceded to their views, and separated the original Bill into three; viz. one for the support of the civil government, one for the defrayal of the legislative contingencies, and a third for the liquidation of certain law costs and other charges connected with the proceedings of the delegates to England, and the prosecution, by the late chief justice and present high sheriff, of certain members of this body, for acts done in their legislative capacity.

The proceedings of Your Majesty's Council, may it please Your Majesty, upon these Bills, will more fully exhibit the inapplicability in this country of those principles which perhaps may work advantageously in the neighbouring provinces, because that while the mercantile portion of the Council support the official in passing the Bill for the civil salaries and expenditure, the official supports the commercial in the rejection of Bills contemplating public improvement, defraying the cost incurred in seeking redress of grievances, or the just and legitimate remuneration for services honestly and zealously performed, because performed by persons selected by the representatives of the people.

House of Assembly, }
25 Oct. 1838. }

(signed) *Will. Carson*, Speaker.

— No. 3. —

TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

May it please Your Majesty,

WE, Your Majesty's faithful subjects, the Commons of Newfoundland, in General Assembly convened, beg leave to approach Your Most gracious Majesty's throne with sentiments of the most profound loyalty and attachment to Your Majesty's august person and government.

May it please Your Majesty, Your Majesty's loyal Commons of Newfoundland, during the present Session of the Legislature of this colony, have laboured assiduously in the public service; and, in the manner of discharging their duties, have sought every opportunity of proving to Your Majesty, in accordance with the terms of their dutiful address to Your Majesty on the loss of the Supply Bill of the seventh Session of the General Assembly, that it is not to them is attributable the injury and embarrassment of the Government, the vexation and distress to the community, resulting from the rejection by Her Majesty's Council of that measure.

The House of Assembly in this Session have tried the experiment of conciliating the Council and the Executive on the subject of the supplies, and have omitted no opportunity of promoting that harmony which ought to subsist between the several branches of the Legislature.

The question of the already exorbitant salary of the collector of Your Majesty's revenues had been brought before Your Majesty's Government in England by delegates appointed by this House, praying, on the part of the Assembly, its reduction to a sum somewhat more proportioned to the smallness of the amount collected; and yet,—and though the reply of Her Majesty's Government to the prayer of Her faithful subjects on that head was not yet communicated to the House, in consequence of the absence of the delegates,—yet did the House permit their privileges to be trampled on, in the ardent expectation of redress from Your Majesty, and calmly suffer his Excellency the Governor to dictate the terms, without an accedence to which he professed his readiness to deprive the country of revenues, and plunge its inhabitants into anarchy; those terms being the raising to a considerable extent that salary to such the reduction of which they sent delegates to England.

Your Majesty's Government, during the Session of 1837, proposed to admit the right of the Assembly to appoint their own officers, provided the representations of the Assembly, with reference to the practice in certain neighbouring colonies, should prove to be correct, and instructed his Excellency the Governor to address the several neighbouring Governors upon that subject, while at the same time the Assembly directed their Speaker to address the several Speakers upon the same. In the meantime, instructed by Your Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies, his Excellency required the officers appointed by the Crown to be paid, although discharged from their functions by order of the House, and the House readily acceded to the proposition, regarding their claim well founded, until the ultimate decision of the question.

This Session a similar demand has been made, and although the reports made to the Speaker of the House by the neighbouring Speakers prove that Government have had proof of the right which the Assembly are determined to maintain, the right of the appointment of their officers, yet have they once more yielded accedence to avoid the possibility of collision with the Executive.

In their conduct towards the Council on the Supply Bill of the present Session, have they exhibited a similar forbearance. The Council insisted the Supply Bill should be divided; the Assembly divided it, and yet, notwithstanding this, has a Bill been rejected by that body, having for its object to defray the expenses of the late delegation to England; thereby proving, that the individuals who, in obedience to the order of this House, had in England struggled to reduce the salary of one member of the Council, the collector, and had procured the removal from office of the late president of the Council, Mr. Boulton, that these individuals are not likely to have their interests equitably guarded by that body; and also proving, by thus incapacitating the Assembly from discharging the just debts which they incurred in London on this subject.

NEWFOUNDLAND. ject, their inclination to bring down odium upon the popular branch of the Legislature.

Addresses from the House of Assembly.

But may it please Your Majesty, this is not enough. We find, by a message laid before this House on yesterday from that honourable body, that they can descend to the grossest exaggeration and misrepresentation even, for the purpose of awakening opinions in the mind of Your Majesty prejudicial to the honour, and defamatory of the reputation of the House of Assembly.

In this message, may it please Your Majesty, Your Majesty's Council seek to show that, during the existence of the present House of Assembly, the contingent expenses of that body have unreasonably increased, thereby clearly imputing an improper appropriation of the public funds to that branch of the Legislature for their own private advantage. But a brief view of their statement will at a glance exhibit an absence of candour, and disposition to exaggerate, highly derogatory from the dignity of a deliberative assembly.

In the first resolution of this message, Your Majesty is told, that in the Session of 1836 the legislative contingencies amounted to 1,390 *l.* 0 *s.* 9 *d.*, viz. for the Council, 405 *l.* 11 *s.* 6 *d.*, for the Assembly, 984 *l.* 9 *s.* 3 *d.*; and in 1837, 2,953 *l.* 9 *s.* 6 *d.* for the Assembly, and for the Council 494 *l.* 4 *s.* 1 *d.*; thus bringing into comparison the first Session of the present with the last of the former Assembly, and the expenditure of the Assembly with that of the Council; and they go on to state the expenses of the Council now to be 663 *l.* 8 *s.* 4 *d.*, the Assembly 3,311 *l.* 19 *s.* 6 *d.*

But may it please Your Majesty, upon examining these statements, we at once behold an improper effort made in 1837 to exaggerate the expenses of the Assembly and reduce those of the Council by improper and unfair means, by means exceedingly unworthy the members of Your Majesty's Council; for upon referring to the 94th page of their Journals, where the items are set out which compose the charges of the Council for 1837, it will be found that that body withheld from their account that year the charge of printing altogether, thereby exhibiting in stronger relief the contrast between the contingencies of both bodies.

However, beside this suppression of the truth, on the one hand, we have, on the other, an incorrect account of the contingencies of the Assembly for that year, as may be seen by a reference to the same (the 94th) page of the Journals, where it will be seen that, even including 215 *l.* voted to the officers appointed by the Crown, and including expenses resulting from inquiry on administration of justice, the gross amount of the contingencies of this body falls short of the sum imputed by the Council by no less an amount than 560 *l.* 7 *s.*

In looking at their statement, that the contingencies of the Assembly this year amount to 3,311 *l.* 19 *s.* 6 *d.*, Your Majesty's faithful Commons are astonished to find exaggeration of the highest character used to enhance the apparent extravagance of the expenditure of the Assembly. In the first place, the Council suppress the fact, that in this charge are included the expenses of two, and not of only one Session, being 1,655 *l.* 19 *s.* 9 *d.* for each; and in the next place, is the amount utterly inconsistent with the fact, for a reference to the Contingency Bill, which has actually passed both Houses of the Legislature, in its aggregate amount, including the expenses of the Council, falls considerably short of the sum here stated as incurred by the Assembly only, while the amount therein provided for the contingencies of the Assembly are little short of 1,000 *l.* below that sum.

May it please Your Majesty, the Assembly have complained to Your Majesty, and humbly sought for protection from these reiterated aggressions upon the personal character, as well as the legislative dignity, of the representatives of the people. They regret that the time, ingeniously chosen too, for this attack had almost incapacitated them from the capability of reply, and then the slander should have rested on their fame for another year, and until the next Session of the Legislature, as only two hours remain to the Assembly for its accomplishment prior to the prorogation.

What can this course of inveterate hostility on the part of that dignified body imply, if it be not to Your Majesty a convincing proof, that as long as Your Majesty's Council continues constituted as at present, so long must their legislative exertions be expected to be directed by motives arising from personal feelings?

Your

Your Majesty's loyal Commons of Newfoundland, therefore, humbly and respectfully fling themselves, their characters, their rights and privileges, beneath Your Majesty's protection; and they humbly pray, and again and again implore Your Majesty to take into Your Majesty's most gracious consideration the reiterated prayers of Your Majesty's people for a just reform in the constitution of Your Majesty's Council, and the due sustentation of the privileges of the Assembly.

NEWFOUNDLAND.

Addresses from the
House of Assembly.

House of Assembly, }
25 October 1838. }

(signed) *Will. Carson,*
Speaker.

— No. 4. —

To the Right Honourable Lord *Glenelg*, Principal Secretary of State for
the Colonies, &c. &c. &c.

May it please your Lordship,

WE, the undersigned members of the House of Assembly, being the only members of that body at present in St. John's (with the exception of the Solicitor-general, who, having been duly notified, declined attending), beg leave to address your Lordship on the subject of the reiterated efforts of a party in this town to lead Her Majesty's Government to entertain opinions unfavourable to the character of the individuals who compose the representative branch of the Legislature of this island, and most respectfully to solicit your Lordship's kind consideration of our position, assailed as we are in terms teeming with vituperation.

