

CURSORY VIEW
OF THE
LOCAL, SOCIAL, MORAL
AND
POLITICAL STATE
OF THE
COLONY
OF
LOWER-CANADA.

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CURSORY VIEW,

&c.

THE writer of this small production has been induced to publish it, concluding, from the contents of the report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons, that very little is known abroad of the true state of this Colony. Indeed this portion of His Majesty's dominions is, from various causes, a kind of political nondescript, and totally unlike any other portion of the globe. The object of these few sheets is, therefore, to expose to view some of its most remarkable features, in order to afford some light in the discussion to which its present political state, as brought before the Imperial Parliament, must of course give birth.

But before entering upon his subject, it behoves him, perhaps, to establish his claim to a certain degree of confidence. First of all, his age, having reached his 75th year, precludes the idea of any view of ambition; and is presumptive of some experience in the world. And in fact he has lived during a period, the most fruitful in remarkable events, all which he has witnessed and closely observed. His education has been such as to enable him to observe them with some benefit, and the

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course of his life has placed him in situations, the most favorable to make his observations, and to derive his information from his own view and experience. Having resided in several countries, without becoming that neutral being called a Cosmopolite, he has shaken off the trammels of national prejudices, which so often distort objects and present them to the eyes of the mind under false shapes and colours, and by enlarging and extending the circle of his own opinions, has led him to allow the full liberty of opinion in others. It is thus prepared, that after having kept for many years a constant correspondence with his brother residing in Canada, the native country of both, he was at last enabled to gratify his own anxious wish and to accede to the frequent invitations of his brother, by going over to Quebec, where he arrived in his 58th year, in 1812, just at the moment when the United States had declared war against Great Britain, and were preparing to invade the country.

Too old to be useful in the field, considering the nature of the warfare, in a country so little settled as this, he was employed in a civil capacity, and has since constant'y been in some public situation whereby he had the most favorable opportunities of studying the genius, manners, and feelings of the Canadians, as well of those of the country, distinguished by the name of *habitans*, as of those residing in the towns, and of acquiring extensive local knowledge. He has besides, taken an active part in the political controversies which were already in existence on his arrival in the country, have continued hitherto, and which have led to the present crisis. He has deeply meditated on the causes of these misunderstandings.—There have been many to which he has successively attributed them, but further enquiries have made him reject them ;

and although he might not have as yet discovered them all, he is convinced that if not the whole, at least many of those which he is going to expose to view, will be found to be amongst the most material ones, and thus the blame, if any, will naturally lie at the door of him, or of those, in whom the mischief has originated.

It appears however necessary for the elucidation of the main subject, to preface these remarks by some reflections on Colonies in general ; and no one, unless he has resided some length of time in a Colony, can pretend to have any proper idea of the Colonial social state.

A Colony, as every one knows, is a distant and detached portion, and under the sway of a parent state. It is usually founded by that parent, and then its population is composed of individuals having the same language, religion, laws, manners, and prejudices with those of its author. Colonies are then under the same general system of government as they were previous to their removal, and one would think that the social state of such colonies is, and ought to continue to be, the same as that of the parent state. But nothing is farther from the truth than such an assumption. That social state undergoes a total change. Public spirit, howsoever little it existed at home, vanishes on a sudden, and is replaced by the most complete egotism. Every one thinks but of himself, and seeks to take and to derive every advantage of that kind of levelism, which is the necessary and unavoidable consequence of a numerous emigration, for the purpose of founding a distant colony. At home, the fountain of favor is surrounded by walls within walls, that hides its view from the many, and allow a free access to it to a very few privileged favorites only. Abroad, that access is free and open to every one, and all are

impressed with the idea of having an equal right to the enjoyment of, and to the participation in the general influence of the colonial sun, which being destitute of its fiercest rays, may be approached without fears of blindness from its splendor. At home the authority of the Sovereign is primordial, and inherent in his high station; no one can bring him to account for his acts: abroad, the head of the administration is invested only with a delegated power; he is bound by the positive instructions of him whom he represents, and lies under a heavy responsibility for all his doings, and is exposed to personal attacks even for his private acts. At home, in every fortuitous occurrence that might disturb the regularity of the progress of government, the remedy is at hand, and being instantly applied, order is very soon restored: abroad, the necessary limits of a delegated power do not always permit that immediate application in unexpected and unforeseen cases, and the distance intervening between the chief and the delegated power, renders the correspondence so slow, that the evil may have had time to spread far and wide before the directions and the means of an efficacious remedy can be administered. Government send over to Boston, in New England, a cargo of tea; a handful of hot-headed republicans dare to throw it overboard; for want of a sufficient discretionary power, and fearful of a serious responsibility, a messenger is dispatched for instructions, and for means of efficaciously putting them in execution, but before his return, rebellion has already extended its baneful influence, means of supporting it have been organized, and thirteen Provinces are forever severed from the Parent State. Far different at home. A misguided multitude, under religious fanaticism, and led by a mad man, rise tumultuously in the metropolis of the empire to the number of

several tens of thousands, commit every excess, and threaten not only the destruction of the capital, but also the overthrow of the very Constitution. Terror palsies for a moment the authorities; but the sense of danger soon restores the necessary energy; the power and the proper means are there, and their instant use quells the tumult.

A British colony has, besides, a peculiarity arising out of the constitution of the mother country.—Other colonies, under the sway of absolute Sovereigns, must tamely submit to those who are deputed to govern them, and passive obedience is their lot; they may have colonial assemblies, but they are merely for show, and have neither the will nor the power to offer the least resistance to the dictates of the ruler set over them. Far different in the British,—these rulers are positively, and sometimes very powerfully checked in the exercise of their delegated power, by co-ordinate authorities, without whose advice or consent they can do nothing. Their task is thereby rendered more arduous and difficult, and it requires some skill to steer clear of the dangers of almost inevitable collision between such, too often incoherent and heterogeneous, branches of co-ordinate power. Thus a regular and efficient system of colonial government is as yet a *desideratum* in politics, even when the colony is the offspring of the parent state.

But how much greater and more arduous those difficulties, when the colony is annexed to the main state by right of conquest, and not only has nothing in common with that main state which might facilitate its amalgamation with it, but on the contrary, carries within itself, on account of this very circumstance, a repulsive feeling proceeding from a wounded pride on the part of the conquered, and from a national prejudice on that of the conquerors.

Is it in the nature of things to suppose that the former could see themselves in a manner cut out, at least partially, of that which they had hitherto considered as a portion of public property, in which they alone had a prospective share, namely the public situations, as well of honor, as of profit, and these become the portion of strangers, without some angry feelings? Indeed they received their rulers from Europe, but those rulers thus sent over to govern them, spoke the same language, were of the same religious worship, came from the land of their forefathers, and were their own countrymen; the laws, manners, and habits of these new-comers were the same as theirs'; and finally, they knew that there could be no partiality injurious to their own interests, arising out of a natural feeling of preference in favor of those with whom we have been connected from our infancy,—a feeling which acquires a greater degree of strength from the circumstance of meeting together in a land of strangers. On another hand the conquerors, sensible of the cause of an antipathy that could not be concealed, are too proud to try to remove it by soothing advances, and thus both parties keep at a distance, without almost any prospect of ever being able to bring them together.

The obstacle to so desirable an end seems to have still more increased by the indulgence shown by the British Government towards its newly acquired subjects. This assertion might, at first sight, appear paradoxical, but on deeper consideration, it will assume quite another character. Is it not evident that any thing which tends to bring back constantly early sensations, must necessarily keep them alive. Now by leaving to the Canadians the full use of their language, of their laws, and their religion, do you not constantly keep them in mind of their foreign origin in regard to you? Does not that idea recall

perpetually to their thoughts, the disgrace which has detached them from their natural parent to transfer them into an entirely strange family? Look at our country people, and see how they stick together, and with what steadiness they avoid, and even resist any thing that might put them in contact with those whose manners, laws, language, and religion have nothing in common with their own. Their dissemination over all the country serves still more to strengthen their close union among themselves, and their estrangement towards those whom they look upon as intruders and invaders of their soil, whilst there exists not a single motive for courting a nearer connexion with them.

It is not so in the towns. The frequent opportunities there of meeting together, and the reciprocity unceasingly recurring of mutual and necessary intercourse, not only invite, but even in a manner command a nearer connexion between both families; and thus we see that in those towns, the causes of estrangement, as before mentioned, have lost both in number and in efficiency. Most of the Canadians speak English, and a great many of the British are able to converse with them in French; they are thus better able to appreciate each other, and their progress towards one another is daily, visibly, and rapidly going on. But even admitting that neither the Englishman nor the Canadian who may happen to have to deal together, does understand the language of the other, a third one, be it a Canadian or an Englishman, who understands both languages, will be a link of connexion between them by acting as an interpreter, and thus, by his utility to both, will acquire a certain degree of interest in the mind of the one and of the other.

