

*Principles and Proceedings
of the
Inhabitants
of the
District of Niagara ...*

PRINCIPLES AND PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

INHABITANTS

OF THE

DISTRICT OF NIAGARA.

FOR ADDRESSING

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCE REGENT,

RESPECTING

*CLAIMS of SUFFERERS in WAR, LANDS
to MILITIAMEN,*

AND THE

GENERAL BENEFIT

OF

UPPER CANADA.

PRINTED

AT THE NIAGARA SPECTATOR OFFICE,

.....

1818.

To the Inhabitants of Upper Canada.

St. Catharines, District of Niagara, 5th May, 1818.

FRIENDS AND FELLOW SUBJECTS!

WE lay before you the Principles and Proceedings of the People of this District, and, example being better than precept, we have now only earnestly to entreat you to join in the cause. You will here find that we have been opposed, but opposition has strengthened us. It would swell too much this little Publication to give a List of Subscribers, but, they will be found week after week, in the Niagara Spectator, as room will admit. They already amount to upwards of nine hundred, and are daily increasing. Many have waited for the Address, which is only this day prepared, and will be found below.

*ROBERT HAMILTON,
WILLIAM ROBERTSON,
CYRUS SUMNER,
JOHN CLARK,* } Representatives for
the District of Niag-
ara.

A true Copy,

WILLIAM J. KERR, SECRETARY.

To the Resident Land Owners of Upper Canada.

Niagara, April 2d, 1818.

GENTLEMEN,

Your Parliament is broken up!—a second time broken up, from employment of the most vital import to the honor and well-being of the Province!!—Good God! what is to be the end of all this?

For my own part, Gentlemen, I had little hope of satisfaction from the sitting of Parliament, after perusing the Administrator's speech from the Throne; and this little was entirely extinguished with the disgusting reply made to that speech by your Representatives. That a man who had spent the best part of his life in Upper-Canada,—whose every interest and affection rested here, should even read a Speech, not only containing mean sentiments, but notifying a measure, provoking in the extreme to the feelings of a large body of his suffering countrymen, was indeed heart-sickening: yet this was not all:—what could we expect—what sensation could swell in our breasts, when we found men, employed and paid by these very sufferers to guide their affairs and watch over their interests, bowing down to kiss the rod of affliction, and, in return for a most insulting offer, granting a receipt in full for demands, equally just and well authenticated?

Gracious heaven! Did we, the offspring of early civilization—the first hope of genuine liberty—the favoured wards of divine revelation, come to this new world, only to witness the degradation of our kind, and be humbled beneath the rude savage who ranges the desert woods?—Surely, British blood, when it has ebbed to its lowest mark, will learn to flow again, and, yet sustain, on its rising tide, that generous—that noble—that manly spirit, which first called forth applause from the admiring world.

It has been my fate to rest here nearly two months, viewing at a distance the scene of folly and confusion,—by turns serious, and by turns jocular, that the serious might not sink into the melancholy. I have advised—I have in duty offered services, but in vain: on went the sport, till yesterday, when the cannon announced to us that the play was over; and, now we have the second Speech of the Administrator, who has appropriately sunk down from the Throne to the Chair!

Gentlemen, the constitution of this Province is in danger, and all the blessings of social compact are running to waste. For three years the laws have been thwarted, and set aside by executive power;—for three sessions have your Legislators sat in Assembly, and given sanction to the monstrous—the hideous, abuse. A worthy catastrophe has closed this farce of government;—your Commons and your Peers have quarrelled, and, the latter would assert, that the constitutional charter of Canada may be trifled with. What is to be done? Do you expect any thing from a new Governor?—you will be disappointed. Do you expect any thing from a new set of Representatives?—here again you will be deceived. Your Members of Assembly are now at home: compare their characters

with those around them, and you will find them equally honest—equally wise—equally independent. Now, that they are returned to society, as private individuals, I should be the very last man to call in question their worth or their probity : they are probably every way above par. It is not the men, it is the *system* which blasts every hope of good ; and, till the system is overturned, it is vain to expect any thing of value from *change* of, Representatives, or, Governors.

It has been the cant of time immemorial to make mystery of the art of Government. The folly of the million, and the cunning of the few in power, have equally strengthened the reigning belief ; but, it is false, deceitful, and ruinous. The people of every nation, may at any time put down, either domestic tyranny, or abuse,—they may at any time, lay a simple foundation for public prosperity : they have only to be honest, and, in their honesty, bold.

In my last address to you, I said that the British constitution was “ that beautiful contrivance by which the people, when perfectly virtuous, shall become all powerful.” Did you mark these words ?—did you weigh them ?—they are as important as they are true. We, of all men, have least to oppose us in correcting the errors of our constitution. The British constitution has provided for its own improvement, in peace and quietness ; it has given us the Right of petitioning the Prince or Parliament ; and, this Right, exercised *in a proper manner*, is competent to satisfy every virtuous desire.

My present purpose is not to dwell on theory ; but to recommend and set example in the practice of using this glorious privilege. As Individuals, we have a right to petition the Prince or Parliament of Britain ; and, we have a right to meet for this purpose in collective bodies. My proposal now is, that a meeting be forthwith held in each organized Township throughout the Province. I shall take upon me to name the day for the meeting of the people of this Township of Niagara ; and say, that on monday next, the 13th inst. I shall be ready by 12 o'clock noon, at Mr. James Rogers' Coffee-House, to proceed to business with whoever is inclined to join me. The people of each township should, I conceive, at meeting, choose a Representative and Clerk. The Representatives should assemble from the several Townships, within each District, on an appointed day, to draw up a petition to the Prince Regent ; and, which could, soon after, be got signed by every well wisher to the cause.