Two Sessions of the Legislature have elapsed since the election of the present members of the Assembly, and before, and during and subsequent to those Sessions, the characters of those members have been assailed with the grossest calumnies, and epithets the lowest that bad feeling could suggest have been affixed to their names. Their efforts to promote the public good have been attempted in every way to be thwarted, and their every act and expression have been misrepresented.

It is painful, my Lord, to think that this party is composed, almost exclusively, of members of the Commercial Society of St. John's; men whose position in society would naturally lead us to expect them to be actuated by a spirit of candour, and by feelings of honour that would forbid them to have recourse to falsehood and calumny to sustain the cause they advocate.

We beg leave, however, my Lord, to refer particularly to a petition lately adopted by the chamber of commerce or managing committee of that body, and transmitted to your Lordship to lay before Her Majesty, a petition couched in terms so violent and unreasonable, as to render it perfectly unnecessary to notice it, were it not that it is therein asserted that "in proof of every statement there made, voluminous evidence has been transmitted to the office of Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonial Department."

We cannot believe, my Lord, that such evidence, or indeed any, on such a subject, could have been transmitted to your Lordship through the Government-office in this island, because we consider it would have been the duty of the Executive, in the first instance, to have afforded the parties accused an opportunity of immediately removing those aspersions on their characters; and we feel the utmost confidence that your Lordship's magnanimity and love of justice would not suffer you to countenance a system of espionage and secret accusation so utterly inconsistent with every principle of just and impartial Government.

We shall not here, my Lord, enter into a vindication of our character, nor shall we enter into a defence of the Catholic priesthood of this country. The very charges that are made against us furnish their own answer; while every paragraph of the petition alluded to with reference to the priests, loudly proclaim two things: first, that the priesthood have now the love and confidence of the people; secondly, that the petitioners have lost both, and *hinc illæ lachrymæ*.

By the late census, my Lord, the population is returned as nearly equally divided between Catholics and Protestants; how then could the influence of the priesthood have been so overwhelming among a Protestant people? The

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election for Trinity Bay is the very best reply to the interrogatory. That district is almost exclusively Protestant. A merchant had proposed himself as candidate, and was actually on the day of election about to be returned, and apparently without opposition, when, without preparation, without the aid of a committee, and opposed rigorously by all the wealth of the Bay, headed by the Protestant clergyman, an humble fisherman was elected after a severe contest, by an overwhelming majority, and the merchant flung aside.

The truth is, my Lord, that confessedly great, and deservedly so, as the influence of the priesthood of Newfoundland is among all classes of the people, that influence would not exist an instant if it were attempted to be exercised in opposition to the public interests.

In fine, my Lord, we consider that the very prayer of this petition furnishes an ample reply to all the statements it contains. The Commercial Society, through their chamber, there express, in reality, not only the cause but the object of all their hostility to the representative branch of the Legislature. They pray, not for a dissolution of the present Assembly; not for a revision of the franchise to purify future Assemblies; not for facilities to enable them once more to get in; no, my Lord, none of these do they ask for. They confess that their hopes of being returned are daily decreasing, the people's representatives are giving too much satisfaction to afford them even a hope; they say, in their address to the Governor, "They have not the slightest hope that future elections will procure a better representation;" and therefore they pray Her Majesty that the right of legislation be altogether taken out of the hands of the people and placed in theirs.

We have repeatedly, my Lord, by petition, solicited an investigation at St. John's into the circumstances of this colony. We have even now joined in a petition, urging with humility the same prayer, and we are confident that the result of such an inquiry would be for ever to set aside that system of secret slander of the reputation of individuals to which this island has been so long subjected.

But, my Lord, before we close we would take leave to point to one more cause, and that one not the least cogent, of the present struggle against the representatives of the people: it is mainly grounded on a rooted hostility to every thing liberal, particularly to the very existence of the present Administration, of which your Lordship forms so proud an ornament: a main object in urging these false accounts of the state of this country, a country than which there does not exist any more tranquil, is simply to afford, even for a moment, to your Lordship's enemies and ours, an opportunity of pointing to another distracted colony. Look to every column of every journal supported by them, or sustaining their views, and you will find them teeming with personal abuse of the members of that Administration, evincing the most marked hostility to the Government.

Under all these circumstances, we feel confident, my Lord, and in that confidence the whole island, with the exception of some 40 or 50 in this town, fully concur, that in every act of yours with reference to this country, the happiness and prosperity of its people will be ever kept in view. We feel confident that the institutions of the country will be supported, and its constitution held inviolate.

We have, &c.
 (signed) *Will. Carson,*
 Speaker.
John Kent.
John V. Nugent.
Patrick Doyle.

St. John's, 7 January 1839.

ADDRESSES FROM PUBLIC BODIES AND INDIVIDUALS.

— No. 5. —

TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

The Petition of the undersigned Merchants, Traders, and other Inhabitants of
St. John's, in the Island of *Newfoundland*,

(Received 29 January 1838.)

Humbly sheweth,

THAT we have witnessed with extreme regret the exertions which for a length of time have been made by a few individuals in this town to introduce discord and anarchy into the colony, to paralyse the moral influence of our courts of justice, as well as the authority of the subordinate magistracy, and, by a system of intimidation, to acquire for themselves an irresponsible control over the public affairs of the island.

We have hitherto forbore noticing the various false and calumnious statements contained in a series of petitions which have, from time to time, been forwarded by them from this colony to his late Majesty's Government, as well as to the House of Commons, in the belief that allegations which were known here to be so utterly devoid of truth, and so gross and incredible in their character, might safely be allowed to pass unnoticed by us; but we find that these misrepresentations, however they may be despised here, yet, from constant reiteration, they are acquiring a degree of credence elsewhere; and convinced that the best interests of the colony, and the safety of persons and property, would be endangered by further silence, we deem it necessary, in support and defence of our dearest rights, not only to lay before Your Majesty, as succinctly as possible, our own positive testimony of the absence of every just ground for the shameless allegations contained in those petitions, but also to express our earnest hope that Your Majesty will extend the relief prayed for by this petition, and adopt such measures as will emancipate this colony from the thralldom to which otherwise it must permanently be subjected. Of these petitions, we beg leave to draw Your Majesty's attention particularly to one addressed to Your Majesty's revered predecessor, despatched from this island in the month of March last, which not only holds out, in language far from equivocal, threats of personal violence, but contains charges of so serious a nature against the characters of the mercantile body of this town, the chief justice, and the grand and special jurors, that to allow them to pass unnoticed would be culpable. We now give to those charges the most unqualified contradiction, and we advisedly designate them as foul and impudent calumnies, notoriously devoid of truth.

In this island, the population of which may be estimated at 75,000, of whom about one-half are Protestants, and the other half Roman-catholics, it may be proper to remind Your Majesty that there are no legal distinctions affecting any class of Your Majesty's subjects; and were the Roman-catholics permitted to follow the impulse of their own minds, and to act individually as their own wishes might prompt them, there would be no cause for apprehending that they would differ from their neighbours in matters of a civil nature. But it unfortunately happens that their clergy have acquired a thoroughly despotic and absolute control over a very large proportion of the lower orders of their creed, by which means they are enabled to concentrate and direct the efforts of the body against each member individually to an extent that would scarcely be credited by any who do not witness their conduct, and in a way that is altogether destructive of the civil and religious liberties of the people at large.

To this cause, we submit, may be directly traced the evils of which we now complain; and as all authority rests in a great measure upon the power which those who exercise it possess of enforcing their mandates, we trust our observations will not be regarded as out of place, if we state to Your Majesty some of the means used by the Roman-catholic priests for coercing those who evince any disinclination to comply with their wishes.

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In the first place, they denounce them from the altar as persons hostile to their priests, and as opposed to the authority of their church, and then warn their congregations not to deal or hold any intercourse with them, designating them commonly as "mad dogs," a term by which it is understood that the individuals to whom it is applied have not adopted the political views of their priests, and are therefore to be regarded as if excommunicated; and being thus branded, they are to a very considerable, and in some instances to a ruinous, extent, injured in their business, are constantly exposed to much personal insult, and not unfrequently ill-treated in the open streets by the lower orders of their own creed, who deem it a meritorious service thus to carry into effect the denunciations of their priests.

But besides these temporal annoyances, they are constantly subjected to every kind of neglect and contumely, their clergy often contemptuously refusing to perform any clerical duty for them, their wives or families. Those offices of their church, which are regarded as most sacred, are refused, often with insult and abusive language, and others are performed in such a manner as to render the very performance painful in the extreme to persons possessed of common feeling. Since the general election of last autumn, their clergy have refused to hear confessions, to grant absolution, to visit the sick, to administer extreme unction, or the eucharist, to perform the office of churching women, to attend funerals, and even to bury the dead, when the parties have been what they call "mad dogs," or the wives, children, or parents of such persons. These punishments were threatened before the elections of last autumn; since which period, electors who had firmness enough to act with independence, have been visited with their rigid infliction; several have been interdicted from attending the chapels, and when, notwithstanding such interdict, a sense of religious duty has led them there, the mass has been suspended until they have gone out, or, declining to retire, have been forcibly turned out.