These repelling and divergent causes, so inimical to a thorough adhesion of the social elements in this

Province, might have been counteracted and finally removed, if the British Government, at the moment of the conquest, instead of the grant of the most liberal boon with which it then favored the Canadians, had paved the way to a future cohesion of those elements, by such measures as these:— declaring that, as the Canadians were become members of the British empire, if they wished to become partakers of all the benefits of its constitution, they ought to show themselves worthy of it, by the sacrifice of some of their former habits. The first requisite ought to have been the learning of the language of the country to which they were annexed; for the acquisition of which a certain period of time, for instance twenty years, would have been allowed, with the warning that at the expiration of this period, no Canadian would be admissible to any employment, situation, or office of a public nature, either of profit or honorary, unless he were sufficiently versed in the English language to transact in it the business of his office, without the use of an interpreter. Such condition extending itself even to the militia officers, would have compelled, even the country people, to attend English schools, which would naturally imply at least the learning of reading. At that epoch there would not have been more difficulty in the introduction in this country of the English civil laws, than has been met with in regard to the criminal ones. No French lawyers remained to administer justice according to the French code, and the benches were filled by judges who never had made it the object of their studies; so that no interested opposition from a French bar was then to be feared, and the system of the feudal tenure of landed property might have been modified and adapted to the new laws. There would have been no necessity for making any alteration either

in the religious worship or in the situation of the ministers of their religion. It would have been, perhaps, good policy to keep up that kind of jealousy that existed between the seigniors and the parochial clergy, by maintaining the former in a certain portion of their former rights over their tenants, in order to counterbalance, in case of necessity, the natural, and almost inevitable influence of the latter over their parishioners. In a word, it would have certainly been advantageous rather to support, and even to create, a kind of hierarchical scale, than at once levelling a yet feeble and unsteady social state, and leaving an ignorant population, as it were, without any guides to direct its yet tottering steps. Besides its infancy and ignorance, the nature of the elements of that population seems to have required more particularly such a social organization. It was then composed of a number of small, it is true, but isolated independent proprietors of land, spread over a vast tract of country. There was not between them that tie, created by vicinity or neighbourhood, nor any, even accidental, points of reunion or concentration in a space of more than three or four hundred miles, saving Quebec and Montreal, distant from one another one hundred and eighty miles. A population of this nature is the most susceptible of a tendency to a system of levelism and republicanism from which their ignorance alone has hitherto preserved them.

We have been thus led to the topics of the location and ignorance of the Canadians, and the latter is the almost inevitable consequence of the former.— This location suited the views of the original settlers of this country. They undertook its settlement upon mere speculation, and therefore they were anxious for a quick and profitable return. It was not from the produce of the soil, but from that of

the waters, and of the woods and forests that they expected such a return. It was not therefore their interest to turn the industry of the settlers towards any agricultural pursuits, but on the contrary, to compel them, in a manner, to stick to the fisheries and the chase, both more congenial to the minds of those adventurers who followed them, and more advantageous, because less troublesome, and presenting the prospect of sooner enjoying the fruits of their ~~importance attached to the possession of riches, and this had already taken too deep a root in the mind~~ toils and labours. Neither did the intention of peopling the country and founding towns enter into the heads of the original settlers; they therefore adopted the most anti-social system of location, yet subsisting, and what is most extraordinary, it has still been persisted in since the conquest, in the location of the settlers on the crown lands in the interior of the country, called townships.

This system consists in *slicing*, if the expression be allowed, the country in little elongated parallelograms, in which there is no proportion between the short and long sides. The following are the almost universal dimensions in the seigniorial settlements or concessions, namely, a breadth, usually called the front, of three arpens, by a depth of thirty arpens; the arpent not being in this sense taken as a superficies but as a measure of length containing one hundred and eighty feet, French measure; each of these shreds of land being thus parallelograms, with a breadth of five hundred and forty feet distance from house to house, by a depth ten times longer, namely five thousand four hundred feet, that is to say, more than one mile, or the third part of a league, reckoning three miles to one league. Now a seigniority is seldom less than two leagues in depth, and the parishes are generally two or two and a

half leagues in breadth, by various depths, but on an average they may be computed at about three leagues. By the word *land*, is generally understood one of those parallelogramic shreds, which, in the Canadian language are called *terres*, and the above are the usual and almost universal shape and dimensions under which they are usually and originally conceded by the seigniors.

Now the seigniories and parishes are again divided in their depths into ranges, denominated concessions, generally designated by the cardinal numbers, *first*, *second*, &c. although sometimes names are appropriated to them. We find again the universal parallelogramic shape in those concessions, whose longer side is the breadth of the parish or seignior, and are thus composed of the sum of all the contiguous lands comprehended between two parallel lines, thirty arpens distant from one another, so that there are about five of these ranges or concessions in each seignior or parish, of two leagues and a half in depth.

Some of the inconveniences of such a location have already been pointed out, let us see what an effect it must have on the *habitans* (such is the name under which the country people are designated) in regard to education. Let us take a parish of two leagues in breadth, and two leagues and a half in depth; which may be considered as one of the smallest in regard of depth. Now the parishes along the river St. Lawrence are in general the most ancient in regard to Settlement, the best settled and the richest of all. In these parishes the churches are generally situated in the middle or thereabout, of the first concession, and the nearest possible to the grand river, that is to say, at about one league from the last lands on both sides; so that the owners of those extreme lands have a journey of one league to

go to church and one league to return to their homes. Admitting the existence of a road descending from the most distant concession in depth, namely from the fifth directly leading to the church and crossed by the front roads necessary to each of the concessions, and required by law, it will be seen that the nearest habitant of the second concession, namely those two whose lands are contiguous to that depth road, called the *route*, must be at a distance from the church by the whole depth of the first concession, namely thirty arpens or one mile, or one third of a league, and that to that distance must be added the half of the breadth of the Parish, namely one league distance of the two extreme lands of the said concession, so that the owner thereof must travel one league and one third, or four miles to reach the church, and as much to go home again, in all two leagues and two thirds, or eight miles. By a similar calculation it will be found that the nearest habitans to the *route* in the third concession will have four miles, and the two extreme one right and left of the same concession two leagues more, or ten miles or three leagues and one third of a league: under similar circumstances, the nearest habitant of the fourth and fifth concessions would have to perform respectively a journey of six and eight miles to the church and back, and the farthest extremes in the same concessions a journey of twelve and fourteen miles, or four leagues, and four leagues and two thirds of a league to reach the church and back home. Schools in those country parishes must of course be as near the churches as possible, and so they are generally wherever there are any: Now is it to be believed that parents would consent to send their children to such a distance, to expose them to the fatigue and dangers of such journeys, to the extreme inclemency of our winters, or to the extreme

heat of our summers, disregarding those falls of snow in the former, and those violent and sudden showers of rain in the latter, and that to attain what? that of which they feel neither the want in themselves, nor the absolute necessity in others. Such establishments might therefore prove useful only to the few habitans the nearest to the church, and of course the small number of children that could attend them, would hardly be sufficient to maintain decently the respectable individual who performs the duty of instructor, and his family. Now is it just, is it in equity under these circumstances to upbraid and reproach the Canadians with their ignorance? Is it not the almost necessary consequence of such a system of location? It is therefore useless to look for any other cause than this one; and to lay the blame either on the Government or on the Legislature, or on the Priests is the summit of injustice; and unfortunately the difficulty of removing it appears to be insurmountable. It involves in its baneful effects every attempt at improvement, either mental or physical, and thus the avaricious policy of the original founders of this part of the world has doomed its inhabitants to eternal ignorance and comparative poverty, and to a perpetual kind of imperfect civilisation. It is so much the more to be deplored as our country people are amply endowed by nature with intellectual faculties, which would raise them to the level of any other population on earth, had they the means of cultivation; but in their present physical state, as it has already been said, they have no motive that can spur them to action nor means to assist them in their exertions, and they remain quietly at the point at which they found the world on their coming in to it, and intend to leave it to those who are to come after them. In general the Canadian is shrewd, sagacious, industrious and hard

working; attached to his religion by the strongest tie that can bind ignorance, namely, prejudice rooted in the youthful mind. He is naturally brave and faithful, polite and respectful to his superiors; but his independence renders him proud; he feels himself likewise entitled to some respect; if paid to him he will show his gratitude by his ready return of kindness and good offices; but beware of treating him harshly, for then you will find him stubborn and equally ready to shew his resentment by any means in his power. He is not however prone to revenge, and may be easily reconciled by a kind and civil usage.

There are other obstructions to the physical improvements of the country, which it may be proper to expose in this place. In every other country besides towns and villages scattered over it, we find a numerous gentry residing on their own estates, who, by their education, riches, example and influence, stimulate and encourage industry, the source of every improvement. Not so in this colony. We find in the parishes seldom any other person of that description, saving the clergyman, denominated the *curé*, one or two shop-keepers or retailing tradesmen, and in some of them the Seigniors themselves. As to the first, it is but just to say that the zeal with which they perform their pastoral duties, which is beyond adequate praise, excludes almost the possibility of dedicating a sufficient portion of their time to the study or to the practice of agricultural improvements. They are however men, and were it even in order to obtain the means of exercising their charity and benevolence towards their poor parishioners, it is not to be expected that they are disinterested to the degree of encouraging improvements tending to the diminution of their lawful income. Now that income proceeds mainly from tythes, and the tythes are not taken here as in England, on every produc-

tion of a farm, but merely on corn, namely, wheat, rye, barley and oats, amongst which the most profitable by far is wheat. It is therefore in the cultivation of the bread corn that the *Curés* are the most interested, and of course that which they are naturally inclined to encourage. Again the most lucrative branch of the seigniorial revenues is that of the Banal Mills, whereto all the wheat grown on the seigniority is obliged to be carried to be manufactured into flour. The Seigniors, to whom these mills belong, are therefore interested in the cultivation of wheat in preference, and, if they can, to the exclusion of any other. Behold then the two head men of every parish having a common interest in, and of course uniting their influence in favor of, that branch of agricultural industry. It is for this reason that the rank and degree of respectability of an habitant in his parish is settled by the relative quantity of wheat which he sows. The same scale of respect paid in the world to the ascending gradation of pounds, shillings and pence, serves to fix by the number of bushels of wheat put into the ground, the standard of respect due to every individual in the country parishes; and this relative homage is specially paid by those who derive the most benefit from it. Experience however shows, let it be from the inclemency of the climate, the agricultural ignorance of our country people, their want of industry or any other cause, and perhaps and the most probable, from the union of all those causes, experience shows and proves that the cultivation of bread corn, is incontestably the most precarious and the least productive of all. It is a fact, and a most remarkable one, that, whilst in England, a farm of sixty acres, at a rent of thirty shillings per acre, besides the tithes in full on every kind of production, and other direct or indirect taxes affords to the farmer, not only ample