The District meetings should, without delay, hold conference by Representatives, each respectively choosing one, to meet in a Provincial convention, and who should arrange the whole business, dispatch commissioners to England with the Petitions, and hold correspondence with them, as well as with the supreme government. Two or three Commissioners would suffice ; and the necessary cost of carrying the whole ably and respectably into effect, would require but a trifling contribution from each Petitioner. It is not going out of bounds to reckon on ten thousand petitioners, and a dollar from each would make up a sum adequate for every charge. I should recommend the subscriptions and payments to commence at

the first Township meetings ; the money to be paid to the Clerks, who should keep in hand one seventh for local and incidental disbursements, and pay over the remainder to a Treasurer, to be appointed in each District, by the Representatives, at their first meeting. Beyond making choice of Representatives and Clerks, the less that is done at Township meetings the better : debate, of all things, should be avoided. The Clerks should minute transactions, and keep a list of Subscribers which should immediately be published in the nearest Newspaper within the Province, and week after week, in the same manner, should be reported, additions. The public would thus, at once see the strength and growth of the cause, as well as have vouchers for the payment of cash. Every transaction should be plain, downright, and open to view or inspection,—every principle should be declared—every proceeding be made known.

The simplicity of all this, and the ease with which it may be accomplished, is obvious : to go into more minute detail, at present, would be wasting time. No man, by joining the cause can lose more than a Dollar, and no responsibility whatever is incurred.—As I take upon me to name the day of Meeting for this Township of Niagara, so that Meeting may appoint days for the meetings of other Townships, and, for the District meeting ; seeing, that it can be matter of no consequence who settles such points, provided the business, thereby, has a fair chance of commencement, and that the whole system of petitioning may proceed without doubt or delay. No man upon such solemn occasion should say “ I am greater than another, and will not be seen acting with him : ” no one should say “ I am less, and therefore presume not to set myself forward.” On such an occasion, and under such circumstances as the present, every party, and every personal prejudice, should be put down, every eye should be resolutely bent on the one thing needful—a radical change of system in the Government of Upper-Canada.

I address myself particularly to Landowners, because their interests are most deeply involved ; but every man resident in Canada—every man who is a lover of peace—who desires to see this country independent of the United States—who desires to see a worthy connection maintained between this Province and Britain ;—every man, in short, who has a spark of sincerity or patriotism in his soul, has now sufficient cause to bestir himself.

There was a time when Israel was famished with intense drought. Day after day, and week after week, the uncovered sun rose, only to frighten the nation, and open more wide the yawning fissures of the scorched earth :—there was yet however faith in Israel ; and the faith of a few brought, at last, salvation to the expiring multitude. Let not the ancient record be lost to these modern days ;—let not the signs and figures of the material world be thrown aside as vain emblems, illustrations, and manifestations of the will, the power, and the goodness of God. He never deserts his creatures while they are true to themselves, and faithful to him,—while they honorably put to use the divine gifts of rationality. The course to be pursued, by the people of this Province, at the present juncture,

is so clear, that he who runs may read : they have only to put trust in the success of their own virtuous endeavours ; and, success will as surely follow, as day succeeds to night—Yes, worthy inhabitants of this Township of Niagara, you may begin the necessary work with confidence :—the little cloud which rose from the horizon, at first no bigger than a man's hand, gradually expanded—mantled over the relentless face of a burning sky, and at last showered down refreshment on the thirsty land.

The good which may result, not only to this Province, but to the general cause of truth, should these proposals be *cheerfully* and *alertly* adopted, surpasses all calculation. It would be needless for me now to descant on the subject. If there is really no public spirit in the country, I have already thrown away too much of my time : if there is, let it now be shown, for never was occasion more urgent. If the people of Canada do not *now* rouse themselves, they may indeed have plenty whereon to exist ; but, to that “righteousness” which exalteth a nation they will have no claim. The farmer may plod over his fields,—the merchant may sit drowsy and dull, in his store ; but, the life, the vigour, the felicities of a prosperous and happy people will not be seen in the land :—the superiority of public management in the United States, will bother all hope of competition : America will flourish, while Canada sinks into comparative decay ; and, another war, will not only bring with it waste and destruction, but ignominious defeat.

In the scheme proposed I will accept of no appointment ; but, persons acting in it shall have my utmost assistance, and I shall make clear to them every course to be pursued. As soon as matters come to a head, all information, collected by me, shall be at the disposal of the Commissioners ; and even better consequences may be expected from this popular movement, than any that could have followed from the Parliamentary enquiry, had that been allowed to proceed. It will shew, that though the rights of Parliament may be trifled with, those of the people of Upper Canada, are not so easily to be set at defiance.

The Assembly of the Lower Province, is to petition the British Parliament as to their trade : your Representatives are to petition the Regent as to their privileges : when I found my petition set aside and despised at York, I dispatched one immediately to be presented to the House of Commons in England, to call attention there, to Canadian affairs :—all this will go for little, if something else is not done. You have read in the Newspapers of my scheme having been discountenanced by Ministers at home : you have read of speculations upon making the best bargain with the United States for these Provinces. I know whence all this proceeds : I know what would open the eyes of the people and government at home to the true value of the Canadas, and put an end to such unnatural—such disgusting surmises ; and all this I shall be happy to explain, as soon as explanation can be useful. One thing I am very sure of, that if the people of Canada will only do their duty as honest men, and as brothers, in unity, not only every just claim may be paid by

next Christmas, but a foundation may be laid for this Province becoming speedily the most flourishing and secure spot, on the habitable globe.

ROBERT GOURLAY.

Niagara, April 13, 1818.

WHICH day a numerous Meeting of the Inhabitants of the Township of Niagara, having been held at the House of JAMES ROGERS, and DAVID SECORD, Esq. M. P. being called to the Chair, the Address of Mr. Gourlay, to the Resident Land Owners of Upper Canada, dated April 2d, 1818, was read over, and its whole tenor and sentiments unanimously approved of. In conformity to the recommendations therein contained, the Meeting proceeded to elect a Representative and Clerk, when *Robert Hamilton*, of Queenston, Esquire, was appointed to fill the former situation, and *John Ross*, of Niagara, Esquire, the latter. A committee also was appointed to forward the views of the Meeting, viz; *Timothy Street*, *John Hagan*, *Wm. G. Hepburne*, and *Robert Moore*, Esquires.