Your Majesty will hence perceive that the priests do not only possess, but also exercise, the power of inflicting the most oppressive and grievous punishments, which are visited on parties guilty of no fault, without trial, and without redress; and it has consequently happened that many worthy persons have found themselves compelled to yield to their will with nothing less than ruin to their worldly prospects, or starvation to their families, as the alternative. A power thus concentrated is brought to bear upon the people with so terrible an effect, that it cannot be matter of wonder that five-sixths of the Roman-catholic population are at the feet of their priests.

By this system of intimidation the Roman-catholic clergy have not only succeeded in procuring the return of persons to serve as members of the House of Assembly, who are entirely subservient to their will, and subject to their control (to which we shall presently more particularly allude); but what is still more alarming, they have systematically interfered with the due administration of justice, in such a manner as materially to weaken its moral effect. Delinquents who were of their party have, when convicted, been taken under their especial protection, and held up to the world as persons oppressed and persecuted on account of their political opinions, and as martyrs in the cause of liberty, and the defence of their creed, by which means they have endeavoured to create in the minds of their deluded followers the most inveterate prejudices against those to whom the administration of justice is intrusted. In this unholy attempt to establish in themselves an authority superior to the laws, they have omitted no opportunity, and neglected no means within their reach to bring the judges, magistrates, and officers of justice into contempt, and to excite popular feeling against them. More particularly have they, and the few factious and needy individuals who are associated with them, been unceasing in their attacks and untiring in their exertions to bring odium upon the present chief justice of the colony, Mr. Boulton, and at any sacrifice to procure his removal from the office which he so ably and impartially fills.

To accomplish this end the vilest slander, the most despicable insinuations, and the most malicious calumnies have been resorted to, more particularly through the medium of a newspaper published in this town, under the name of the "Newfoundland Patriot," the conductors of which are notoriously under the control of the Roman-catholic priesthood. In order to give plausibility to their proceedings, and to obtain for them the attention of Your Majesty's Government, a principal expedient resorted to, has been that of petitions, which are
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got up by them with a facility almost incredible to those who are unacquainted with the domination which the Roman-catholic clergy exercise over their flocks. The manner in which signatures are procured to these petitions is by exhibiting blank sheets of paper at the chapel doors, where all who enter, whether men or boys, are made to subscribe their names, or have them written down for them; and to this they are obliged to submit, knowing that otherwise they will be visited with the displeasure of their clergy.

These sheets are afterwards appended to the petitions, with the contents of which but few of the subscribers are acquainted; and it is thus that the most shameless allegations, devoid of every particle of truth, and intended to bring the judicial character of Mr. Boulton into contempt, are brought under the notice of Government as expressing the public sentiments of the people of Newfoundland.

In seeking the cause of this malignity displayed towards the chief justice, we solemnly declare to Your Majesty that we can discover none, except it may be in the apprehension that his inflexible administration of justice, unawed by their power or their threats, is calculated to divest the priests and their adherents of their undue ascendancy, and to subject them, in common with Your Majesty's other subjects, to the supremacy of the law. We take this public opportunity of expressing our full confidence in the integrity and ability of Mr. Boulton, and our entire satisfaction with the firm, judicious, and impartial manner in which he has discharged his duties. We have also no hesitation in asserting that notwithstanding the infamous attempts to create distrust in his official conduct, the public confidence in him remains unshaken, and we should lament, as a public calamity, any circumstance that might cause his removal or retirement from the bench of this colony, which would thereby suffer a loss not easily repaired.

And here we would respectfully suggest to Your Majesty that this community is almost exclusively a commercial one; that the merchant and fisherman have but one common interest, and are bound together by one tie of mutual dependence; that those differences of public opinion which exist in older and larger countries, have been hitherto unknown amongst us. Who, then, we would respectfully ask, are most interested in the due and impartial administration of justice? Your Majesty's petitioners, many of whom have a large stake in the country, upon whom hundreds depend for their daily bread; or the Roman-catholic priests, with their adherents, men who, generally speaking, have nothing to lose, but who might hope to extend their political influence by bringing the constitutional authorities into contempt.

We further crave leave to represent to Your Majesty a few circumstances worthy of serious consideration, as connected with the Charter by which his late Gracious Majesty was pleased to establish a Local Legislature in this island.

By this Charter the sole qualification prescribed for an elector is that of his being the occupier for one year of a tenement, however mean and valueless; a franchise so extensive, that it amounts almost to universal suffrage. On the other hand, no qualification whatever is prescribed for candidates, beyond that of being the occupier of a dwelling, no matter of what description, for two years; a defect we have ample cause at present deeply to deplore, for the Roman-catholic clergy, quickly perceiving how useful an engine the House of Assembly might be made in their hands, have not failed to exercise, in the manner before mentioned, the power they possess over this description of persons, in securing the return of a majority of members of their own nomination.

It is thus that the parties returned are nearly all persons of little or no stake in the country; who are not, in point of ability, character, or standing in society, at all qualified for the office in which they find themselves placed; consequently, by no means such as the electors themselves, if left to the uncontrolled exercise of their franchise, would have chosen. Their only qualification, in fact, being a blind subserviency to the dictates and wishes of the Roman-catholic priesthood.

We feel confident in affirming that, in the districts of St. John and Conception Bay, which return seven out of the 15 members of the Assembly, and where the illegal influence of which we complain is so powerful, a large majority of the electors were, and are, opposed to the candidates who have been returned

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by the means before mentioned, and the result of the elections would, we doubt not, have been very different could the electors, in attending the hustings, have been assured of protection from violence and outrage, and secured from the subsequent persecution and punishment with which they were solemnly threatened, and which they well knew would have been so unmercifully inflicted upon them.

Nor is it the least among the evils resulting from this baneful system, that in other districts, where the Roman-catholic clergy possess little or no direct influence, such a hopelessness of anything like a fair representation throughout has been engendered, and such a conviction of the uselessness of sending independent members to meet a majority thus produced, that in the last election instances occurred in which persons were returned as members without opposition, whose pretensions were really ludicrous, and who, under any other circumstances, would have received no countenance whatever.

From a House thus constituted, whose members are by no means the representatives of the colony, and among whom are the most active agents, as well as the most passive creatures of the priests, little can be expected to the satisfaction of the community. We forbear entering into a detail of their proceedings during the present Session (characterized as they are by the same feelings of partizanship, the same political depravity and persecution which influenced their conduct out of doors), or of giving a description of the low and abusive language with which the more prominent members, by pretence of their privilege of speech, are in the daily practice of assailing the Governor, the judges and other officers of the Government. The numerous and useless offices connected with the House of Assembly which they have created for the sake of patronage, the prodigal manner in which they have endeavoured to squander the revenues of the colony to support themselves and their adherents, and the invidious distinctions and provisions which they have made in several instances for the purpose of prejudicing individuals against whom they entertain personal dislike, indicate with painful certainty their determination to exercise all the power they possess, or are permitted to arrogate, in extending their influence, and inflicting injury on those who presume to differ from them.

That any of Your Majesty's colonies should in this, the 19th century, be reduced to such a state of priestly tyranny as that to which we are subjected, may well excite Your Majesty's astonishment, and our statements might possibly be attributed to prejudice or an exaggerated fear, did not evidence of their correctness exist in the office of Your Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies, whence documents in abundance may be obtained to support them.

We deem it incumbent upon us now to bring under the especial notice of Your Majesty the important fact that the magistrates, constables, and other subordinate functionaries in this colony, are entirely dependent upon the annual grant of the House of Assembly for the payment of their salaries. A ready method is thus afforded of controlling their independence, if not of corrupting their integrity, by diminishing or withholding, or perhaps increasing, their respective stipends, in proportion as they are supposed to be more or less favourable or adverse to the authority of the priests and their partizans; and we lament to add, that the determination to exercise this influence has been manifested in the votes of the present Session.

Great, however, and insupportable as are the evils to which we are thus subjected, we yet trust that an adequate remedy may be found in the wisdom of Your Majesty's Ministers, and we do humbly and earnestly pray for the adoption of such measures as will effectually redress the grievances which we thus presume to bring under Your Majesty's notice. We beseech Your Majesty that, among other steps for that purpose, means may be taken to secure to all Your Majesty's subjects in this island the free and uncontrolled exercise of their civil and religious rights; to protect the judges and officers of justice in the fearless administration of the laws; and also to make permanent provision for magistrates, constables, and others connected with the police, thereby rendering them independent of popular control, and amenable only to the Executive branch of Your Majesty's Government for the faithful discharge of their duties.

That Your Majesty may have a long, prosperous, and happy reign, is the heartfelt wish and sincere prayer of Your Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects.

[969 Signatures.]