necessaries of life, but even some of its most essential comforts, the absolute property of an estate of ninety acres, for which a trifling annual rent of, from five to thirty shillings is paid to the Seignior, and moderate and partial tithes are due to the rector, not subject to any kind of direct taxes whatever, can barely maintain its owner, altho' most of his own wants are either the produce of his land or manufactured by himself. This last circumstance however, being an additional efficient cause of the independent spirit of the *habitans Canadiens*, and of their indifference for improvements of which they feel no necessity, is at the same time the foundation and the strong bases of that degree of happiness known in no other country in the world, which they enjoy. They are perfectly sensible of this, and if so, is it to be presumed that they would wantonly expose themselves to impair that happy state, and to change it for a pretended better one, of which they have not the smallest idea. No, no ! the Canadian countryman is not such a fool ; and though people, by treacherously abusing his credulous ignorance, may induce him apparently to sanction falsehood by affixing his cross or his name to papers, the contents of which are artfully disguised to him, no one will have an influence over him to that degree as to lead him to acts that might disturb that peaceableness which he enjoys so delightfully. Eighty seven thousand crosses might appear formidable on paper, but there is no fear lest any one of these crosses be metamorphosed into bayonets, no ! not even into spears or pitchforks, in the hands of these knights of the cross, so long as they are not dragged by main force out of their inheritance, or their religious worship is not at stake. Upon the whole, the Canadian country people are in general religiously inclined, peaceable, saving when their rights of property are

in danger, well disposed, hospitable, civil, sagacious and not at all susceptible of those enthusiastic emotions, which too often lead the multitude astray when artfully excited. Nothing therefore is to be dreaded from their deviation from the path of loyalty.

After having thus cursorily sketched the physical moral and local social state of the country habitans of Lower-Canada, it is necessary to say a few words on the social state of the two cities of the Province namely, Quebec and Montreal.

A positive and active kind of rivalry exists and has done so between them for these many years past. Montreal has been the seat of a commercial company enjoying until lately, on account of its richness, real or supposed, a powerful influence not only within that city, but also over the greatest part of the Province. It was chiefly composed of British born subjects but afforded employment to a great number of Canadians who found abundant means of subsistence in the service of that company, well known under the name of the north west company. Most of its principal members and head agents were scots, and it appears that the national pride and steady and active industry of these, had greatly influenced the general population of Montreal. The natural consequences resulting of this, so to say, impregnation of uoral feelings, were two fold ; the first, an encrease of wealth, arising from industry ; and the second, a spirit of pride, too commonly an attendant on wealth, which hardly admits equality, and still less superiority. Such however was the case, and wealthy Montreal could not bear the idea of being subordinate in point of provincial rank to Quebec, to which its locality had assigned the first : hence that rivalry before mentioned, and those exertions on the part of the Montrealists to maintain at least the

show of that superiority, in point of wealth, which their city had in reality over Quebec. They upheld it so long as the company was prosperous, but at its dissolution, the means failed ; the north west nabobs disappeared from the stage, but not so with the ambition of those citizens of Montreal, who, by that disappearance, found themselves mounted on the first rank : but how to keep up an equality founded upon wealth without its powerful means ? These new comers, in general men of talents and possessing comparative independance in point of fortune, had long repined at the idea of their kind of nullity in the scale of influence to which they had so long been reduced by those proud merchants, and seeing that it was the result, not only from an inferiority of wealth, but also, and in a great measure from the compact union of the members of that company, they formed among them an association in the view of reconquering some portion of that consequence to which they were intitled by their birth, their talents and their fortune, and of which they saw themselves unjustly dispossessed by individuals whom they considered as mere lucky adventurers, strangers to their own native soil. Intrenched behind their packs of furs, and shielded by their heaps of gold and silver, the popularity of those adventurers was not assailable that way. Too proud however to owe, and to seek to prop that popularity upon the good will of the people, they depended solely upon their means of purchasing it, and that pride was their most vulnerable side. As they sided naturally in regard to politicks with this Government, the league against them adopted the adverse party, certainly not for want of loyalty, but in order, at least, to secure to their countrymen and to themselves their share in the political rights of British subjects, of which they ran the risk of being entirely dispossess-

ed, if they suffered these strangers to have the exclusive monopoly of sending Representatives to the Provincial Legislature. In order to prevent that real misfortune, the new association assumed a political turn, took for its themes those powerful topics, rights, liberty, &c. and that not unsuccessfully : and thus Montreal acquired a political ascendance over Canada, which it has hitherto maintained. The means of that success could not fail of gaining ground in the Province, and were generally adopted, and especially in Quebec, notwithstanding its being the seat of Government and the fountain of Colonial favors, which unluckily is not sufficiently plentiful to allay the thirst of the number daily applying for a drink out of it. But however, Montreal is in fact the political leader of the whole Province, and likely to continue so.

Twenty years ago the population of each of the two cities of Quebec and Montreal did not amount to more than eight or ten thousand souls, amongst which hardly two or three hundred were not of Canadian origin, not including however the military establishments. The french revolutionary war which then raged, had given a sudden impulse to the trade of the country concentrated in those two cities, and of course an instantaneous increase of riches for which the Canadians were very little prepared. The scarcity of hands raised the price of labour to an excessive height ; the people of the country allured by the golden bait, flocked into the cities, and their population rapidly increased : the news of the rich harvest so suddenly sprung up, soon reached abroad, and a croud of needy adventurers from Great Britain came in haste to have a share in the booty, and so the market of hands was soon overstocked, and unfortunately the return of the peace put a stop to the unnatural exuberance of that ephemeral pros-

perity, and restored the overflowing of business to its proper level. This falling off of affairs was no less unexpected than its sudden rise; those so cheaply acquired fortunes equally vanished; but they had been tasted and relished, and had given birth to new ideas, among which was that of a certain degree of importance attached to the possessing of riches, and this had already taken too deep a root in the mind of those temporary favourites of the goddess fortune to be as easily eradicated. During the enjoying of her gifts, they had by the magic virtue of those gifts found the means of associating with the great and mighty, but, as is said before, they were taken unprepared by a relative education, and their enjoyment was of too short a duration to allow them the proper time to rub off the rust of their social habits and give to their manners that polish which can only be acquired by early association with the upper classes of civilized society. In fact they had, besides wealth, none of those qualifications which, in want of material ones, are essentially necessary to a welcome admission in the higher polished circles. The consequence was that being no longer supported by golden stilts, they fell back on the ground; and thus reduced to the former standard of their natural qualifications, they found themselves again treated by their betters with that indifference to which they had been in old time quite insensible, as being then a natural consequence of their birth, education, and worldly circumstances, but which they now considered as an undeserved contempt and an unmerited insult. Hence a vindictive spirit, so much the fiercest for originating in an offended pride, was kindled and fanned against their betters. But who were these betters?—Unluckily the members of the Administration and those connected with it. Now the greatest part of these members of the Adminis-

tration were British, or of British origin, and the offended were bred and born Canadians ; this national circumstance could but add fuel to natural jealousy, arising out of that difference of native soil as already mentioned, and giving a fresh impulse to that vindictive spirit, prepare the minds of that class of offended citizens to join heart and hand in any hostile measure in opposition to these offending members of the administration, and by a natural consequence to the administration itself. Altho' these Canadians had not had time during their short lived prosperity to polish their manners, they had enjoyed it long enough to acquire an ascendance over their less fortunate country men, and to establish their claim to a higher rank among them, and thus they formed a middle class which has successively encreased by the consequent admission of their own children, whom they have fitted for it by dint of an education of which they felt the want in themselves : So that that class is become numerous, consisting of respectable tradesmen, lawyers, notaries and their nearest relatives, and is possessed of a powerful influence upon the lower classes of their citizens : No wonder therefore if they are always supported by these classes when any among them come in competition with a member of, or an individual anyways connected with Government. That opposition is now become systematic, and it is almost impossible to find out the means of dissolving it. Their influence, however, is not confined within the walls of their cities. It reaches the country parishes by means of the clergy who belong entirely to that class, and have received their education in the seminaries among them ; of the petty tradesmen and shop-keepers who deal with them ;* and of their numerous relatives scattered all over the country. This circumstance accounts for the eighty-seven

* See note B. at the end.

thousands signatures or crosses of the petition of grievances, but does not invalidate the above assertion that the country people, without personal provocation, will never actively enter into any overt opposition to Government, altho' they might be led to sign any paper presented to them, or to vote in favor of any person pointed out to them by the influencing party. As to the Seigniors, their influence is null, unless they range themselves under the banners of the mighty leaders, and then even that portion which they enjoy is very limited indeed, one of the first steps of the antibritish association having been to impose so far on the credulous ignorance of their country men, by telling them that the Seigniors in general sided with the anti-canadian party and betrayed their interests.