Monday, 20th of this present month, was named as a proper day for the meetings of other Townships within the District of Niagara, and Monday 27th for the Meeting of the Representatives from the various Townships, to be held at SHIPMAN'S Tavern, St. Catharine: the Committee duly to advertize the same, and take such steps, as to them shall appear requisite for furthering the good cause.

The thanks of the Meeting were then unanimously voted to David Secord, Esq. for his public spirit in coming forward, on this occasion, and liberally fulfilling the duties of the Chair.

DAVID SECORD, *Chairman.*

A true Copy, JOHN ROSS, *Clerk.*

TO THE PUBLIC.

IT having been stated to me by some of my friends, that the public mind was impressed with the idea of my having participated in, and sanctioned the recent improper and unwarrantable publications of Mr. Robert Gourlay; I conceive it a duty which I owe to the Government, to the Province, and to myself, to declare, that beyond publishing a statistical report of this Province, he had neither my approbation nor my countenance.

In making this declaration, I trust that the tenor of my life justifies my asserting that factious discontent never originated in my breast. Having said this much in vindication of my own sentiments, I shall, in order to prevent error in, and rescue from distress the heedless proselytes of Mr. Gourlay's "one thing needful—viz. a radical change of system in the government of Upper Canada," transcribe for their information, an extract from the common law of the British Empire, which bears on the point of unlawful meetings or conventions, viz. "The constitution of Great Britain having placed the representation of the nation, and the expression of the na-

“ tional will, in the Parliament, no other meeting or convention, “ even of every individual in the Kingdom, would be a competent “ organ to express that will ; and meetings of such a nature, tend- “ ing merely to sedition, and to delude the people into an imaginary “ assertion of rights, which they had before delegated to their Re- “ presentatives in Parliament, could only tend to introduce anarchy “ and confusion, and to overturn every settled principle of Govern- “ ment.” An act of Parliament was passed in Ireland, in the year 1793, to prevent any such meetings or conventions ; and a few ignorant individuals, who in the same year had dared to assemble under that title in Scotland, were quickly dispersed, and their leaders convicted of seditious practices ; for which they were sentenced to transportation.

I shall conclude with recommending to all, to weigh well how they attend to visionary enthusiasts.

THOMAS CLARK.

Niagara, April 18, 1818.

PUBLIC NOTICE.

IN consequence of a handbill having this day appeared, signed by the Honorable Thomas Clark, of the Legislative Council, in which an attempt is made to stigmatize the principles adopted by the Niagara meeting, the committee, appointed by that meeting, recommend the people of other townships, (where any *doubt* may exist in consequence of Mr. Clark's handbill) to postpone the election of their Representatives until a future day of meeting is advertised.

Great as the necessity is for an instant appeal being made to the Supreme Government, regarding the state of Upper Canada, the committee would, by no means press any measure until its legality is proved, and its propriety fairly established in the public mind. They pledge themselves to shew, in a few days, that they are not only right in what they have done ; but, that the Hon. Thomas Clark is grossly mistaken.

(Signed for the Committee,)

ROBERT HAMILTON.

Niagara, April 18, 1818.

Till there is time for further proof, the following will testify the strange inconsistency of Mr. Clark.

To the Clerk of Township Meeting, 13th April, 1818, at Niagara.

Queenston, 13th April, 1818.

SIR—You will herewith receive two dollars, one of which is the subscription of the Hon. Thomas Clark, for the purpose of defraying the expenses of carrying a Petition to the Prince Regent, relative to the situation of this Province, the other dollar for the same purpose, from your most obedient humble serv't.

(Signed)

W. G. HEPBURNE.

WE certify, that we saw Mr. Clark, give the dollar above mentioned, to Mr. Hepburne, for the purpose also above specified.

(Signed) { THOS. DICKSON,
 { JAMES KERBY.

— — —
Grantham, April 20, 1818.

This day a numerous meeting of the Inhabitants of the Township of Grantham, having been held at the house of Paul Shipman, and Geo. Adams, Esq. being called to the chair, spoke in substance as follows,

GENTLEMEN,

“ I am happy to see so many of you assembled here this day on the present occasion. You have heard the address of Mr. Robert Gourlay read : you have likewise heard the address of the Hon. Thomas Clark, and as it has been your unanimous vote, that I should be called to the chair, I beg to make a few remarks on the business before us. I assure you, Gentlemen, if there was the least appearance in any one sentence of Mr. Gourlay’s address tending to sedition, I would be the last person to come forward to support it. You observe, Gentlemen, that in the address of the Hon. Thos. Clark, to the public, he endeavours to impress on your minds, that our meeting together tends to sedition, but allow me to say, it is an erroneous opinion.

I have been acquainted with you twenty-four years, and so has that Hon. Gentleman, particularly in the late War with the United States of America, when you all went forward and exposed your lives and property in defence of your King and Country. Gentlemen, your loyalty is not, and *cannot* be shaken by the address of Mr. Gourlay, or any other individual—neither ought you to be intimidated by the address of the Hon. Thomas Clark, wherein he states, it was necessary for the Parliament to suppress seditious meetings. But the Hon. Gentleman should recollect that the meetings alluded to were entirely of a different nature from ours—at a time when the greatest part of Ireland was in a state of open rebellion, and when preparations for the same were going on in Scotland. This, Gentlemen, is not the case here, and God forbid it ever should be ; for I am certain there is not now, a more loyal people in the British dominions, than you in the township of Grantham. It would be doing Col. Clark, the greatest injustice, were you not to hold him in the highest esteem, and hand his name down to posterity, for his active and zealous conduct, in frequently exposing his life and fortune in defence of the Province. But, Gentlemen, you have all done the same, and I do not think he has any more reason to doubt your loyalty, than you have his. I conceive, Gentlemen, our object for meeting here to-day is to endeavour peaceably and quietly, to petition the Prince and Parliament of our mother country, and let them know the state of the Province. You have suffered privations, and have lost property during the late war, which we have a just claim to ask for.”