— No. 6. —

To the Right Honourable Lord *Glenelg*, Principal Secretary of State for
Her Majesty's Colonies, &c. &c. &c.

The Memorial of the undersigned Merchants of *Liverpool*, trading to, and connected with, the Island of *Newfoundland*,

(Received 25 September 1838.)

Humbly sheweth,

THAT the memorialists are possessed of property in the said island; that several of them have resided there, and that all of them are interested in the prosperity of the colony.

That the memorialists have had occasion to deplore the existence of strong political dissensions in the island ever since the institution of the Colonial Legislature; and that, although they are satisfied the great body of the people are still orderly and peaceable in their disposition, yet to so serious a height has this party feeling arisen amongst them, that the memorialists are filled not only with unfeigned grief, but with just apprehension and alarm.

That the memorialists are apprised, by the latest intelligence from St. John's, the capital of the island, that the House of Assembly had committed to prison, for an alleged breach of its privileges, a respectable individual, a medical practitioner in the place; and that upon his discharge, by writ of *habeas corpus*, the Judge of the Supreme Court, and the High Sheriff of the Island, who, in the exercise of their respective functions had discharged him, were themselves taken into custody by order of the House.

That the memorialists, while they refrain from pronouncing any judgment upon the character of such proceedings, are impressed with the solemn conviction that they place in imminent peril the interests and even the safety of the colony; and that they point to the necessity of investigating the nature of the elective franchise by which the House of Assembly is constituted.

That the memorialists respectfully and earnestly disclaim being actuated by political motives in addressing your Lordship at the present juncture, being indeed, amongst themselves, of different and adverse political sentiments; and, from a regard only to the safety of their property, and to the peace and well-being of the colony generally, they venture urgently to pray,

That such measures may be adopted by Her Majesty's Government, as may, in its wisdom, be calculated to allay the party ferment which exists in Newfoundland; and, meanwhile, before the season is too far advanced, that additional troops may be sent out for the more effectual preservation of life and property in the island.

And the memorialists will ever pray, &c. &c.

[19 Signatures.]

— No. 7. —

To the Right Honourable Lord *Glenelg*, Principal Secretary of State for
Her Majesty's Colonies, &c. &c. &c.

The Memorial of the undersigned Merchants resident in *Liverpool*, connected with the Trade of *Newfoundland*,

Humbly sheweth,

THAT the memorialists have had the honour to receive, through Mr. Brooking and Mr. Christophers, the communication made to these gentlemen by Sir George Grey, in reply to a memorial addressed by the undersigned to your Lordship relative to the prevailing excitement and dissension in the island of Newfoundland, in connexion with certain proceedings of the House of Assembly there.

That the memorialists feel bound gratefully to acknowledge the consideration which your Lordship has given to the statements and prayer of the said memorial,

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rial, and the promptitude with which instructions have been transmitted to his Excellency Governor Prescott, such as your Lordship conceives will prove effectual for the maintenance of the public tranquillity.

That, with these feelings, the memorialists, nevertheless, remain impressed with the apprehension of impending danger. They are aware that, for a considerable period during the winter season the great body of the men in the colony are unemployed, and that strong political excitement amongst them cannot fail to be perilous to the peace and safety of the community; and they know, moreover, that the additional troops which have been solicited, and whose presence would be invaluable in the event of any disturbances, could scarcely be expected to reach the colony this season, unless sent out immediately.

That the memorialists forbear adverting again to the recent proceedings of the House of Assembly further than to express their confidence that Her Majesty's Government will not fail to have them fully investigated, and to consider whether the House, as at present constituted, be consistent with the well-being, or even with the safety of the colony.

That the memorialists trust your Lordship will forgive the anxiety and earnestness which urge them again to address your Lordship, and to pray,

That Her Majesty's Government, in addition to the instructions transmitted by your Lordship to his Excellency Governor Prescott, may be pleased, before the season be too far gone, to send out some additional armed force for the support of the Executive, and the more effectual protection of the colony of Newfoundland.

And the memorialists will ever pray, &c. &c. &c.

Liverpool, 12 October 1838.

[21 Signatures.]

— No. 8. —

To the Right Honourable Lord *Glenelg*, Principal Secretary of State for Her Majesty's Colonies, &c. &c. &c.

The Memorial of the undersigned Merchants of *Poole*, trading to and connected with the Island of *Newfoundland*,

Humbly sheweth,

THAT your memorialists possess property in the said island, where some of them have resided, and that the prosperity of the colony is of great importance to all of them.

That your memorialists regret that since the institution of a Colonial Legislature there, strong political dissensions have arisen; and although they are confident in the orderly and peaceable dispositions of the great body of the people, they are, notwithstanding, seriously alarmed at the extraordinary virulence of party feeling there.

That your Memorialists are profoundly impressed with a conviction that by the violent and inflammatory proceedings of the conflicting parties, the interests and safety of the colony are placed in imminent danger; and that it is indispensably necessary the nature of the elective franchise should be revised.

That your memorialists disclaim most solemnly that they are actuated by political motives in addressing your Lordship at this crisis, and assure your Lordship that their own opinions on such subjects are various and adverse; but from a regard to the peace, welfare, and prosperity of the colony generally, they venture to pray,

That Her Majesty's Government will adopt such measures as they in their wisdom shall think fit and proper to sooth party feeling in Newfoundland; and meanwhile, before the season is too far advanced, send out additional troops for the protection of the lives and property of Her Majesty's loyal subjects in the island.

Poole, 5 October 1838.

[54 Signatures.]

— No. 9. —

My Lord,

Bristol, 24 October 1838.

I AM desired by the parties whose names are attached to the accompanying memorial on the affairs of Newfoundland, to transmit the same to your Lordship, and respectfully to solicit your Lordship's attention thereto.

I have, &c.

To the Right Hon. Lord Glenelg,
Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State
for the Colonies, &c. &c. &c.

(signed) *J. A. Daniell.*

To the Right Honourable Lord *Glenelg*, Principal Secretary of State for Her Majesty's Colonies, &c. &c.

The undersigned Memorial of Merchants and others resident in *Bristol*, trading to and connected with the Island of *Newfoundland*,

Humbly sheweth,

THAT your memorialists, many of whom are possessed of property in the said island, are all of them deeply interested in its welfare and prosperity.

That your memorialists have frequently had to lament the numerous evils and disturbances that have taken place in the island, more particularly since the appointment of a Colonial Legislature, whereby trade has been seriously prejudiced, and the lives and property of Her Majesty's subjects placed in the most imminent peril.

That by advices recently received by your memorialists from the town of St. John's in the said island, they have heard with extreme regret of the arrest of a professional gentleman of high respectability, for an alleged breach of privilege, by order of the House of Assembly, and that upon his being subsequently released by the Judge of the Supreme Court and the High Sheriff of the island, in the exercise of their judicial functions, those gentlemen were themselves taken into custody by a similar order from the House.

That your memorialists, without wishing to make any unnecessary comment upon these proceedings, cannot but regard them with unfeigned sorrow, as indications of the continuance of a most unhappy state of affairs in the colony, unless it shall please Her Majesty's Government to take prompt and efficient measures towards rescuing the island from that internal animosity and distraction which now so alarmingly prevails.

That your memorialists, in addressing your Lordship upon this occasion, are not in the most remote degree influenced by party or political feeling, being purely desirous for their own sakes, as well as for that of their numerous friends and connexions resident in the island, that order and good government should be permanently established. Having the utmost confidence in the peaceable disposition of the greater portion of the inhabitants, your memorialists would venture to suggest the importance of an early investigation on the part of Her Majesty's Government into the nature of the elective franchise, whereby the House of Assembly is constituted, and to which, in the opinion of your memorialists, the evils complained of are chiefly to be attributed.

And your memorialists would therefore earnestly venture to hope that such measures may be adopted for the restoration of peace and tranquillity throughout the island as Her Majesty's Government in its wisdom may see fit, and that before the winter is too far advanced additional troops may be sent out for the more effectual protection of life and property.

And your memorialists will ever pray, &c. &c.

24 October 1838.

[29 Signatures.]

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— No. 10. —

TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

The humble Petition of the undersigned Clergy, Magistrates, Merchants, Traders, and others, Inhabitants of the Island of *Newfoundland*,

Sheweth,

THAT in attachment to Your Majesty's royal person, in obedience to the laws of their country, in respect to the authorities appointed to rule over them, and in an anxious and earnest desire to uphold the principles of the British constitution, the people of Newfoundland are not surpassed by any portion of Your Majesty's subjects in any part of the world.

That these dispositions of the people of Newfoundland have been at all times testified. When danger threatened from the invasions of foreign enemies, they promptly volunteered in arms to defend the rights of their Sovereign, and to seal their allegiance with their best blood; and never has an individual of this island been known to render himself at any time amenable to the tribunals of his country upon a charge of treason or sedition. But if those feelings had upon former occasions been manifested by the people of this country towards the British Government, much more solicitous are they to acknowledge their love and loyalty to Your Majesty, in whose benign administration are centred all their hopes of happiness and prosperity.