Since the word *party* has here been made use of, it becomes necessary to justify its propriety. At an early period after the conquest, the first provincial newspaper made its appearance in Quebec. It was conducted upon liberal principles, and its contents were both in french and english. Being the only one in existence, it became naturally the *medium* of correspondence between the authorities, and the public, and its utility was soon established upon daily experience. It does not appear that the editor had any intention to interfere in the then state of provincial politicks or policy, or to influence public or private opinions; and things went on thus smoothly and prosperously, until the explosion of that tremendous and awful volcano, the french revolution, offspring of the successful rebellion of the neighbouring British Colonies. The hatred which the Canadians bore towards these neighbours, against whom they most chearfully joined in war, and the almost insuperable bar to any communication between the former and the Americans, namely, the difference of

language and religion, prevented at that epoch the introduction of those principles inimical to the system of Government to which they the Canadians, were attached from habit, principles and prejudices, the Monarchical, and their unshakeable loyalty to their new Sovereign displayed itself in the field against his rebellious subjects. How far that display of loyalty was acknowledged or rewarded appears on no record, saving a few half pays on the old footing, now no more in existence, death having removed that encumbrance on the Imperial Treasury. Historical truth however requires to mention that such slight of real and faithful services was, as it ought to have been keenly felt by those who had so steadily adhered to their yet new allegiance, and resisted a temptation that would have afforded them a most favorable opportunity of returning to those former habits and connexions, whose ideas could not as yet have been eradicated from their minds: the least that can be said of this is that it laid them open to the baneful consequence of the french revolution.

That too memorable event arose in the same country which the Canadians no longer than twenty five years ago acknowledged as their own; it was even the native soil of many of them; they had there yet many acquaintances and near relatives; some of them were then in France among their friends for pleasure or business, and a few were even in the french army. There existed yet a great many links of natural and even of friendly connexion and of national intercourse. So circumstanced and thus prepared, was it possible to obviate the consequences of certain, may be dormant, but certainly not yet extinct, sympathetic sensations: and in fact they appeared to have been powerfully excited, and not only they mentally assisted the insurgent french

with their wishes, for want of more efficient means, but also greedily swallowed the baneful poison of their political principles. These principles were too specious, too seducing, too flattering and too specially calculated to act powerfully on young and ardent minds to miss their effect upon the then rising Canadian generation, and soon the "right of men" "the sovereignty of the people," "the sacred duty of insurrection," "civil equality" were the topics on which their thoughts and their rethorical powers were at full play : but the whole would have most probably evaporated in mere smoke, had it not been for a boon well meant, but granted by the Government of the Mother Country under the most untoward circumstances.

The rise and progress of a spirit of contention between the old and new population of this colony, and the mediate cause of opposition on the part of the former against Government have been before related, but the parties have been left in battle array in presence of each other, without having positively come to any overt act of hostile aggression, saving words of mouth.

The ultramarine population notwithstanding the accession to its party of the loyalists lately arrived from the revolted British Colonies, found itself yet too feeble numerically to contend openly with, in that respect, so superior a one as the Canadian. They thought therefore more prudent in order to secure the victory on their side, to call such thing as cunning to their assistance. They were conscious of their advantages on the score of their knowledge of the ways of the world, and of the diplomacy of party policy, over an adversary utterly a stranger to the one and the other. The Canadians were then a straight forward kind of people, not suspecting deceit in others because there was none in them-

selves. They were therefore open to any snare that could be laid to entrap them, and so it was practised. Some of the principal among them were easily persuaded to sign a petition to the British Parliament to obtain a Provincial Legislature similar to that of the mother country, and their prayer was granted by the act of the 31st of the late King. But, what is often the case, the intended deceiver found himself deceived in the result of his scheme.

The expectation of the planners thereof was that, on account of the superiority of their influence, of their wealth and of their abilities, they would succeed in introducing themselves in the popular branch of the Provincial Legislature in sufficient number to obtain a powerful ascendancy over the Canadian members, and depended on the composition of the Legislative and Executive Councils, which naturally consisting principally in individuals of the same extraction as their own, would side with them, and thus altogether govern the whole country in their own way. This artful scheme indeed succeeded tolerably well at the first onset, but the Canadians more and more enlightened in the ways and politicks of the world by reading the french revolutionary accounts, were not slow to perceive the advantages gained over their former ignorance by their antagonists, and resolved to dispossess these from that vantage ground so artfully seized by them. Had the Canadians cautiously and consistently proceeded, they might have succeeded without any violent struggle; but carried away by the keen sense of wrongs, real or imaginary, they neglected to follow the dictates of prudence, and were very near becoming the victims of their unguarded irritability and of their own inconsistency.

A second Newspaper had made its appearance at about that period; it was entirely English, being

edited by a classically educated, learned and shrewd gentleman, lately landed from England, who naturally thought that his interest in harmony with his national feelings, directed his siding with his own country people. He soon discovered the weak side of the opposite party, and in concert with his own, he seemed to take hold of every favorable opportunity of playing on the feelings of the Canadians, and by thus exciting their angry passions, to lead them to some objectionable acts of rashness, of which their opponents might avail themselves to represent them as illaffected subjects. Unluckily the Canadians too easily took the bait. A few among them associated together to repell those incessant attacks, in a periodical sheet in french, which they called the *Canadien*, whose object was, according to its Editors, to vindicate their countrymen from the false imputations of disloyalty laid to their charge by what they called the anti-Canadian party. So far nothing was amiss, and had they confined themselves to the refutation of these charges, and directed their batteries against that party only, no one would have found fault with them, and the Government neither would nor could have interfered with any colour of justice. But instead of remaining within those rational bounds, they began a most violent attack on two Canadians because, forsooth, they opposed in the House of Assembly, as in duty bound holding public offices under his Majesty's Government, such measures which they conscientiously thought were inimical to the principles of the British constitution, and because they could not help disapproving the political opinions and principles manifested and promulgated both in the House of Assembly and thro' their weekly paper the *Canadien*. Indeed it was astonishing to see the degree of boldness to which these principles and opinions were

carried. One could almost have fancied that they were emitted by and the production of some emissaries of the Jacobin Clubs of Paris. The Provincial Government, at the head of which Sir James Craig then was, seemed not at first to take any notice of what was looked upon as a mere conflict of angry words between the Canadians and the anti-Canadians, but when the former began to turn their arms against their own countrymen, situated as these were, and their antagonists perceived the violence of the animosity displayed against them, they did not fail to avail themselves of this circumstance to awake the suspicions of Government, and to give it to understand that the disaffection of the Canadians did not bear only on their fellow subjects the British population individually, and that their angry feelings towards them were not alone the offspring of national jealousy and of personal pretended wrongs, but that they proceeded from their aversion to the British Government itself. That the Canadians, not daring to attack Government directly, tried every thing in their power to weaken its force and its efficiency by exposing its servants and supporters to public contempt; and as a proof of such insinuations, they rested upon the opprobrious treatment experienced by two worthy countrymen of their own, merely because they were in the employ of Government. Sir James Craig then found himself in a manner compelled to interfere, and did it, in fact, in an efficient manner by imprisoning the Editors of the *Canadien* and their abettors, and seizing and locking up their Press. But his health did not allow him to see the conclusion of his memorable act of authority, having been obliged to leave the country to go over to England, where he died soon after.

Thus it was left to his successor Sir George Prevost to bring that matter to a conclusion, which from some adventitious circumstances took a very different turn from the expectation of the schemers of the application for a Provincial Constitution, and of the devices adopted to obtain a supremacy of power and influence by its means.

Sir George assumed the reins of the Government under the most unpromising circumstances ; for, besides the distracted state in which he found the country, the Province was menaced with an invasion from its powerful neighbours the U. S. who chose that moment to declare war against England, destitute of every means to repel it.—No money in the military chest ;—no stores at hand ;—a weak regular armed force ;—and an immense extent of frontier to guard and protect. He could not look on the British population for assistance, and was of course compelled to throw himself into the arms of the Canadians. But there was a preliminary step necessary to the success of his appeal ; it was the undoing of all that which had been done by his predecessor ; and in consequence not only the prison doors were unlocked, but favors heaped on the sufferers and their partisans, to the great mortification of the other party. The consequence of this expiatory measure was the opening of the well provided Provincial Chest, and the creation of a paper money issued on the credit of the Province, whereby Sir G. Prevost was enabled to provide for his military operations. As it does not enter into the plan of this work to follow this General as well as his successors in the historical part of their Administration it will be left to others, and it will be, for the moment, observed as, slightly, before-mentioned, by this unexpected and accidental turn of affairs, the snares in which the Canadians were to be

entrapped, turned against the contrivers and schemers, by securing from this moment to the popular branch of the Provincial Legislature an ascendancy which it has pertinaciously maintained since and which it still possesses. The Russian Empire would most probably never have risen to its present preponderance in Europe, had it not been for the unjust wars waged against the Barbarian Peter of Russia, by the mad Charles of Sweden.

The granting to this country, and especially at the epoch at which it was done, a popular Constitution, most forcibly evinces on the part of the granters the most complete ignorance of its moral, local, political and social state. Nothing can justify them but the gross imposition practised upon that ignorance by the contrivers of the plan. What? To intrust Legislative powers to a population so little prepared to make a proper use of them? And under what circumstances? At a time when the most ungovernable passions had been roused to activity; when the most baneful and most antisocial doctrines were the universal order of the day; when war was loudly proclaimed against all regular Governments, and monarchy specially under the ban of proscription and the ties between the Governors and the governed were rent asunder; at an epoch when the dagger of the assassin was every where uplifted against those who had the misfortune to be born to sway the sceptre over nations; when in a word anarchy and confusion threatened to overwhelm the whole world; thrones and altars were overturned and impudently trampled upon, and the instrument of popular fury, the Guillotine waded in its progress through the torrents of that human blood that it had shed.