The meeting then proceeded to elect a Representative and Clerk, when WILLIAM HAMILTON MERRITT, Esq. was appointed to fill the former station, and GEORGE A. BALL, the latter.—A committee was also appointed to forward the views of this meeting: viz. *William Chisholm, Charles Ingersol, Robert Campbell, Amos McKenny and James Dedrick.*

The thanks of the meeting were then voted to Mr. Robert Gourlay, for the disinterested manner, in which he has come forward in endeavouring to promote the prosperity of this Province.

The thanks of the meeting were also voted to George Adams, Esq. for his spirited address on this occasion, and his able and impartial conduct in the chair.

GEO. ADAMS, *Chairman.*

GEO. A BALL, *Clerk.*

When the meeting had finished business and were about dispersing, Mr. Gourlay who had been visiting some Townships, to advise delay till the aspersions cast on his conduct and the right of the subject to petition, were proved to be unfounded, accidentally arrived; whereupon a dinner was ordered, and, Mr. G. being invited to partake, a large party sat down and spent the evening in the most convivial manner.

The following toasts were given,—by the Chairman.

“The King,” (with cheers.)

“The prosperity of the Province of Upper Canada.”

By William H. Merritt, Esq.—“May every Township contribute its aid to the prosperity of the Province.”

By Mr. G. A. Ball—“May the navigable waters of the Province be speedily improved.”

By J. Clark, Esq.—“May the adherents of Mr. Gourlay, be ever encouraged in their virtuous proceedings.”

By Geo. Adams, Esq.—“The Administrator.”

By Mr. Gourlay—“May the Representative of His Majesty in Upper Canada, ascend from the Chair to the Throne.”

Some of the company desiring an explanation of this toast, Mr. G. rose and replied, that, as unworthy views had been attributed to him, and as such meetings as they had this day held—meetings for the pure purpose of petitioning the sovereign, had been stigmatised as illegal and seditious, he gave this toast as the most loyal which he could possibly think of for the occasion. The Administrator having in his speech to Parliament, expressed himself as addressing that body “from the *chair*” had virtually deprived the Province of the Royal presence and let down the dignity which it was his duty to maintain.

This was a matter of more consequence than might at first be supposed. On the part of ministers at home there was a glaring indifference to the concerns of these Provinces; and when public prints ventured to hint at the bartering them away to the United States for their value in cash, it was high time for the people here to support their own dignity by marking every step towards their degrada-

tion. True loyalty, did not consist in mere passive submission : it consisted in watching over every part of the constitution, at once, with jealousy and affection.

By G. A. Ball.—“ May our Representatives undergo a reformation.

By the Rev. Mr. Williams,—“ May morality and religion encrease throughout the Province, particularly in the township of Grantham” (by a wag, in addition) “where there is so much room.”

By George Adams, Esq.—“ May the United Enemies of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and her dependencies be drowned in this draught”—(Cheers.)

Louth, April 20th, 1818.

This day a numerous meeting of the Inhabitants of the township of Louth, was held at the house of Robert Runchie, when the Address of Mr. Robert Gourlay, to the Resident Land Owners of Upper-Canada, dated April 2d, 1818, was read over ; also, an Address to the Public, signed by the Honorable Thomas Clark, and a contra Address to the Public signed by Robert Hamilton, Esquire, Representative for the township meeting of Niagara, when the whole tenor and sentiments of Mr. Gourlay's Address was unanimously approved of. In conformity to the recommendations therein contained, the meeting proceeded to elect a Representative and Clerk, when JOHN CLARK, of Louth, Esquire, was appointed to fill the former situation, and WILLIAM J. KERR, Esquire, the latter.

The thanks of the Meeting were then unanimously voted to Mr. Robert Gourlay, for his *able* assistance in behalf of the Province.

By order,

(Signed)

JOHN CLARK, *Representative.*

A true copy.

WILLIAM J. KERR, *Clerk.*

Stamford, April 20th, 1818.

At a numerous meeting of the Inhabitants and Landholders of the township of Stamford, held at the house of A. Rorback, JOHN HARDY, Esquire, being called to the Chair, it was unanimously agreed, that we Petition the Prince Regent, for the losses we sustained in the late war, and such other grievances as we labor under.

The meeting proceeded to elect a Representative and Clerk, when JOHN J. LEFFERTY, was appointed to fill the former situation, and HUGH M'CLIEVE, the latter. A committee also was appointed to forward the views of the Meeting, viz : *Frederick Smith, John Howison, James Thompson and Abraham Bowman.*

The thanks of the meeting were then unanimously voted to John Hardy, Esq. for his public spirit, in coming forward on this occasion, and fulfilling the duties of the Chair.

JOHN HARDY, *Chairman.*

A true copy,

HUGH M'CLIEVE, *Clerk.*

Gainsborough, April 20th, 1818.

At a meeting of the Inhabitants of the township of Gainsborough,

field agreeable to the notice and recommendation of the Inhabitants of Niagara township, for taking measures for petitioning the Prince Regent, regarding the state of the Province—JOHN I. TAYLOR, was called to the chair. Mr. Gourlay's Address, dated the second day of April, 1818, was then read over and its principles approved of; whereupon JOHN KENNEDY, sen. was chosen Representative, and GEORGE SHIPMAN, Clerk. A committee to forward the business within the township, was then appointed, consisting of *George Hensel, Charles Kennedy, William Dils and Benajah Williams.*

JOHN I. TAYLOR, *Chairman,*

GEORGE SHIPMAN, *Clerk.*

Bertie, April 20th, 1818.

A numerous meeting of the respectable inhabitants of this township, having been convened at the house of Matthias Haun, THOMAS OTWAY PAGE, Esq. being called to the chair, the Address of Mr. Gourlay, and other papers to the Resident Land Owners of Upper Canada, dated April 2d, 1818, were read over, and their whole tenor and sentiments unanimously approved of. In conformity to the recommendations therein contained, the meeting proceeded to elect a Representative and Clerk, when Wm. POWELL, of Bertie, Esquire, was appointed to fill the former situation, and JOHN APPLGARTH, of Bertie, the latter.