That, animated by these sentiments, Your Majesty's petitioners feel deeply indignant that that portion of the Newfoundland press, as well as that of Britain, which profess opinions hostile to Your Majesty's Government, should, by the repetition of their slanderous attacks upon the character of the people of Newfoundland, seek to awaken in the minds of the British public opinions unfavourable to them and to the institutions of the colony, and to create in Your Majesty's Government prejudices calculated to neutralize those blessings granted to the colony by Your Majesty's royal predecessors, and confirmed by Your Majesty.

That some of the merchants of Liverpool, connected with the trade of this country, should, though totally unacquainted with the present state of the colony, address Your Majesty's Government to adopt measures of coercion against the people of Newfoundland, appears to Your Majesty's petitioners only as part of a general hostility to the growth of free institutions in Newfoundland, manifested by a portion of the mercantile body at all times; and if recently they concurred with the people of the country in soliciting a Local Legislature, their motive is rendered manifest, by the hostility they display upon discovering that the inhabitants, exercising the rights vested in them by Your Majesty's royal predecessors for the advantage of the country, had wrested the representation from them, and placed it in the hands of persons freely chosen by the people, who will use the powers entrusted them, not for the promotion of the aggrandizement of a party, but for the general improvement of the country, the universal good of the whole people.

That, under those circumstances, Your Majesty's petitioners humbly pray Your Majesty to disregard the torrent of misrepresentation that has for some time past been pouring upon the Government, making it appear that in Newfoundland all the bonds of society are severed; that sedition is upon the lips and treason in the hearts of the people; that anarchy has superseded order, and that rebellion threatens to rear her hideous head; that property is insecure, liberty in peril, and even life itself unsafe.

Your Majesty's petitioners beg leave solemnly to assure Your Majesty that there is not at this moment beneath Your Majesty's royal sceptre a country where exists a more perfect state of tranquillity; there is not in existence a people among whom, not only at the present moment, but for very many years, the criminal calendar so completely proves almost an absence of crime. The public records of the country will prove the greatest degree of moral improvement; the industry of the people is manifested in the rapid advancement of agriculture; and every effort of the Legislature, young as it is, and surrounded by difficulties, is directed to improve the face of the country by the
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making of roads; and the intellectual character of its people by the promotion of education. NEWFOUNDLAND.

Your Majesty's petitioners, for these reasons, humbly and reverently pray Your Majesty that, disregarding the misrepresentations of those who are only actuated by a wish to embarrass the councils of Your Majesty's present advisers, in whose justice and wisdom the people of Newfoundland entertain the most unbounded confidence, and not even yielding to the statements of Your Majesty's petitioners implicit credence without investigation, Your Majesty will graciously please, amid the difficulties naturally occasioned by these contradictory and opposite assertions, to order that a commission be given to one or more gentlemen of England, Scotland, or Ireland, unconnected with colonial parties, to inquire at St. John's into the condition and government of this colony, and to report to Your Majesty thereon.

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And Your Majesty's petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

St. John's, Newfoundland,
11 December 1838.

[2,626 Signatures.]

—No. 11.—

TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

The humble Petition of the undersigned Clergy, Magistrates, Traders, and others, Inhabitants of *Harbor Grace* and *Carbonear*, in *Conception Bay*, in the Island of *Newfoundland*,

Sheweth,

THAT since the first settlement in Newfoundland to the present period, the people of that important colony have ever maintained their loyalty and attachment to the Throne and Sovereign of Great Britain unimpeached and inviolable, in respect to the constituted authorities, and in unqualified obedience to the laws administered by them. In anxiety to maintain unsullied the great principles of the British Constitution, Your Majesty's petitioners affirm, and history confirms the position, that the people of Newfoundland have rarely been equalled, and never surpassed, by the inhabitants of any colony in Your Majesty's transatlantic possessions.

That while we regard the liberty of the press as the ægis of the constitution, we cannot but regret that it should be made the medium of propagating misrepresentations, affecting the character and loyalty of Your Majesty's petitioners as well as of the people of Newfoundland generally; charges the most foul and unfounded against Your Majesty's petitioners, their representatives, and the Catholic clergy, have been widely disseminated by a venal press, styling itself conservative, in Newfoundland, and echoed, to promote the purposes of party, by an insignificant portion of the press of Great Britain; charges which, if founded on fact, merit the serious consideration of every lover of social order and rational liberty; but which, we emphatically assert, and we challenge contradiction, have neither facts, reason, truth, nor justice to support them.

That while Your Majesty's petitioners maintain that the tranquillity of the country is secure; that the entire population are animated by the purest principles of loyalty; that their desire to uphold the supremacy of the laws continues unshaken and unabated; that security for person and property prevails in every part of the island; that the criminal calendar, in the different districts, exhibits almost a total absence of crime (*Conception Bay*, containing a population of 30,000 souls, being represented as the birth-place of every disturbance and disorder, yet at the last term of the Northern Circuit Court not a solitary bill, even for petty larceny or assault committed in the Bay, was submitted for the consideration of the grand jury); that public confidence, in the purity of intention by which the highest administrator of the laws of the island is actuated, is daily increasing; that the advancement of agriculture has developed the industry and energies of the people; that the efforts of the House of Assembly have been directed to the improvement of the country, and the moral condition of the people by the promotion of education;—their (Your Majesty's petitioners') adversaries, on the other hand, positively affirm that all the above

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allegations are false; that sedition, anarchy, and rebellion are about to burst upon the land, and that life, liberty, and property are placed in the utmost peril.

Your Majesty's petitioners humbly pray, that under these circumstances Your Majesty will be graciously pleased to constitute a commission of inquiry, consisting of individuals unconnected with the colonies and uninfluenced by the prejudices of party, to investigate the various charges propagated by a venal press against the people of Newfoundland, to report upon the state of the colony, its institutions and government, and upon the moral and political condition of its people, and we (Your Majesty's petitioners) pledge ourselves to petition our representatives to defray the expenses of such commission from the colonial revenue.

And Your Majesty's petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

Harbor Grace, 18 December 1838.

[1,520 Signatures.]

— No. 12. —

TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

The humble Petition of the Chamber of Commerce of *St. John's,*
Newfoundland.

May it please Your Majesty,

WE, Your Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, the Chamber of Commerce of *St. John's*, in the Island of Newfoundland, approach Your Majesty with feelings of the most sincere devotion to Your Majesty's throne and person.

We are impressed with the conviction that no part of Your Majesty's widely-spread dominions is too remote or insignificant to prevent Your Majesty regarding with concern the grievances of Your loyal subjects therein, and affording that redress which the nature of their complaints require.

The Chamber of Commerce of *St. John's* is composed of 13 mercantile men, elected by ballot from the General Commercial Society of the place, and is intended to represent the trade, and to foster and protect its interests.

Though established for many years, the Chamber has sedulously avoided all interference with, or the expression of any opinion upon, the civil government of the island, or its political affairs; but the perils to which the best interests of the colony are now exposed, and which threaten with ruin its trade and prosperity, compel Your petitioners to depart from their accustomed course, and, with the unanimous and express concurrence of the society at large, to lay before Your Royal Councils, with earnest entreaties for relief, the almost intolerable wrongs they endure.

May it please Your Majesty,

We do not arrogate too much for Newfoundland, when we assert that the immense importance of its commerce to the mother country, its situation, so nearly approximating to the continent of America, and the invaluable and almost inexhaustible resources which its hardy sons afford to Your Majesty's navy, claim from Your Majesty a ready sympathy for its wrongs, and a speedy redress of them.

The value of the annual imports into *St. John's* alone amounts to from 400,000*l.* to 500,000*l.* sterling, the largest portion of which is for the manufactured goods of Great Britain. The trade and fisheries give employment to a numerous body of hardy and expert seamen, competent and ready at a moment's warning to man the fleets of Great Britain; and at the custom-house of this port alone nearly 800 vessels, exceeding on an average 100 tons burthen each, annually clear.

The soil of the country, though capable of cultivation to an extent which renders its produce a valuable auxiliary to the fisheries, is, and ever must be, incapable of supporting even the number of its present inhabitants. Upon its trade, therefore, and upon it alone, does the very existence of the colony, and its value to the Crown of Great Britain, depend. And when we assure Your Majesty that the interests of the merchant and fisherman are so inseparably interwoven as to amount almost to identity,—that nothing can occur to damnify the one without entailing ruin on the other,—Your Majesty will consider what weight

weight is due to the representations of Your Petitioners, upon a subject which so deeply involves their own prosperity and that of the whole colony.

In this country there are not, as there are in most others, any persons of education residing unconnected with business, and none therefore from whom a large sacrifice of time for the public good can reasonably be expected; nor do many in the lower grades of life settle here for the purposes of agriculture; its population, therefore, with the exception of the learned professions, consists entirely of the merchant, possessing capital and the means of giving employment to the fisherman, and the fisherman, whose wealth consists in his labour, who is not attached to the soil by any tie of family or possessions, and who is prepared to migrate to the United States of America upon the first symptoms of a depression in the trade, or upon the first suggestions of caprice; the exception of the native inhabitants, though highly honourable to them, is not sufficiently important to affect the general principle.