But surprise will be still more excited in considering the nature of the boon thus granted. It is

a counterpart, or rather, counterfeit of that august tripod which rules over the whole British Empire, and on which rests the admirable structure of its Constitution. That boon consists then in a Provincial Legislature metamorphosed, God knows how, into a Provincial Parliament, in which, saving the popular branch, it is impossible to discover the least analogy between the component parts of these two bodies. In the prototype there stands a head, the King, the Representative of the whole British nation, in whom is concentrated or rather, perhaps, in whom is indivisibly united the whole national majesty. All the attributes which the Constitution has, in a manner, crowded upon him, are the people's : they are committed to his trust for the benefit of his people ; and, therefore, any attempt at depriving him of any one of them becomes a public outrage. He may be beloved for his personal qualities, but it is a duty to honor him. The higher he is exalted, the more he is venerated and the greater is the homage paid through him to the whole body over whom he rules. In short, he has no equal in the whole Empire. Can all this be said of the distinguished personages whom he sends over to represent him in his external dominions. He cannot invest them with the plenitude of his attributes ; he cannot cover them with the cloak of inviolability which screens him from personal responsibility. Their assimilation with him is therefore impossible, and this circumstance alone is sufficient to discountenance any analogy between the august body of which the King is the head and any other in appearance similarly organised body. But, by an analogical reasoning, it is manifest that he who is sent over as the Administrator of any of the King's external dominions is intitled to the highest degree of honor and respect as being the Representative of the National Majesty.

In the Imperial Parliament the second branch is composed of an hereditary aristocracy, possessing by its richness, talents, and connexions an independence and an influence sufficient to maintain the important part that the constitution has marked out to that illustrious body, namely that of moderator between the sovereign and the people. Not only the elements of such body are not to be found in this colony, but the Imperial Parliament's omnipotence itself could not instantaneously create these elements; thus again the second branch of the colonial Legislature bears no analogy whatever with the same branch of the British Parliament. Many more analogical discordances between that august body and the Provincial Legislature, *alias* Parliament, may, and some in the sequel, will be pointed out.

From this cursory review of the local, moral and political social state in this colony, it is easy to deduce the innumerable difficulties which inevitably and naturally must arise out of it in regard to its administration. A personage, distinguished by his rank and talents, is sent over from the United Kingdom to take upon himself the reins of government. He arrives in a country in which almost every thing is strange to him: localities, manners, habits, language, laws are all new to him. He must therefore begin by a kind of prenticeship, and to whom shall he apply for information? Naturally to those by whom he finds himself officially surrounded on his arrival, namely by officers appointed by the Crown, composing the Colonial Executive Council, whose duty is to advise him, and whom he is by his instructions, to consult in all his public functions. Now it is almost an unavoidable necessity that the greatest number of the members of this council and the most influential among them consist in his native countrymen, and who of course are really or at least

supposed to belong to what is considered by the Canadians as their adverse party. Nay, it may be even said that some of them, having had real reasons of complaining of, according to them, unjust & vexatious aggressions on the part of the Canadians, cannot be presumed to be very well disposed in favor of these. Hence a kind of intuitive feelings of fear and distrust arise in the minds of the latter, which damp that fervor of cordiality with which they would otherwise have been eager to welcome his arrival among them. On an other hand, suppose that the new comer being indeed prejudiced against the Canadians by what he might have heard of them, far from attributing the kind of shyness, resulting from the above first impression, to its real cause, he will look upon it as a corroborating proof of the suspected disaffection of the Canadians towards the British Government, & he may think it equally useless and degrading to make any advance towards a mutual better understanding, and thus both parties will remain at a distance from one another. Admitting, and there is little doubt if that which has been hitherto exposed here be true, that there exist two discordant parties in this colony; that, rising superior to any suggestion of prejudice, the new comer submit to court a reconciliation with the Canadians by the just and impartial distribution of his favors and of his courteous behaviour, will he not thereby draw upon himself the ill will of those who were accustomed to look upon the far greatest portion of the one and of the other as their exclusive property? Which ever way he may turn himself, he meets with danger and in trying to escape from Charybdis, he runs the risk of falling on Scylla.

Whatever might be his prepossessions, a new trial awaits him. He must convene the Provincial Legislature: he meets them, delivers from the Throne a

harangue expressive of his most earnest desire to promote the best interests of the country and of his sanguine hopes of their cordial co-operation and so forth. His harangue is re-echoed in addresses couched in the most respectful terms, and replete with most flattering promises of a zealous concurrence of exertions, &c &c. But soon those high sounding words of loyalty, devotion, cordiality, and affection vanish in smoke. The head of the Executive, in pursuance of his instructions, proposes a measure, whereupon a question of privilege arises; to that pretention the prerogative comes in opposition; the debates grow warm and a complete breach of the primary contract of mutual support ensues. Such is the universal, and indeed natural course of things. There will always exist strong feelings of jealousy between the Governors and the governed. The power of the former is a mere moral one, whose sole props are certain prerogatives: take these from them and they fall again to the level of any other being of their species. It is therefore natural in them to be extremely tenacious of that armour and to defend it with the utmost pertinacity. On the other hand the people, strong in its physical force, is no less jealous of its privileges and incessantly in fear of the abuse of prerogative against these privileges, and therefore is constantly on the watch to prevent that abuse, and to secure the latter by weakening as much as possible the former. It is in the view of obviating the fatal effects of that unavoidable collision, that the British Constitution has wisely contrived to place as a moderator between the Sovereign and the people, a body possessed of that compound moral and physical power sufficient to restrain the two contending parties within the limits of their respective and legitimate claims.

But here the Governor does not find that powerful intervening moderator : he may be said truly to stand single-handed face to face against the whole population of the country. Indeed the existence of a Provincial L. Council seems flatly to contradict such an assertion ; but admitting that existence ; admitting the highest degree of personal respectability to which all and every one of the individuals of whom it is composed are justly entitled, where shall be found those mighty means of influence, and influence alone now a days constitutes power, proceeding from immense riches and numerous connexions and dependants, all interested in the support of that influence so beneficial to them, which are met in that noble aristocracy of the Realm? No such thing or any thing like it exists in this country. The Counsellors are taken out of the same general class of citizens out of which the Representatives of the people are elected, and out of a population in which the gradation in regard to independance and rank is almost imperceptible. It will be seen hereafter, however, how beneficial, nay how essential is the existence of such a council in the present state of things.

Another analogical discrepancy between the Parliament and the Provincial Legislature consists in this. It is true that in the former, the King, for very good reason does not sit personally in either of the two houses, but he is virtually present in both, through his ministers and confidential servants who there represent him. They come prepared to support the measures of his Government and to guard his prerogatives against any attempt either to invade or to curtail them. Although they may be looked at by a portion of the members with a jealous eye, the majority are ready to side with them so long as they are deserving of their confidence ; and the heavy

responsibility that weighs upon them prevents their making an unconstitutional use of their influence. But here, neither can the Representative of the King sit in either of the two houses, nor has he any confidential and responsible agent or servant to perform the same part in the Provincial Legislature. So that there is no one to vindicate the measures of Government, and to account for the motives of their adoption. In England, although not by the Constitution the exclusive prerogative of the Crown, all the laws of general import, originate from and are proposed, and that very properly, by the ministers, who are prepared to develop their bearings and to answer to every objection to them, so that these laws maintain their connexion with the general system; but here, as the new Legislative measures originate in any individual members at random, they must necessarily produce a kind of confusion and disorder in the general code whereby their efficacy must be more or less affected. It is absolutely impossible in the actual constitutional organization of the Provincial Legislature to remedy that national defectibility; for, admitting that the Provincial Government finding in one of the Members of the Assembly those talents and that consequent influence that would be useful to the public service, should call those talents and that influence to its assistance by promoting the possessor thereof to some official situation, from that moment, however great and commanding his talents, his influence would be entirely lost; he would be looked upon by his colleagues as a renegado, and pointed out as one who has sold his liberty and is voluntarily become the slavish tool of Government. Repeated experience comes in support of that assertion, and in this very moment the House of Assembly now sitting, is busy framing a Bill to vacate the

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seat of any of the members who should accept any situation of honor or profit under Government. It is true that a law of a similar nature exists in England, but there the Member raised by the Sovereign is almost sure to be reinstated in his seat by a new Election, whilst here a member under such circumstances would be almost as certain of failure in a fresh poll. In a word, in this country the Governor has no influence, nor any means whatever to acquire any in and over the popular branch of the Provincial Legislature, unless he passively submit to its will and resigns in their hands the reins of Government. In fact, these reins would, soon pass into their hands were it not for the intervening Provincial Legislative Council.

Whatever might be said against the defects, theoretically speaking, of the composition of this branch of the Provincial Legislature, practically these very defects are the ground and foundation of its usefulness. Were it composed only of individuals absolutely unconnected with Government, there would be the possibility of a coalition between the Council and the House of Assembly, and what then would become of the power of the Provincial and of course, of the Imperial Government? Composed as they are that danger cannot exist. It is true that they are not possessed of that influence necessary to act as moderators between the Governor and the House of Assembly, as the House of Lords in the Imperial Parliament; but if they have not the power of doing all the good they might be inclined to do, they have at least that of preventing evil. Connected as they are with His Majesty's Government they have a direct interest in supporting it, and by the exercise of their *veto*, they are able efficiently to guard it against any incroachment that might be attempted by the

co-ordinate and powerful branch, on its just and lawful authority, and on the Royal Prerogative. Some of the members of the Legislative Council belonging at the same time to the Executive Council and being thus perfectly well acquainted with the views of the Provincial Government over which they, as in duty bound keep a watchful eye, are a sure security to the country, that the measures which they support are intended rather to promote the best interests of its inhabitants than militate against their welfare, since, if it were otherwise, not only their own interests indivisibly united with those of their countrymen, but also their character private and public, would be involved in the consequences of pernicious measures concerted and supported by them. Until therefore a rich, powerful and really independant hereditary aristocracy shall be established and in existence in this colony, so long the present composition of that respectable body must and ought necessarily to remain as it is, and the country rest satisfied with its passive action, until it has acquired that influence required to enable it to become more virtually useful.