The thanks of the meeting were then unanimously voted to Thomas Ot. Page, Esq. for his public spirit in coming forward on this occasion, and liberally fulfilling the duties of the Chair.

THOS. OTWAY PAGE, *Chairman.*

A true copy, J. APPLGARTH, *Clerk.*

At a second meeting of this Township, it having been reported that it was inconvenient for Wm. POWELL, Esq. to attend to the duties of Representative, it was then unanimously voted, that JOHN BAXTER, Esq. do take upon him the duties of that office, provided Wm. POWELL Esq. do not attend to it. Having been found necessary that a Committee should be chosen, to forward the views of the meeting, *David Damewood, Charles Hill and Henry Warren* were elected to fill that office.

The thanks of the meeting were unanimously voted to Mr. Robert Gourlay, for his unparalleled generosity, in assisting us, in the remotest part of the earth, by presenting to us a method we are in the present undertaking so glad to pursue.

HENRY WARREN, *Chairman.*

A true copy, J. APPLGARTH, *Clerk.*

NOTE INSERTED IN THE NIAGARA SPECTATOR, of April 23d.

The Committee of Niagara meant to have obtained a Lawyer's opinion to lay before the public, to satisfy every one as to the right of British subjects to meet for petitioning the Prince or Parliament; but in the various Townships, this right has been so spiritedly maintained, and every one is so well satisfied on the subject that it would rather be thought

insult to lay before the public any legal authority. In many Townships the business of choosing Representatives and Clerks, has been already done, but the Newspaper of to day, cannot give publicity to more than three. Those Townships which postponed their business on the suggestion of the Committee are now requested to meet for choosing Representatives and Clerks on Saturday SECOND of May, 12 o'clock if no other Notice is sent round ; and at all events, the Representatives and Clerks from the various Townships, are requested to meet at Shipman's Tavern St. Catharines on Monday 4th of May, 11 o'clock forenoon—bring with them their lists of subscribers, and the contributions. A treasurer will that day be chosen—and a Petition be drawn up to lay before the public for amendment or remark.

(For the Committee,) ROBERT HAMILTON.

A true copy, JOHN ROSS, Clerk.

As the Public throughout the Province cannot be so well informed of all circumstances as they are in this District, the Committee give the following extracts from a letter written by Mr. Gourlay, which appeared in the Niagara Spectator of the 23d April, in support of their principles, and they doubt not, but these, with the sentiments expressed by individuals at Township Meetings, will be quite sufficient to settle all question on the subject, wherever any may be started.

“The right of petitioning is one of the grand articles of the Bill of Rights solemnly passed into law, when the British people had driven one Sovereign from the Throne, and were about to establish in it another more agreeable to their will. No act of Parliament is half so sacred as this—the second great charter of British liberty. It emanated purely from the people, uninfluenced by Sovereign Power, or unswayed by domineering aristocracy, and the æra which gave it birth stands emblazoned in history as our Glorious Revolution. The Parliament of Britain has never questioned this great right of the People, and the people are in the constant habit of exercising their right. The meetings of last year in England, at some of which 20,000 people were collected together, were all held under this grand constitutional privilege, and not a question was made regarding their legality. The Parliament of Britain never attempted to suppress even the Spaw-fields meetings, which excited in the minds of some, the greatest alarm, and, I, myself, was in the House of Commons, when Lord Folkstone presented a petition from one of these meetings, on the evening of the very day on which it was held.”

“What is all this which Mr. Clark has set before the public of Upper Canada, as a bugbear to frighten them out of the exercise of their most sacred right?—what is this quotation from the Statute book? what are these stories to us, which concern the Irish rebellion and the conviction of Traitors? Is it possible that Mr. Clark could seriously believe that he could for any length of time impose, even upon the ignorant, or appal the timid, with recitals of this na-

ture? Can any man read the Act of Parliament which he has quoted, and not perceive, that it has no eye whatever to peaceable meetings. The Act clearly specifies the sort of meetings which it was framed to repress—meetings “tending merely to sedition, and to delude the people into an imaginary assertion of rights.” In the name of God, I ask, where is the symptom of sedition to be discovered in this Province? Unless from the mouth of the Hon. Thomas Clark, I never heard a breath in Upper Canada which could, by the remotest construction, be applied to any thing of the kind.—The pure and ardent loyalty of the people here has been one strong influence with me in exerting myself towards improving the connection of Canada with the mother country, and it excited in me peculiar feelings of disgust, when I read in the newspapers, that surmises were on foot for bartering away such people, like slaves, to the United States. If I am guilty of sedition, why does not the Hon. Thomas Clark do his duty and bring me to trial? Mr. Clark knew of the Niagara meeting, and of my being present there, yet he suffers me to go at large to advise and attend other meetings,—nay, not only am I going at large and doing all this, but I dare the highest Magistrate in the Province to lay hands upon me. There is thus no alternative for Mr. Clark, but either to do his duty, and arrest me, or to leave me alone and thereby satisfy the world that he has been wofully imposing on the public by assailing my conduct and principles—wofully and wantonly scandalizing the rights of the Canadian people. Doubting that the ignorant and timid might not be sufficiently astounded with a quotation of law, Mr. Clark seems to expect that my “heedless proselytes” will be driven from their meetings and appalled, for ever, by a reference to an Irish act of Parliament, and a hint, as to what befell the ignorant in Scotland. In the year 1793, every body knows, that rebellion was nearly bursting out both in Great Britain and Ireland; and every body knows that soon after this, it did break out in the latter. I myself visited Ireland in the midst of its fiercest rebellion, when I was allowed to land and pass along, only from being known to the commander of the Kings troops. I had, thus, better opportunities than Mr. Clark, of being acquainted with the state of that country, and the necessity for strong measures on the part of government; and I was still better informed, than he could possibly be, of the situation of things in Scotland. I attended the trial in Edinburgh of one of the chief offenders, and remember well, on what grounds he and others were transported. They were charged with holding secret meetings, with administering oaths of secrecy, and having warlike arms in preparation for carrying their designs violently into execution: who would not wish to see men convicted of such practices, “sentenced to transportation?” Have I done any thing of this sort? Have I held secret meetings? have I sworn any one to secrecy, or, been an advocate for oaths? have I or my proselytes any thing to do with warlike arms? Mercy on us, for, by and by, the Hon. Thomas Clark will accuse us of sedition for eating our food, and, of treason, for meeting together, in Church, to put up our prayers to the Almighty!”