The influx of immigration to this country has of late years been chiefly from the southern and western parts of Ireland, and has supplied a population of Roman-catholics; peaceable and well-disposed when left to themselves, but for the most part uneducated and bigoted, and, consequently, as completely under the dominion of their priests, no less in their temporal than in their spiritual affairs, as if they were so many automata.

To a population so composed a colonial Legislature was accorded by Your Majesty's revered predecessor in 1832.

By that constitution the only qualification prescribed for a member of the House of Assembly was the occupancy of a tenement of any description for two years; and that required for the elector, the occupancy of a similar tenement for one year. It was feared that with such a franchise, in a society constituted as that of Newfoundland is, the whole representative power would centre in the Roman-catholic clergy, and that individuals unfavourable to the good of the colony would be selected by them to fill the seats in the Assembly. The worst fears which the most timorous entertained have been more than realised.

The Roman-catholic clergy, quickly perceiving how useful an engine the House of Assembly might be made for their purposes, lost no time in adopting a line of proceeding calculated to secure the return of a majority of members of their own nomination. Previous to the election, the candidates whom they desire to see returned are named by the priests, or publicly patronised by them. All of their own persuasion who refuse to vote for their nominees, are denounced in the chapel as persons opposed to the authority of their church, and hostile to their priests; the congregations are warned not to deal or hold any intercourse with them; they are branded with contumelious epithets, even by the priests from the very altar, and with blasphemous maledictions are held out to public detestation. Those offices of their church which are regarded by them as most sacred are refused them; the very dead are denied Christian burial, when the deceased, or even a member of his family, had been what they designate "a mad dog." By these and such-like means the Roman-catholic priesthood have succeeded in completely monopolising the representation of the country; and, of consequence, the members of the present House of Assembly, with only one or two exceptions, are persons possessing but little property, hardly any education, and no standing in society, and were selected solely because they would be passive tools in the hands of the priesthood. Nor is it the least mischievous part of this baneful system, that although in a few of the districts the power of the priesthood is not so omnipotent as to prevent the return of respectable men, no person possessing the education and the feelings of a gentleman will enter the Assembly to be associated with the individuals he would there meet.

And here we entreat Your Majesty to observe that the evils we complain of are not speculative; they have all occurred. We speak from bitter experience; and in proof of every statement we have now made, voluminous evidence has been transmitted to the office of Your Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonial Department

In whatever dependency of Your Majesty's dominions English law is faithfully administered, there will protection to the lives and properties of Your Majesty's subjects be surely attained; and although evils may exist in its Government, and as large a portion of happiness may not be enjoyed by its inhabitants as under an improved system of policy might reasonably be expected,

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still the ark of British justice will float amidst the troubled waters of discord, and afford a safe and certain refuge in the hour of need. The preservation therefore of the administration of justice from all pollution and contempt, is the object nearest the hearts of those who wish well to their country; for neither life nor property can be secure, nor the Government held in respect, where the judges are men who would be capable of tampering with law for the purpose either of conciliating the Crown, or of pandering to the passions of the people. In Newfoundland, however, the systematic exertions of the House of Assembly for the last few years have been unintermittingly directed to pollute the fountain and obstruct the free course of justice throughout the colony. Not content with persecuting by slanders and false accusations those judges and public officers whose impartiality and vigour rendered them formidable opponents to oppression and outrage, and finally succeeding by a system of falsehood seldom equalled and never surpassed, in getting removed from the Bench a most admirable and experienced chief justice, they have brought the whole weight of their influence to bear upon the magistracy and police force of the island. They have interfered with the duties of the Executive by appropriating to individuals, by name, the most trifling salaries, depriving one constable altogether of his stipend, lessening that of another, increasing that of a third, and this, too, without any complaint being made against the sufferer, or any recommendation in favour of the one benefited, but solely and notoriously because the individuals affected by their votes were either opposed or favourable to the members of the Assembly at their election, or did or did not approve of their subsequent conduct. However contemptible such conduct may appear, the evil effects of it are daily felt more extensively and seriously than we can describe. The peace officers, who are poor and mainly depending for subsistence on their salaries, are naturally deterred from independently doing their duty; and we fear the evil is not confined to these, the lower functionaries.

We feel confidently assured that the same spirit actuates Your Majesty which influenced one of Your Majesty's most glorious and beloved predecessors, and which drew from him the celebrated declaration, "that he looked upon the independence and uprightness of the judges as essential to the impartial administration of justice; as one of the best securities of the rights and liberties of his subjects, and as most conducive to the honour of the Crown;" and we doubt not the same principles are equally applicable to the minor departments of justice.

We most earnestly adjure Your Majesty not to believe that these our representations are the emanations of party spirit; there are no legal distinctions affecting any class of Your Majesty's subjects here; there is only that difference which should, and we hope ever will, exist where the cause does, between those who desire to see peace and happiness prevail, to have their lives and properties shielded by the power of the law; and those who seek to paralyze that law, and to arrogate to themselves a power superior to it. Amongst the latter class must the House of Assembly be ranked; and their acts within the last few months manifest how unquestionable is their title to the distinction.

In August last, a private quarrel occurred in the public streets of St. John's, between a respectable medical gentleman and a member of the House of Assembly; the dispute had no reference whatever to the proceedings of that body.

The medical gentleman was, however, without being permitted to deny the charge, or to offer evidence in his defence, voted guilty of having committed a breach of privileges, and was instantly committed by the Assembly to prison, and kept in close custody for four days. Upon his being brought before one of Your Majesty's judges of the Supreme Court, on a writ of *habeas corpus*, he was discharged, his imprisonment being judged illegal, and a gross infraction on the liberty of the subject.

The order for the discharge of the prisoner was directed to the high sheriff, whose duty it is to obey the mandates of the judges; and it was, in the usual course of business, carried into effect.

Immediately upon the release of their victim being made known, the Assembly hesitated not to outrage the bench of justice itself; and having sent a number of their retainers, they arrested the venerable judge who had thus incurred their displeasure, and, with brutal violence, literally dragged him from his chambers where he was engaged with counsel. This excellent man,
 and

and the respected high sheriff of the island, were, in the face of day, paraded through the public streets like common malefactors, were committed to close custody, and were confined upwards of two days, until the Governor, by proroguing the Legislature, obtained their release. Well did Your Majesty's Privy Council express their marked disapprobation of the conduct of the Assembly, upon the former occasion of their showing wilful disrespect to the judges of the land, and endeavouring to bring the law and its administrators into contempt.

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Had Your Majesty's petitioners, and other orderly and respectable persons, obeyed the dictates of their indignant feelings, and by the prompt interposition of physical force, vindicated the respect due to the bench and the liberty of Your Majesty's subjects, little surprise could have been excited, and no blame could have been attached to them; but, desirous of setting an example of forbearance, and of showing our reliance upon Your Majesty and Your Government to procure us ample redress, we repressed our indignation, and now appeal to Your gracious Majesty for the abatement of those grievances which none possessing the feelings of men can tolerate.

On the occasion of the election of members to serve in the first House of Assembly, the system of oppression and intimidation which has lately been in full exercise here had not been organized, and several competent gentlemen were returned. During the existence of that House, the colony was preserved free from debt, the public service was better performed than it has been since, and a few hundred pounds were all that were required to defray the salaries of their officers, and all their expenses: now the colony is considerably in debt; in every session Acts are passed adding to that debt, and yet the contingencies of the House of Assembly annually increase, and this year have engrossed no less than one-sixth of the entire net local revenue of the colony. Surely it is too much to ask any man to bear that 15 individuals shall commit all descriptions of evils and outrages upon the community, and be allowed, whilst so engaged, to help themselves as extravagantly as they please out of the funds of the colony, and support themselves, their families and friends, at the public expense.

To the inhabitants of this island, in general, the stigma of disloyalty cannot with truth attach; they have, as a body, ever been most true to their Sovereign, and obedient to the laws (and, if uncorrupted, will, we have no doubt, so continue). It remained for its House of Assembly to produce, and by its countenance to foster, the first symptoms of disaffection amongst its people. Some of the most active propagators of those principles which have led to the defilement of the fair face of Your Majesty's neighbouring provinces by the detestable crime of rebellion, cruel, unprovoked rebellion, have been in open correspondence with some of the leading members of our House of Assembly; this correspondence was disseminated throughout the country by means of a newspaper of this town, publicly acknowledged to be the organ of the priests' party, and the editor and printer of which is the favoured servant of the said Assembly.

Even after the sanguinary outbreak in Canada had taken place, whilst its plains were still reeking with the blood of Your Majesty's faithful and murdered subjects there, a fervent prayer was offered up through the columns of the same newspaper to the God of battles, solemnly invoking his aid to the rebel cause.