From all that precedes, and nought has been set down in malice, nor dictated by a spirit of censure or of party, it is easy to conceive the difficulty of the situation in which a distinguished personage sent over to assume the government of this Province, must be on his arrival. He finds himself amidst a divided and discordant population. He sees two parties contending for ascendancy; the one founding their claims on their superiority in point of number and their ancient possession of their native soil; the other resting theirs, on the right derived from conquest, and the preference due to them as being originally and by

birth British subjects. Does he follow the natural attraction towards his own countrymen, he will draw upon himself the ill will of the numerous population ; should he shew any bias in favor of this population, he will offend his own countrymen. Jealousy is sharp eyed, and even admitting the most strict impartiality on his part, it will soon discover something or other that will wound it, and make him lose all the merit and the benefit of the uprightness of his intentions. In a word, let him follow his own inclination, or act up to his instructions, if there be any thing in his measures that may in the least be in opposition to the pretensions or opinions however irrational of some influential members of a party, the whole will soon join them in their hue and cry against him. Without presuming to profer advice in a position so delicate, it may be allowed to suggest here that the Canadians, in general not being addicted to coaxing others, do neither want nor wish to be coaxed : but as already said, they are a set of proud, independant beings deeply impressed with the sense of their own dignity as men and free men. The *habitants* are proud of cultivating a property fully and absolutely their own ; the citizens of the town are proud of the superiority of a wealth, the product of their own industry, and of their acquirements, and still more of their knowledge of those rights secured to them by the constitution as British subjects. They are therefore keenly susceptible of resenting any deviation from that respect they think themselves entitled to. They see with a jealous eye that the portion of favors and even of mere civilities allotted to them is not commensurable with that bestowed on individuals whose claims to that preference rest only on a difference of names and origin, and they resent it as an unmerited injustice.

But speaking of favors, it is here an object of regret that the head of the Provincial Administration has so few in his power to bestow. That source of influence, already too scanty, is still more impoverished by external patronage. A Governor remains with very few means of encouraging men of talents and abilities to dedicate them to the service of a government from which they would have very little prospective hopes of deriving an adequate benefit to themselves and families. Such means of influence seem to be however particularly requisite, and would prove of an infinite advantage to the government of this colony.

It is necessary now to add here a few words to that which has been said about the two cities of Quebec and Montreal. It is evident that both these cities have a most extensive influence over the whole Province; that they are the head quarters of the two parties contending together for political ascendancy; that by their superiority of number the Canadian party already sensibly preponderate within the limits of these cities, but more so in the country; about the half of the members of the Assembly being individuals residing in the one or the other; that that last party shall naturally always make use of every means in their power to secure and consolidate this ascendancy is but too presumable; hence their anxiety for incorporations. But before such a boon be granted to them, it is fit to consider what might be the result of that grant, if the elections of the members of these corporations were to be left to the choice of the citizens themselves. The first inconvenience resulting from that mode would be the keeping in constant activity the popular passions by the frequency of necessary public assemblies of the electors, and by the intrigues of the candidates of the divers parties: the next would be to throw

additional weight in the scale of the already overgrown power of that party apparently hostile to government, for certainly, by a popular election, none would find access to the corporation but those who have already obtained seats in the Assembly and their supporters and abettors, and thus creating fresh means of impeding and obstructing the march of government, whose influence is already too limited to weaken it still more by transferring to others the appointments to civil honors.

Such is and such must be the local, political, and moral social state of a colony, which, were it not for several adventitious causes, some of which have already been here exposed to view, would and should have e'er now vyed with any other portion of the British empire in point of moral & physical prosperity —The proof of this assertion lies in its present state notwithstanding the many obstacles laid in the way of its improvement. It may be said that this Province might challenge its like all over the globe. No where will be found a population in which property is so equally diffused, ninety-nine out of one hundred being the owners of the land which they cultivate, and whereby they and their family are fully and competently maintained ; pauperism being almost universally the result of idleness and vicious habits of life, and known merely in the cities. No monstrous inequality of fortunes, scarcely any exceeding £1,500 or at the utmost £2,000 a year. No direct tax of any kind is known here except in the Cities, wherein an assessment is raised on houses and ground or in lieu of personal labour for the bettering, cleaning and repairing of the Streets. Far from being obliged to appropriate a portion of the Provincial Revenue to the liquidation of its debts, the public chest of the Province, has always a balance in its favor after the annual payments of the

necessary expenses of its Government, which balance is, in part at least, generally applied to improvements of a public nature, and yet the resources of this colony, and they appear to be vast and extensive, may be said to be hitherto waste and unexplored. Its inhabitants peaceably enjoy the fruits of their labour, no body molests them, and they partake to the utmost of that liberty which is secured to every British subject by the Constitution of the Empire. And how comes it then, every body will exclaim, that their grievous complaints, crossing the Atlantic resound now in the Palace of the Sovereign and in the seat of the supreme authority of the Empire? To this question may be very properly answered—these complaints are returning to their principal sources and origin. This answer will appear bold;—it may be;—it remains therefore to prove it a true one.

In a former part of this work, some reflections already conducive to that proof, have been made on the improvident liberality and dangerous generosity with which the Canadians were treated at the conquest of the country. By leaving them in the full and unconditional enjoyment of their language and laws, you left them at the same time, as said before, objects of constant reminiscence of former connexions from which they were torn by violence. You took no measure to encourage and ensure their speedy coalescence and amalgamation with their new co-subjects. You did not foresee, or if you did, you did nothing to obviate the difficulties a diversity of civil laws would lay in the way of an impartial and equitable distribution of justice. This excess of indulgence might have been excusable if it had been complete, that is to say, if looking upon the colony as a distinct and detached territory submitted to your Empire, but continuing to be under

its former mode of Government ; in a word, if you had intended to consider it as a French Province under your protection. But such jumble of contradictory and clashing forms, language, laws, usages, habits, and interests could never tend to any good, as the present experience so powerfully proves. So long as the Canadians continue to form a distinct portion of the British population, enjoying some characteristic kind of franchise, they will necessarily and pertinaciously uphold them and strenuously oppose every thing that might, in their own view of the subject, tend to infringe on it. In a word, although perfectly happy and even glorying in their quality of British subjects, the Canadians, therein supported by your own concessions, still persist in considering themselves as Frenchmen, entitled to enjoy in their own way all the blessings of the British constitution under your protection.

But assuredly the most egregious act of impolicy has been in granting them that Pandora's Box, yclept a Provincial Parliament without those modifications as to powers, authority and privileges which the then state of this country and of Europe imperiously demanded. Indeed one would be tempted to compare this to the idea of feeding new born infants with roast beef and plum pudding. However, the evil is done and the stomach of the Canadians is too well accustomed now to that noble British food to relinquish it. You have imprudently given them a British Constitution and it would be next to an impossibility to take it back from them. You thought you gave a mere Provincial Legislature and it has turned out to be a full Parliament, endowed with the fulness of your own powers, privileges, prerogatives and franchises, at least so they consider it and act accordingly. At the very mo-

ment that this is written they reject contumeliously the olive branch tendered them by the representative and in the name of the King, and scornfully trample it under their feet. They go farther and presume to issue a manifesto in the shape of resolutions in which they dictate the conditions under which they will condescend to take into their consideration the fair and equitable propositions of the Crown, to put a stop to difficulties of their own creation. The Government must submit to their will, and trust them with the plenitude of executive as well as Legislative powers, and on no other conditions will they even enter into a *pourparler*. And this *ultimatum sine quâ non* is forthwith to be forwarded to their Sovereign. And all this is not the work of the pretended P. P. no not even of the Provincial Legislature ; but solely by that branch thereof, which assumes falsely the title of the representatives of the Canadians. This implied denegation of their being such, might appear bold and unfounded to people ignorant of the state of things in this Province ; but I might appeal in support of it to many respectable Canadians and others, who were it not that the access to the poll, especially in the country, is free only to the small number of the favorites of a faction which in fact rules the country, would come forward as Candidates for the Provincial representation. But especially if any person well disposed in favor or in the service of Government is bold enough to present himself, he is soon punished for his rashness by the insults heaped upon his devoted head. The Canadian House of Assembly is in fact nothing less than the representative of the people at large, but the humble tool of that faction, being composed solely of its abettors. Five or six out of the fifty members, sway despotically over the rest, excepting

however three or four who dare to think for themselves, and the rest follow implicitly the motion imperatively dictated by these rulers. The result of any question whatever may always be anticipated by knowing before hand the opinion in regard to it of a single one of those few.

In England knowledge is universally disseminated over the country, and the preponderance of party is merely local, so that they have all a fair and equal chance of success. A Whig, for instance, will not present himself as Candidate in a portion of the country where Toryism preponderates, nor a Tory in a place where Whigism is the order of the day; but both Whigs and Tories know well that such or such a County or Borough offer them a fair chance and there they go. But here the whole country lays under one sole influence and that influence is due to the generally diffused ignorance and to the complete indifference about public matters of the habitans. These are so happy that they do not feel in the least the want or the necessity of entering into any investigation about them, and they suppose that those who seem so anxious about these matters have a personal and mighty interest at stake. But one of the most powerful engines of general influence in the hand of that, numerically speaking, truly insignificant party, is the press. All the French ones are devoted to and conducted or supported by the members of that party. Not a single French press is free and open to the fair discussion of principles or doctrines or of questions of public interest; so that the Canadians finding a concordance of principles and doctrines in all the sources of information that they are able to read or that are read to them and none to contradict them, must naturally take for granted that these principles and doctrines are unquestionable and uncontrover-

tible, and of course, at the poll, they are disposed to vote in favor of those who, on addressing them, speak the same language as these papers or are pointed out to them as professing the same political creed which they have themselves thus blindly adopted.