* * * * *

“One part of Mr. Clark’s placard has stirred up doubt, I find, in more than himself, I mean, his quotation of my words, “a radical change of system in the government of Upper Canada.” There are some people so nervous—so very sensitive, that reason has nothing to do with their actions or impulses. A worthy professor of St. Andrew’s College, sat one morning in his elbow chair, while his wife reached the tea-kettle to the fire. A drop fell on the professor’s leg. He saw the fire and black bottom of the kettle at one glance. The association of scalding was instantly formed, and the impulse was irresistible: he leaped to the floor, in agony, and stormed at his wife for the pain he suffered. When he had sufficiently vented his groans and his spleen, “sit down” said his patient partner in this world’s misery “sit down and bless yourself, my dear, for the water was but this moment drawn from the well.”

“The word, government, may be variously applied:—to the frame of government—the constitution; or, to the mode of carrying on the government—the management—the administration. In Britain we never think of petitioning for a change of government in the first sense—a change of constitution. We are all pleased with the constitution; but we roar loudly, and petition often, against the government, taken in the latter sense—the management—the administration. To petition for a change of Government in Upper Canada is quite different:—here we may safely petition for a change of government, in every sense of the word. The government or constitution of Upper Canada rests merely on the authority of a British act of Parliament; and all that is constituted thereby is subject to repeal, by the same power which enacted it, as the words of our constitutional statute expressly indicate. The constitution of Upper Canada is to continue only “during the continuance of this act” and should we petition for a change of government here, we do nothing more than is done every day at home, for a repeal or amendment of an act of the British Parliament.”

* * * * *

“But the words did not go to the extent imagined. I speak of “a change of system in the government.” What is *in* the government, cannot be the government: the wine *in* a bottle, is not the bottle. Through all my writings, it will be found that I spoke of the *system*, and sometimes I identified this system, with that which ruled by “patronage and favouritism.” The system of patronage and favouritism in the government of U. Canada, I have long considered to be the great bane of prosperity, and, without this is put down, all legislators sent to little York, will come back better for themselves, but bringing with them, nothing better for the country.”

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Clinton, April 27, 1818.

This day a numerous Meeting of the Inhabitants of the Township of Clinton, was held at the house of Richard Hill, when the Address of Mr. Robert Gourlay, to the Resident Land Owners of Up-

per Canada, dated April 2d, 1818, was read, and the whole tenor and sentiments therein contained, were unanimously approved of;—when JOHN BEAM, was appointed Chairman.—The meeting then proceeded to elect a Representative & Clerk, when Dr. CYRUS SUMNER, was chosen to fill the former situation, and JACOB BEAM the latter. A Committee was also appointed to forward the views of this meeting, viz: *James Doddie, George Morris, John Comfort, Peter Hare Jun. and Perez Dean.*—The thanks of the meeting were voted to Mr. ROBERT GOURLAY, for the disinterested manner in which he has come forward in order to promote the interest and welfare of this Province. The thanks of the meeting were then unanimously voted to Mr. John Beam, for his regular conduct in the Chair.

JOHN BEAM, *Cha'n.*

JACOB BEAM, *Clerk.*

Grimsby, April 27, 1818.

This day a meeting of a number of the Inhabitants of this Township, was held at the house of Charles Anderson, for petitioning the Prince Regent with regard to the state of the Province.

The meeting was regularly constituted by calling JONATHAN WOLVERTON to the Chair, and the meeting proceeded, according to the recommendations of Mr. Gourlay, in his address to the Resident Land Owners of Upper Canada.

Mr. HENRY HIXON, was chosen Representative to meet with others and concert measures, for carrying the same into execution. DENNIS WOLVERTON, was chosen Clerk; also a Committee to forward the business of the Township, consisting of *John Moore, Daniel Camp, William Bridgeman and John Smith.* The smile of approbation appeared visible on every countenance and the whole meeting was conducted in harmony and good order.

JONA'N WOLVERTON, *Chairman.*

A true copy, DENNIS WOLVERTON, *Clerk.*

Caistor, 28th April, 1818.

This day the Inhabitants of Caistor, and Canborough, having met at the House of Mr. John Lymburner, to take measures for petitioning the Prince Regent, according to the principles approved of by the Inhabitants of Niagara Township, met at that place, the thirteenth Instant, SAMUEL BIRDSALL, was called to the Chair, WILLIAM ROBERTSON, Esq. was unanimously elected Representative, and Mr. JOHN LYMBURNER, Clerk.—A Committee for aiding the business within the said Townships was also formed, consisting of Messrs. *Peter Melick, Mathew Smith, William Stevenson, and Mathew Lymburner, jun.*

SAMUEL BIRDSALL, *Chairman,*

A true copy, J. LYMBURNER, *Clerk.*

At a numerous meeting held at Becket's Mill in the Township of Pelham, the 29th April, 1818, pursuant to the recommendations of

the Niagara meeting held on the 13th Inst. THADEUS DAVIS, was called to the Chair, when the whole tenor and sentiments of Mr. Robert Gourlay's address to the Resident Land Owners of Upper Canada, dated April 2d, 1818, was read over and unanimously approved of. The meeting then proceeded to appoint a Representative and Clerk, when JOHN HENDERSON, was appointed to fill the former situation, and MOSES BRADY, the latter.