On behalf of ourselves, and the people of Newfoundland in general, we abjure such infamous and disloyal sentiments and proceedings, and profess ourselves ready to shed, were it necessary, our best blood in defence of Your Majesty's gracious person and throne. But if such a body as the House of Assembly of Newfoundland, as at present constituted, be suffered to continue amongst us, we cannot say how long the good principles of Your Majesty's faithful subjects here may remain proof against the contaminating influence of its example.

Your petitioners have anxiously watched the course of public events for the last few years; they have sought to discover if there is any pretence for believing or hoping that the evils they have witnessed and described are imputable rather to the abuse of a good system, than to the natural operations of the system itself, and that public opinion would, at future elections, vindicate itself, and by an expression of unequivocal indignation mark its reprobation

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of the conduct of the present House; but we solemnly assure Your Majesty of our matured and fixed conviction, a conviction equally entertained by nineteen-twentieths of all in the colony who are capable of judging, that no conduct of the members of the Assembly, however unprincipled and atrocious, not even such as we have recently witnessed, would render their return again a matter of the least doubt; and that with a population such as ours, nothing but an immediate and total abrogation of the present colonial Legislature can restore peace to the colony, and prosperity to its trade.

Before a General Assembly was conferred upon Newfoundland, its commerce flourished, its inhabitants were united and happy, no political adventurers sought refuge on its shores, and support from unrighteous agitation, nor were British feeling and justice outraged by acts of eastern tyranny. With the laws fairly administered, and the local government desirous to do right, and not to be intimidated from doing it, the affairs of the colony prospered; but in an evil hour a representative government was granted to it, simply because the want of some power to make local regulations was felt, although that want could have been well supplied by an extended Council, selected by the Crown, and aiding the Governor. A miniature imitation of the British Parliament was inflicted upon us, and an elective franchise conferred upon a people, the mass of whom felt no interest in the enjoyment of it, and possessed not the necessary intelligence to exercise it aright.

If any additional proof were necessary to convince Your Majesty of the inability of the majority of the Roman-catholics here to exercise political power independently, we need only state the fact which the experience of more than one occasion warrants us in asserting, that if it were thought practicable to shake the credit of this or of any other petition, by a contradiction of every fact contained in it, the priests could obtain, in the course of a few hours, some thousands of signatures, to be used as occasion might require, attach them afterwards to such a document as they might prepare, support their statements by oaths, and send them forth to the world as the deliberate opinions of its subscribers. Already has the value of property been depreciated in this country, the rate of insurance on it has been increased, its safety is becoming more insecure, and if the present system be continued those who have the ability and means of benefiting the colony by their presence and fortunes, will seek a home in some other country, the government of which will be more congenial to the tastes and habits of Englishmen.

In desiring to get rid of our present unsuitable form of government, we do not wish to avoid the payment of such taxes as may be necessary to defray the civil expenditure of the colony; we are willing that the same amount of taxation which at present exists be continued, and the proceeds thereof be appropriated to the purposes of supporting its civil institutions, and to the general improvement of the country; but we do not desire, nor can we patiently endure, that persons who have no property in the country, and who contribute nothing to its revenues, shall exercise unlimited power over, and rule with a rod of iron, those who do possess property, and who mainly contribute to the support of its government.

We do therefore most earnestly entreat Your Gracious Majesty, as you value the peace and prosperity of this Your Majesty's oldest dependency, and the happiness of Your loyal subjects therein, that Your Majesty will be graciously pleased to use Your Royal influence in procuring an immediate abolition of our present colonial Legislature, and conferring upon the Governor, and an enlarged Council, to be appointed by Your Majesty, the power of enacting such laws and ordinances as may be necessary for the good government of the colony, in such a manner and under such restrictions as to Your Majesty's wisdom may seem meet.

And Your Majesty's petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

John Sinclair, President.

William B. Row, } Vice-Presidents.

T. B. Bland, }

W. Richards, Secretary.

Robert Job.

B. Scott.

Tho. Bennett.

Ewen Stabb.

John Butler Bulley.

R. F. Trimmingham.

J. Jennings.

John Nicholls.

St. John's, Newfoundland, Dec. 1838.

The Hon. John Dunscomb, one of the members, is absent from the colony.

Wm. Richards, Secretary.

—No. 13.—

TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

The humble Petition of the undersigned Merchants, Traders, and Shipowners
of *Conception Bay*.

May it please Your Majesty,

WE, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the undersigned merchants, traders, and shipowners of Conception Bay, in the island of Newfoundland, approach Your Majesty with feelings of the most sincere devotion and attachment to Your Majesty's throne and person, to lay at the foot of Your most gracious Majesty's throne a statement of the intolerable grievances with which we, in common with others of Your Majesty's loyal subjects, labour in this colony, under the conviction that Your Majesty will graciously lend an ear to our complaints, and afford us that relief which to Your Majesty may seem just and reasonable.

We feel that we cannot appeal to Your Majesty in vain, when we reflect on the care and solicitude with which the Sovereigns of Great Britain have always watched over their colonies, however distant, and being assured that the prosperity of the mother country is so intimately connected with theirs.

The importance of this, one of the most ancient dependencies of the British Crown, is clearly shown by the number of hardy and experienced mariners yearly employed in the trade of the country, who, in any case of emergency, are ready to man Your Majesty's fleets; in the vast annual imports of the manufactured goods of Great Britain; in the employment of a large quantity of British shipping, and of many thousands of Your Majesty's subjects.

The trade of this bay alone employs 250 vessels, the property of those who carry on business in this part of the colony, besides 156 British vessels; and the imports have exceeded 150,000*l.* in one year: it gives employment and affords support to 26,000 persons, who are entirely dependent on the commerce of the country. The population consists principally of merchants and fishermen, whose interests are so connected with each other, that the welfare of one class must be the welfare of both; the merchant cannot carry on business without the fisherman, nor the fisherman without the merchant. Such being the case, it is necessary that the utmost confidence should exist between them. Such confidence, we unhesitatingly assert, did exist previous to the granting a Colonial Legislature to this island, in the year 1832, by his late Most gracious Majesty King William the Fourth; granted, we confess, at the request of many who have since had bitter reasons to repent their having solicited it. That confidence has been shaken, almost destroyed, by designing men, who, for political purposes, have endeavoured to make the poor ignorant fisherman believe that the merchant, who, from every principle of interest must be his friend, is his enemy.

Fluctuating as our population has been, from the contiguity of this island to Canada and the United States, to which countries hundreds constantly resort, our numbers are kept up by the annual importation of young men from Ireland, mostly Roman-catholics, for the most part uneducated and illiterate, who, by the occupancy of any tenement for one year, have the right of voting for the members of the House of Assembly; and, startling as the fact may appear to Your Majesty, by the occupancy of a tenement of any description for two years, are eligible to become members themselves. These men, who are completely under the influence of their priests in temporal as well as spiritual affairs, are mere tools in their hands to enable them to return to the House of Assembly, not men who, if left to their guidance, the electors would necessarily from their own interest wish to see there, but such candidates only as are patronized by the priests, and are subservient to them to carry out their political views.

The present House of Assembly consists, with very few exceptions, of men without talent, without property, without any necessary qualification to constitute "legislators;" of men, who, by their violent proceedings during their last sessions, have outraged the liberty of the subject, by arresting and imprisoning a respectable medical gentleman, without even suffering him to

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make any defence to a charge brought against him of having committed a "breach of privilege" of the House, for some out-of-door quarrel with a member; have even outraged the respect due to Your Majesty, by dragging from the seat of justice one of your Most gracious Majesty's judges, for fearlessly discharging his duties in administering impartial justice to Your Majesty's subjects; have outraged common decency by parading the venerable judge, and the high sheriff, who had obeyed the commands of the judge, like felons through the streets. These things, we respectfully submit to Your Majesty, have occurred, and past proceedings point out to us what we may expect in future. We had almost hoped that the indignation so generally expressed throughout Great Britain and the neighbouring colonies at the violent and unconstitutional proceedings of the House would have taught them wisdom; but the fact of the Speaker of the House having published a letter in one of the newspapers, threatening a member of Your Majesty's Council, the President of the Chamber of Commerce of St. John's, for having presumed to address his Excellency the Governor on the subject of a petition to be forwarded to Your Majesty, to bring it under the consideration of the House as a "breach of privileges," shows that past experience has not taught them wisdom, but that they are again preparing to infringe the liberty of the subject, by interfering with their right of petitioning, and of stating their grievances to Your Majesty. As they did not respect the person of one of Your Majesty's judges, they cannot be expected to respect that of one of Your Majesty's Councillors.

The late decision of the supreme court of this island, that they cannot interfere with the House of Assembly, to give redress to Your Majesty's subjects when imprisoned by the House, however illegally, should the House plead their "privileges," has given alarm to the well-disposed amongst all classes of Your Majesty's subjects. To see an irresponsible power, assumed and exercised by a body of ignorant men, who have already so fearfully abused it, who have by their persecutions caused the removal of the most distinguished judge that has for years presided over the courts of this country, imprisoned another judge for exercising his judgment and discharging his duty, imprisoned the sheriff for obeying the mandate of his superior, are such attacks on the pure administration of justice, that if permitted to pass unredressed, would sap the very foundation of British liberty and of British law, and expose Your Majesty's subjects in this colony to a state infinitely worse than was experienced by our forefathers previous to the obtaining the great bulwark of British rights and liberties, the "Magna Charta," and the still later boon of the Habeas Corpus Act, and is sufficient to arouse Your Majesty's loyal subjects, and cause them to seek relief at the foot of the throne.