All this will appear incredible to any one who has not for a long time resided on the spot, and taken a lively interest in all that passes in this country. The writer of this stakes his character of veracity for the truth of all which he has thus exposed to view. Far from shrinking from an investigation, and the stricter the better, he courts it: but it is on the spot that it ought to be made; it must be conducted with the most rigorous impartiality. Every evidence profered ought to be accepted and sifted through and through; every one without distinction ought to be heard; every deposition of facts taken down in writing and signed by the deponent. The Commissioners sent over must not accept entertainments from any one and act in their capacity of Inquisitors, as Judges on their Benches; they should go unexpectedly in some parts of the country, in order to inform themselves of the grievances if any are in existence: they should call in all the political productions of the press; inspect the public records; if possible, witness a general election, and attend incognito the Legislative meetings. But if such a mode of investigation should be attended with too many difficulties in the execution, then seek for the corroboration of the facts herein contained in the journals of both branches of the Provincial Legislature, in the records of the Executive Council, and principally in the voluminous production of the Canadian press, since and including the administration of Sir James Craig, until the present day.

Truth, the whole truth ought to be well known before, prescribing a remedy to the existing evils. Partial knowledge derived merely from the extreme parties, can only lead to partial and half measures, which correct nothing and please no body. But let it be remembered that neck or nothing is the motto of one of the parties, it is in the breast of the other to decide on the conveniency, possibility or honorableness of yielding all without receiving any thing in return. Between conquest and purchase stands FIRMNESS.

NOTE A.

It is necessary to prove by undeniable facts the truth of the assertion that the Colonial House of Assembly cannot be said to be the true representation of the Canadian population. Here are the facts :—

From the very beginning of the Provincial Legislature, a respectable family in possession of Seigniories and other estates of value in the county of Dorchester, had regularly, and for several successive Elections obtained the votes for at least one and some times two of its members to be the representatives of that county. One of them had, by his talents and zeal, obtained a great deal of influence in the Assembly, until the catastrophe of several of those Members under Sir James Craig, who being then concerned in the publication of certain periodical paper called *le Canadien*, were committed to jail. Happily for them the health of Sir James Craig forced him soon to resign the Government of this Province, & the circumstances under which, as has been related, his successor Sir G. Prevost found himself on his entrance into office, having compelled him to seek for the required assistance in the popular branch of the Legislature, he lost no time, not only in liberating the prisoners as being those who enjoyed the highest degree of influence in that body, but also to heap upon them all the favors in his power to bestow, in order to gain them over to him. The military preparations requisite to oppose the threatened invasion opened to him an abundant source. He appointed the lately incarcerated Member for Dorchester to the situation of Deputy Adjutant Gen. of the Militia with a decent salary, his eldest brother to the command of one of the new created batallions of the elect embodied Militia, his sister's husband to a seat on the Bench, his wife's brothers to the situations of Major and Captains in the above corps, and others of his relations and friends to some one or other of these lucrative places, which the creations of the moment put at the disposal of the Governor. But peace came back ; and with it disappeared the necessity of these lucrative places. The Member for Dorchester knew well the nature of that which he had chosen, and that it would be expedient, even in a time of peace, to keep up a Militia staff ; which in fact took place, and the House of Assembly in which the said Member had yet preserved his influence, was easily prevailed upon to appropriate a fund for defraying the expense of that establishment. But the said Member found himself in a difficult dilemma ; between the keeping his snug Militia birth, or exposing himself to lose it by maintaining his rank and influence in the then, exclusively so called, patriotic party. Experience had taught him that sticking to this last was attended with some danger and little profit : he yielded therefore to the suggestion of prudence, and from that moment that bladder of devotion to the pa-

triotic party, which had been hitherto so inflated as to be in danger of bursting, was seen gradually growing flasker and flasker, at the same time that the bladder of loyalty to his King and of deference for his Representative, manifestedly puffed itself up, and soon became a fine sleek globe leaving no trace of its many former folds and wrinkles. The necessary consequence of his secession from his *quondam* party was the loss of their confidence, and thence his ejection from the house was meditated. It would certainly have immediately taken place, but happily for him, he had rendered himself useful in the house by his indefatigable attention to business and his great experience in Parliamentary transactions, the greatest part of the then Members being raw ignorant people, from whom no great assistance could be expected. They waited then until some better qualified should have been introduced to take upon them that part which, by his expulsion, would have been left vacant. They had no sooner replaced the most useless of their associates by somewhat better qualified new Members than they sat to work, but the Member in question being too deeply rooted in the opinions of his numerous tenants and countrymen, who had for so many years seen his family in possession of a seat in the house, that they almost firmly believed that it was the due of the family and of him who occupied it, was not to be so easily given up by them and for this time, his adversaries' machinations were fruitless. But not so the next election. They opposed to him a most powerful competitor : a Lawyer of talents, and having in the county of Dorchester the mighty support of a numerous parentage, most of them dealing in certain commodities, ranking in this country, especially since the last war, amongst the very necessaries of life ; (of this hereafter*) no wonder therefore if the old member was compelled to yield to a coalition so formidable.

The second example is the expulsion of the other Member for the same county of Dorchester. He had had his seat in the house for several P. P. but that house was at last to be entirely regenerated, and contain none but the abetors to the patriotic party or submissive followers of its chiefs and rulers. Their motto was, " he who is not with soul and body for us is against us : war then to them to extirpation." That gentleman whom they proscribed thus, was and is a very inoffensive gentleman, of the most pleasing manners, in the external trade, and entitled to his situation in society by his birth and education. What was then his crime ? None other than his honorable and fair dealings. He voted for their party when he thought they were in the right, and he dared and presumed to oppose them when he thought them in the wrong. This would have already been most sufficient for drawing their ill will upon him,

* *Vide* Note B, at the end.

but there was still a more efficient and cogent cause for his proscription. He had the misfortune to be the brother in law of, and which is not always a necessary consequence, on the most intimate terms with one of the principal officers of the Provincial Government. What greater crime could he be guilty of? To dispossess him however, was not so easy a matter. His brother in law was the Seigneur in full property and possession of an extensive portion of the whole county. He owned besides on that estate, a vast and considerable establishment which provided for the subsistence of great number of his tenants and of others, and contributed greatly to their well doing and being.

These were the solid grounds on which rested his influence amongst them, and that influence was naturally and undividedly exercised in favor of his relative and friend. But this relative and friend had besides a stronger support in the good will of all the tenants of his brother in law which he had deservedly obtained by the amenity of his manners towards them, and by his readiness to render them any service that they requested of him, and which was within his power. But what cannot perform persevering wiles. They set up against him, whom do you suppose? A gentleman equal to him in talent, education, manners and rank in society. No, no, such are their aversion. Whom then?—Whom? None other than an honorable *dealer by the glass*; a licensed Tavern-keeper. And that useful members of society, whose profession is so highly conducive to the bettering of the morals of the people, according to Judges and Juries, is elected, and the old member rejected. To complete the picture, it is proper to add, that at that time, the member thus ejected was the only merchant of Quebec then in the house, and that by his rejection the transmarine and external trade of the principal port of entry in the province was left unrepresented in the Assembly.

The third example of such rejection is that of a respectable Seigneur and land-owner in the county of York. This gentleman highly considered in his neighbourhood, had for many years past been in the undisputed enjoyment of a seat in the house of Assembly, and all along maintained his independance. He had in consequence for a long time past been on the proscribed list, but neither bribery, nor wiles could overcome the solid prop he had in the sincere regard and affection which his tenants and neighbours bore to him. Nothing short of main force could dislodge him from his strong hold, and to that means recourse was had at the last general election. The avenues to the poll were closely blockaded, and the access to it was only free and open to the voters in favor of those candidates chosen and sent by the rulers of the party. Force became right, and the member who had the majority of good wishes

in his favor was bet out of the field, and victory crowned the brow of one of the minions put up by the faction in opposition to him.

But the party was not satisfied with one single victim. As they were at work to dispatch the one, they thought they might as well kill two birds at one shot, whilst they had the means at hand. The second seat for the county was filled by a gentleman every way qualified for the situation, and it may be said none more so. They might perhaps have had no objection to keep him among them, but he was guilty in their eyes of an unpardonable offense which rendered him unworthy of a seat fit to be occupied only by the most immaculate patriot. And how could he be considered as such by his acceptance of a situation under Government? And the same means had the same success. He was ejected, and the other candidate put up by the same party, in opposition to him was elected. This is the fourth example.

The next and fifth example is not less characteristic of the ambitious views of those would be absolute rulers of the country. One of the members of the Canadian Bar distinguished by his transcendent abilities, had formerly a seat in the House of Assembly, and was then a strenuous and powerful supporter of the opposers to the Government; but being aware of the extravagance and danger of the pretensions of the party he had embraced, he withdrew himself from the house and vacated his seat. Some years after that gentleman was promoted to a high legal situation in the colony, and Government deeming it advantageous to the public service that he should have a seat in the Assembly, induced him to become the candidate at the last general election, for a borough, the property of the Crown and where the Governor used generally to spend the greatest part of the summers. The attempt was made but without success, his rival Candidate, a creature of the party, was preferred, and the Government officer outsted.