A committee also was appointed to forward the views of the meeting, viz: *Messrs. Samuel Becket, William Henderson and Christopher McCalpin.* The thanks of the meeting were unanimously voted to Mr. Robt. Gourlay, for his disinterested exertions in behalf of the Province, likewise the thanks of the meeting to Mr. Thaddeus Davis, for his public spirit in coming forward to fill the Chair.

THADDEUS DAVIS, *Chairman,*

A true Copy, MOSES BRADY, *Clerk.*

Thorold, April 29th, 1818.

This day a numerous and respectable meeting of the Landholders and other Inhabitants of this Township, having been held at the house of Mr. Aaron Crane, it was agreed to unite in the endeavours of other Townships, to represent the state of this Province to His Royal Highness the Prince Regent—Thereupon the meeting was regularly constituted by calling Mr. EBENEZER CAVERS, to the Chair.

GEORGE KEEFER Esq. J. P. was elected to act as Representative for the people of this Township.

Mr. WILLIAM McCLELLEN to act as Clerk. To forward the business within the Township, the following persons were chosen a Committee, viz:—*John Street, Ebenezer Cavers, Jacob Upper, Thomas Bald, jun. Garrett Vanderburgh, Geo. Martatt.*

The Thanks of this meeting were unanimously voted to Mr. Robt. Gourlay, for his active exertions in behalf of this Province. Also, to the Chairman, Mr. Ebenezer Cavers, for his public spirit in coming forward to fill the duties of the chair.

EBENEZER CAVERS, *Chd'n.*

A true copy, W. McCLELLEN, *Clerk.*

Willoughby, April 30, 1818.

This day a meeting of the Inhabitants of the Township of Willoughby having been held at the house of John Palmer, and David Davis being called to the chair, it was unanimously resolved to support the measures recommended in Mr. Gourlay's Address to the Resident Land Owners of Upper Canada, dated 2d April 1818, when JAMES CUMMINGS Esq. was unanimously chosen Representative and JACOB GANDER, Clerk. A committee to forward the business within the Township was then appointed consisting of *Jacob Everett, John Lemon, Henry Hetch and Benjamin Sharp.*

DAVID DAVIS, *Chairman.*

A true copy, JACOB GANDER, *Clerk.*

Humberstone, 1st of May, 1818.

This day a second Meeting of the Inhabitants of Humberstone and the Lake side of Wainfleet, having been held at the House of Christian Zevitz to take into Consideration the state of the Province and the propriety of Petitioning the Prince Regent, respecting the same, Mr. BENJAMIN HORTON in the Chair—It was agreed to confirm the appointment of Mr. HORTON to act as Representative, and Mr. BENJAMIN HERSEY, Clerk.—A Committee was also formed consisting of *Jacob Luse, Abraham Hersey, John Weaver and Abraham Kennaird*, to carry the business into effect in the Township.

BENJAMIN HORTON, *Chairman,*

A true copy, BENJ. HERSEY, *Clerk.*

Crowland, May 1, 1818.

Which day a numerous meeting of the Inhabitants of the Township of Crowland, having been held at Cook's Mills and Calvin Cook being called to the Chair, the address of Mr. Gourlay to the Resident Land Owners of Upper Canada, dated April 2d. 1818, was read over and its whole tenor and sentiments unanimously approved of.

In conformity to the recommendations therein contained, the meeting proceeded to elect a Representative and Clerk, when JOSEPH CURRENT was appointed to fill the former situation and SAMUEL GLOVER the latter. A committee was also appointed to forward the views of the meeting viz. *Jacob Brookfield, William Cook, Leonard Misner, and Christopher Buchner.*

The thanks of the meeting were then unanimously voted to CALVIN COOK for his public spirit in coming forward on this occasion and liberally fulfilling the duties of the Chair.

(Signed) CALVIN COOK, *Chm'n.*

A true copy, SAMUEL GLOVER, *Clerk.*

At this meeting Crowel Wilson, Esq. J. P. was proposed as Representative, but declined, owing to the present state of his health. He came forward however as a subscriber, and delivered a most spirited address to the people, which unhappily cannot have sufficient justice done to it in this report—In substance he said. "I know, friends and neighbours, that all British subjects inherit the right of petitioning the Throne, for redress of grievances, and I conceive that meeting together, in this friendly and peaceable manner, for that purpose, may be attended with most beneficial effects to the Inhabitants of this Province.

The law quoted by my much esteemed friend the Hon. Thomas Clark, does not regard meetings assembled for the peaceable exercise of petitioning even in Britain; but here, at any rate, it can have no more force than the laws of Japan or China. This law was made in 1793, but before that date the Inhabitants of Upper Canada, had received a power of legislating for themselves. Our first step might have been to Petition the Provincial Parliament, as to the public grievances; but the different branches of Parliament have quarrelled and our members of Assembly have neglected us. Our only resource now is to petition the Throne, and for my part I

would rather be adopted into a tribe of Indians than give up this privilege. I am not for bearing the kicks and cuffs of servants of government: I am not to be alleviated under such grievances; by returning thanks for the same. It is well known, that notwithstanding the reputed purity and vigilance of the ancient government of Rome, the people of its distant colonies were most shamefully imposed upon by those delegated to rule over them. I have a high opinion of the Administrator and Chief Justice, and do not think that any blame rests with them or other members of the Executive Council; but certainly "there is something rotten in the state of Denmark"—and I rather think that evils originate at home.—Before the war any man who came from any part of the globe received, upon petitioning, and taking the oath of allegiance, 200 acres of land: the fees were thirty-seven and a half dollars, and the location could be made on any land not before taken up. Now His Majesty's own subjects, who have borne all the hardships of war for support of the Crown, can only draw 100 acres, and perhaps that is located in some remote corner, such as the Township of Brock, where it is no better than a location in the moon; it being impossible to get there but in the frozen season of the year. The Honorable Thomas Clark, I consider to be a loyal subject and faithful friend to the British government; but as to the right of petitioning he is grossly mistaken."