Notwithstanding such tyrannical acts on the part of the House of Assembly, and that by the extravagance of their expenditure, and the large sums appropriated under different forms to the members themselves, by which the country has become involved in debt, yet we feel assured, through the influence of the priests over the ignorant electors, the same men would be returned should even another election take place, the same scenes would be re-enacted, and the prosperity of the colony and the welfare of its inhabitants be endangered.

The representation of the country is entirely in the hands of the Roman-catholic clergy, who, by their vast influence over their flocks, can wield them at pleasure; the mercantile community, the trade of the island, is entirely unrepresented. To prove the influence exercised by the priests over their flocks, and the manner in which they can obtain signatures to petitions for any political purpose, we can refer to the one forwarded from this bay within the last month to Your Majesty, stated to have been adopted at a public meeting of the inhabitants of Harbor Grace and Carbonear, two towns that contain a population of nearly 9,000, about half Catholics and half Protestants; we most solemnly aver to Your Majesty, that no public meeting was ever called, but that the few persons who prepared that address met at a Catholic school-room, adjoining the Catholic chapel, and that a great part of the signatures attached to the petition were obtained several days prior to the day on which the meeting was said to have taken place, and the address adopted.

Before the present system existed in Newfoundland, the colony was prosperous, its inhabitants contented and happy; with the General Assembly came political adventurers, who have sown the seeds of discord, and have caused this once peaceful and quiet country to become one of political anarchy and disturbance.

disturbance. We humbly submit to Your Majesty that this country is not fitted for a colonial Legislature; the few years that the General Assembly has existed has proven to every dispassionate mind that it is unsuited to it.

To the existence of the House of Assembly we can trace all the evils that have been inflicted on us; and on its removal alone can we hope to return to our former state of peace and confidence. That we do not pray for its removal on selfish grounds, or to avoid the payment of those taxes which it has imposed on our trade, we beg respectfully to state that we are willing that the existing ones should be continued, in order that Your Majesty's Government may be enabled to defray the civil expenditure of the colony therefrom.

We therefore most humbly pray Your Most Gracious Majesty,

That in regard to the peace and prosperity of one of the oldest of the British colonies, and in compliance with the fervent wishes of thousands of Your Majesty's loyal subjects, who would shed their blood in defence of Your Majesty's person and rights, Your Majesty will be most graciously pleased to use Your Royal influence to procure the abolition of our present Colonial Legislature, and to substitute instead thereof a system of government better suited to the character and condition of the country, in such form and manner as to Your Majesty's wisdom may seem meet.

And Your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

[79 Signatures.]

Conception Bay, Island of Newfoundland,
20 February 1839.

— No. 14. —

To the Most Noble the Marquis of *Normanby*, Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies, &c. &c. &c.

May it please your Lordship,

WE, the undersigned merchants of Torquay, connected with the trade and fisheries of Newfoundland, beg to call your Lordship's attention to the political state of that island, and more particularly at this season, when we are about to embark our capital, and engage our fishermen for the ensuing summer, the extent of which must depend on our assurance of safety and protection in the island.

From the undoubted information we have received from Newfoundland of the state of the political feeling there, and from the gross and outrageous proceedings of the House of Assembly, we are of opinion, that the only remedy for the many evils complained of, is the abolition of the Local Legislature there, and a return to a more protecting form of government, which we humbly and earnestly recommend to your Lordship's consideration.

Torquay, 28 February 1839.

[Nine Signatures.]

— No. 15. —

To the Most Noble the Marquis of *Normanby*, Principal Secretary of State for Her Majesty's Colonies, &c. &c. &c.

The Memorial of the undersigned Merchants of *Liverpool*, trading to and connected with the Island of *Newfoundland*,

Humbly sheweth,

THAT the memorialists, during the last few months, have repeatedly addressed your Lordship's predecessor on the subject of the distracted state of the said island, and, very recently, a deputation of their body, associated with Mr. George R. Robinson and other gentlemen connected with the colony, had the honour

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Individuals.

That the memorialists remain deeply impressed with the necessity of some essential change being made in the legislative government of the island, in order to allay the violence of party and political feeling amongst the people, and to restore commercial confidence and credit, which are suffering severely under the pressure of the evils referred to

That the memorialists complain both of the constitution of the House of Assembly and of its proceedings: of its constitution, inasmuch as the candidates require no other qualification than that they shall have been householders in the island for two years; and the electors, that they shall have been householders for one year, the description of house occupied by either class not being regarded. As respects its proceedings, it may suffice only to mention to your Lordship, that, during the last session, the Assembly, in the exercise of its privileges, first imprisoned a highly respectable individual, a surgeon of St. John's, who had had a quarrel with one of the members, and then ordered into custody both the judge and the high sheriff who had judicially discharged him; for which grievances it now appears, by a decision of the Supreme Court, that there is no redress in the colony.

That, with so low a qualification for both candidates and electors, in a population the great mass of which is composed of fishermen, it falls out, in the practical working of the system, from dictation on the one hand and terror on the other, that the merchants and wealthier classes are totally unrepresented in the Assembly; and this is the case, while the experience of its past acts creates very reasonable apprehension as to its proceedings in future.

That the island, being dependent for its supplies of provisions upon the merchants, it is most important, both that their credit in the European markets should be unimpaired, and that their apprehensions of disturbance in the colony should be removed, otherwise there is ground to fear that adequate supplies will not be sent out, whereby the people must be subjected to privation and suffering, and the fisheries to serious harm and loss.

That with these views, the memorialists wait now upon your Lordship, and humbly and earnestly pray,

That your Lordship may be pleased to take the state of Newfoundland, as respects its government, and especially as respects the constitution of the House of Assembly, into consideration, inquiring into the same by commission or otherwise, if such course be deemed advisable, with the view of applying an early and efficient remedy to the existing evils.

And your memorialists will ever pray, &c. &c. &c.

Liverpool, 7 March 1839.

[18 Signatures.]

— No. 16. —

To the Most Noble the Marquis of *Normanby*, Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies.

May it please your Lordship,

WE, the undersigned merchants and others of Dartmouth, in the county of Devon, carrying on business, having property and otherwise interested in the Island of Newfoundland, being about to invest capital to a large amount in forwarding our usual annual supplies for the outfit of the fisheries, and for other purposes, beg leave to call your Lordship's serious consideration to the perilous state in which property is placed in that island, in consequence of political dissensions arising from a defectively-constituted House of Assembly, and its outrageous proceedings, and which has been brought under the notice of Her Majesty's Government from time to time, by petitions and memorials, as well from those interested in its trade and fisheries on this side the Atlantic, as from a great number resident in the said island. We trust we shall not be considered obtrusive in repeating that we have serious apprehensions for the safety of our property in Newfoundland, and do most earnestly entreat your
Lordship

Lordship will use your best influence and assistance to effect the abolition of the Local Legislature of that island, as the only means by which peace can be restored, property rendered secure, and the consequent return to the good faith and harmony that had ever existed previously to the granting of the Royal Charter.

NEWFOUNDLAND.
 —————
 Addresses from
 Public Bodies and
 Individuals.

Anticipating the concurrence of Her Majesty's Ministers to the prayers of the numerous petitions and memorials that have been brought under their consideration, and abrogate the present Charter, we would humbly and respectfully suggest that the most effectual and most satisfactory government, for the future well-being of the island, would be by a Governor and an extended Council, to be nominated by the Executive; being assured, from the general state of society, that the elective franchise will not tend to the end of a good, wise, and well-regulated government.

Dartmouth, 8 March 1839.

[17 Signatures.]

— No. 17. —

To the Most Noble the Marquis of *Normanby*, Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies, &c. &c. &c.

My Lord,

Teignmouth, 12 March 1839.

YOUR Lordship's memorialists having for many years past been engaged in the trade and fishery of Newfoundland, view with great suspicion and alarm the encroachments on our liberties in the island, and the imposts levied on the articles of life necessarily imported there to carry on the fishery, which have been made and done by the House of Assembly; operating as they do against the fisheries, which are so much encouraged by other nations, both for their general benefit and the excellent nursery of seamen for the navy which they are found to afford.

Embarking, as we now are from these circumstances, to a much less extent than usual in the trade of Newfoundland, we shall another season be compelled to abandon it altogether unless your Lordship affords us protection; and we cannot but be impressed with the conviction, that the only lasting and efficient remedy for the evils which have so recently arisen there, will be the abolition of the Local Legislature, and a freedom from taxation of the necessaries of life.

We are, &c.

[19 Signatures.]