The sixth and last example of this kind of expurgation of the House of Assembly, is this and like the preceding ones, speaks for itself. One of the in every respect high in rank and estimation among the gentlemen of the Bar of Quebec, was elected one of the members of the House for the Upper-Town of this city. Whatever might at first have been his motives, he enlisted under the banners of the opposition. One would suppose from his subsequent conduct, that he soon perceived his error, and that far from being the true patriotic party, their proceedings and their views were in his opinion detrimental and prejudicial to the best and truest interests of his country: so that, altho' he had already by his talents acquired a great deal of influence in that party, he left them and devoted himself to the interests of Government, as essentially connected with those of his commettants. From that moment his influence was at an end, and it was in vain for him to

speak the language of reason, and to defend the principles of the constitution, his votes were always in the minority. On the following election he very wisely did not propose himself again, well knowing that there was no chance for him of being again elected. However at the last general election he put himself anew on the rank of the candidates for the same Upper-Town, but, notwithstanding the number and the respectability of those who voted for him, (a certain proof of the high confidence which his fellow citizens still reposed in his talents,) he saw himself compelled to give up the contest, which raged still after his retreat between the three other candidates for popular favor. Two of these were the former members. Both eminent in the profession of the law, but notwithstanding the talents which one of them had usefully and zealously displayed in the preceding Parlements, he was most strenuously opposed, and that for no other reason but that of his being the brother of that eminent law officer who was ousted in a Royal borough. However by dint of the most active and persevering exertions of the friends of Government and of his own, he was at last successful. Thus the whole number of members of the Assembly in anywise connected with Government is reduced to four out of the fifty, and all the others are under the sway of a kind of hexarchy, if such word may be forged for the present purpose, composed of Messrs. Papineau, Orateur and leader. Vallière yeleft, not by the Grace of God but by his own *de Saint Real*, altho' he has, as yet, not shewn any *Saint* nor Royal blood in his veins. Viger, Bourdages, Neilson the most wily of them all and Cuvillier, all men of talents, more or less transcendent however. It is then in that Hexarchy that resides an influence powerful enough all over the province to wield an uncontroled sway. It will be naturally asked how such a political phenomenon can be accounted for? The answer to this question will be given in the following Note B, which will be worth of occupying for a moment the attention of the reader.

NOTE B.

In England the fame of the great actors who exhibit on the various Stages of the State, is, by the medium of thousand presses, transmitted in a moment not only to the extremities of the United Kingdom, but even to the confines of the civilised world. The names of Pitt, Fox, Canning, Wellington, and of thousand others are as well known at St. Petersburg, Constantinople, Grand Cairo, New York, &c. as in London. Their actions as well as their words reach the smallest cottage in the realm, and by them they are in a manner made personally acquainted with every Englishman. Thereby their influence on every ones mind rests on a positive and rational basis. It raises and falls according to the effect produced upon the opinion of individuals in whose power it

is to judge by themselves from the documents before them, and it is out of the aggregation of all those individual opinions that spring up the true and rational general opinion. He, in whose favor it is, may be said justly possessed of an almost political omnipotence, whilst he against whom it runs must yield and withdraw from the stage.

The case is widely different in this colony. There exist, it is true, some periodical news-papers edited and circulating in the Province, some in english, some in french, and some in english and french. Of this last class the most read is that of Mr. Neilson, which, like the others published in french, is entirely devoted to the Hexarchy. These last papers could not have a great influence over the *habitans* of the country, few of them being able to read them: but not so in the two cities & the town of Three-Rivers. There they are read not only with avidity, but with the most fervent faith in their contents: so that the greatest portion of these citizens adopt blindly whatever doctrine these papers preach, and would be ready to stake even their lives in support of the facts they contain, however improbable, and even absurd they may be. They may very well be called the devoted political Seïds of the Hexarchy. Let it be observed here that they are, almost to a man shop-keepers and retail dealers, and that few of them scarcely ever read any thing but their prayer book and the aforesaid news-papers.

Thus well prepared, a general election is announced as being at hand. Then begins the stir amongst these honest citizens. Their political consequence is to be asserted and upheld. They meet first in small groups, then secret committees are formed generally presided by some emissaries of the Hexarchy. Their attention is not only directed on the choice of their own special representatives; there is yet time enough for that: but it is particularly directed on the country elections, and when they have agreed among them, and always agreeably to the wish of their rulers, they proceed to the means of ensuring the success of their schemes, not by sending agents into the divers counties in order to canvass for votes; no, they have a way neither so expensive nor so glaring as that, but infinitely more sure and certain.

Open bribery and corruption are too dangerous to be resorted to by them, the provisions of the law against such means being very severe and numerous. But there are certain equivalent secret ways of influencing the elections which the law has not contemplated and against which it can hardly provide. It must be understood that petty dealers, as well shop as tavern-keepers are in great number disseminated over the country. These are the capillary tubes, whereby the lymph of political influence is conveyed to the very extremities of the body. Let this be explained.

It has been observed that the greatest portion of the Canadian population of the towns consists in shop-keepers and retail dealers. These supply the petty traders in the country with every thing that suits their country customers, such as spirits, tea, articles of dress for women, &c. and a certain credit is allowed on these supplies. Now when a general election comes to pass, accounts for goods sold and delivered are sent all over the country with request of their being settled without delay, &c. Such application does not always find those to whom it is made ready for the requisite prompt settlement. A journey to town becomes necessary to obtain a respite: objections are at first made founded on urgent necessity: by degrees the pressing instances of the debtor mollify the, at first, obdurate hard heartedness of the creditors, an amiable arrangement is entered into, a glass of something or other seals it and then follows the talk of the news of the day. After the common topics of the weather, of the prospect of the crops, the distress of trade, &c. the conversation turns naturally to the matter of elections. "Well, friend," says the Quebec citizen, "have you already pitched upon some body for your county?"—"We! not that I know of; it is time enough when some body presents himself. Upon my word, for the interest we, in the country, do take in those affairs, it matters very little who does or does not."—"How friend! little interest in such a thing as an election which has for its object to entrust our rights, our liberty, our lives, in fine all that ought to be the dearest to every one of us, to the first intruder that presents himself!! Surely you are not serious? Would you trust your purse into the hands of one who would squander away your money? &c. &c. &c." Terrified at the frightful picture of the consequence of a bad choice, the countryman confesses that his ignorance in that respect is extreme; that he knows no one in whom he can put his confidence, seeing that his neighbours are as ignorant as himself, and so forth, concluding by asking the advice of his then bottle companion.—"Well, my good fellow, if you have the interests of your country and your own at heart, I will guide you in your choice." Then several individuals are named, commented upon and rejected on such and such consideration; but at last as by a sudden inspiration the names of the real intended ones are uttered, supported by the utmost power of language to raise them in the estimation of the countryman, and their names are entered in the little pocket book of accounts, and carefully secured in the pocket of safety. And now, another glass is filled and drank to the success of the pocketted candidates. The whole concludes by a cunning attack on the vanity of the good man, who, it is said, will acquire and deserve the highest regard and esteem from his countrymen at large, if he takes advantage of the influence he so deservedly and so highly enjoys in his parish and neighbourhood, to pro-

mote the success of the object in view in which the welfare of the country is so deeply concerned.

Behold then my little man, his pocket untouched, his stomach full of good liquors, and his mind puffed off by the vanity of his self importance, cheerfully shaking hands with his friend, ascending gaily his travelling vehicle, and with a smart lash applied on the rump of his nag, accelerating the moment of proving himself that consequential being worthy of the high trust reposed in him. His march was already traced; he had only to follow it by calling on his daily customers for the payment of the numerous white scratches with which his wainscots were adorned, and concluding as a good christian by doing unto others what had been done unto him, but at the same time requiring of them what had been required of him for the warding off of the imminent dangers with which they were threatened by the numerous enemies of their country, if they were suffered to intrude themselves in the legislative sheep fold. Thus then, the election day arrives, the candidates present themselves, their names are loudly proclaimed, the previously agreed upon are greeted with loud acclamations, and the obnoxious ones repulsed with hisses mixed with contumelious language. And this is a constitutional election! This is the voice of the country! Surely a constitution which should authorise or even wink at such dereliction of principles, would be far from deserving the universal approbation justly bestowed to that under which we have the name, but only the name, of living in this colony. It must be observed here that the underhand dealings above exposed are become now unnecessary by the almost complete expurgation of the Provincial house of Assembly, the number of obnoxious members, as said before, being reduced to four at the utmost; so that in the present state of things it is sufficient, as well as sound policy on the part of the Hexarchy, simply to recommend the re-election of the late members who are represented as being possessed of that degree of practical knowledge in the legislative way, from which the greatest public good may undoubtedly be expected: and thus seats in the popular branch may be looked upon as the property for life of those who are now in possession thereof.

Is it necessary to comment any farther on such state of affairs in this country? Is it not most grossly flying in the face of the british constitution, whose most beneficial part, namely the free choice of the peoples representatives, is so openly trampled under feet, and nineteen twentieth at least of the Canadian population deprived of so sacred a right by the usurpation and intrigues of a few agitators? Can such a violation of the constitution in its most vital part be suffered to be persisted in? No, it calls loudly for the mighty interference of the Imperial Parliament. And this is an appeal to that interference. Let the proper enquiries be insti-

tuted, that the true state of things be ascertained, and if found so as represented in this short sketch, let justice be done against those who by their machinations have done all in their power to pervert a whole and numerous population, and to make it swerve from that innate loyalty whereby it has hitherto justly been distinguished. The author of this cursory view of Canadian affairs is well known in this country. He has announced already that his age ought to exclude even the presumption of personal motives in raising thus his single voice ; but this voice would not be single if the liberty of the speech and the freedom of the press were not fettered, not by any lawful authority, but by that powerful, baneful and unconstitutional influence to which the ignorance of the ones and the delusion of the others compel obedience and submission. However single handed, he fearlessly stands on his ground, intimately convinced that he fights for the true constitutional rights of his countrymen, and yield to the imperious dictates of his conscience, and of the loyalty he owes, and most sincerely and ardently bears to his sovereign.