Wainfleet, May 2, 1818.

This day a meeting of the Inhabitants of this Township, was held at the house of David Thompson for the purpose of taking into consideration, the propriety of petitioning the Supreme Government for a redress of grievances; when Mr. Gourlay's address, to the Resident Land Owners of Upper Canada, dated the 2d. ult. was read over and its whole tenor and sentiments unanimously approved of. The meeting then proceeded to elect a Representative and Clerk, when DAVID THOMPSON, Esq. was chosen to fill the former situation, and JAMES THOMPSON the latter. A Committee also was appointed, to forward the views of the meeting, viz. Messrs. *Henry Groff, Nathan Kelley, Stephen N. Farr, and Hiram Humphrey.* The thanks of the meeting, were then unanimously voted to Mr. Gourlay, for his disinterestedness, and for coming forward and ably assisting to promote the good cause.

(Signed) DAVID THOMPSON, Chairman.

A true copy, J. THOMPSON, Clerk.

Mr. Thomson, the Chairman of this meeting, after returning thanks for the honor done to him, spoke with much animation on the right of the subject to petition the Prince Regent, and deprecated the comparison of the present meetings in Upper Canada with those rebellious assemblages which had, in Ireland, proceeded to unwarrantable lengths. Those who call the present meetings seditious, would do well, he said, to call to mind how the people of Canada rallied round the Royal Standard in the late war—not only when it waved victorious, but even in the most critical

times. Was it not a fact, that those who now accused us of sedition, left us and flew to other countries for refuge, till the storm was over? None of you Gentlemen acted thus: but you see the return that is made. You all know that Councillors and Commanders promised you land for your extraordinary services as good soldiers,—and you all expected your private losses to be made up. Three years have now elapsed since the din of arms ceased; but where are your rewards—what has become of your claims? Should we attribute such neglect to our Parliament, or can we suppose that the Supreme Government hath forbidden the fulfilment of justice. In my opinion the fault lies with our own Representatives, and it is now high time for us to petition the Prince Regent for enquiry into the causes of evil, and for our just demands.

St. Catharines, 4th May, 1818.

This day Representatives (and Clerks,) chosen by the Inhabitants of the several Townships of Niagara District, for the purpose of petitioning the Prince Regent, on the general state of public affairs now existing in the Province of Upper Canada, met here.

Robert Hamilton, Esquire, representing the Township of Niagara.

Wm. Hamilton Merritt, Esq. J. P. do. Grantham.

John Clark, Esq. J. P. do. Louth.

Dr. Cyrus Sumner, do. Clinton.

Captain Henry Hixon, do. Grimsby.

Major Wm. Robertson, do. Caistor and Canbury.

Mr. John Kennedy, do. Gainsborough.

Mr. John Henderson, do. Pelham.

George Keefer, Esq. J. P. do. Thorold.

Dr. John J. Lafferty, do. Stamford.

James Cummings, Esq. J. P. do. Willoughby.

John Baxter, Esq. do. Bertie.

Mr. Joseph Current, do. Crowland.

Mr. Benjamin Horton, do. Humberstone, and Lake side of Wainfleet.

David Thompson, Esq. do. Wainfleet.

John Clark, Esq. being unanimously called to the Chair—the business of the day commenced by Mr. Clark's reading over Mr. Gourlay's Address to the Resident Land Owners of Upper Canada, dated 2d April, 1818. The recommendations and principles contained in the address, were declared to be those now generally approved of, and as constituting the basis of the present proceedings.—It was then moved and carried, that Mr. Gourlay should be called to the sitting, and invited to assist in the business of the day.

George Adams, Esq. J. P. was elected to be Treasurer for this District, and, being sent for, accepted the office. William J. Kerr, Esq. was elected secretary; and these gentlemen were desired to retire with Township Clerks, to arrange accounts and commence a regular Journal of transactions. It was then moved, that a Draft of a Petition previously prepared, should be read, which being done, its general principles were approved of, and it was agreed further

that consideration, as to its style, &c. be referred to a committee of four.—*Moved, and unanimously carried*, that as soon as the Committee are sufficiently satisfied with the wording of the Petition, they order it to be printed, with a view to its lying before the public one month, and affording opportunity for animadversion or amendment, that finally it may be so drawn out as to give the greatest possible degree of satisfaction to the people of the District—*Moved, and unanimously carried*, that the same committee do immediately publish, throughout the Province, the whole proceedings of the people of this District of Niagara, up to this time; and take all necessary steps towards promoting the objects in view.

Moved, and unanimously carried, that the Gentlemen of the Committee advertize, Saturday, 6th June, at 2 o'clock afternoon, as a proper time for the people of other Districts, to hold Township Meetings throughout the Province, at all places where Township Meetings are usually held—that Saturday, the 13th of the same month, be advertized for the meetings of township Representatives at the Head Town of their respective Districts, there to choose District Representatives, to assemble in the Provincial Convention.—

Moved, and unanimously carried, that Monday, 6th July next, be advertized as the day of meeting at York, of the Provincial Convention, there to appoint a Commission to proceed to England, with the Petitions to the Prince Regent, and hold conference, generally, on all matters then requiring attention. *Moved, and unanimously carried*, that it is proper for each District, to send to the Provincial Convention, Representatives in like number and proportion as they send members to Parliament.—*Moved, and unanimously carried*, that it be recommended that the District Representatives for the Western, London, Gore & Niagara Districts, do meet together, at Ancaster, on Friday, 3d July—there to tarry one or two days to consult and order with regard to any thing in these Districts, that may then be discovered to be neglected.—Also, that the District Representatives for Ottoway, the Eastern, Johnstown and Midland Districts, do meet for the like purpose, on Wednesday the 1st of July, at Earnest Town.

The Meeting proceeded to choose Representatives for Niagara District, when Robert Hamilton, Esq. Dr. Cyrus Sumner, John Clark, Esq. J. P. and Major Wm. Robertson, were duly elected.—It was then moved and carried, that these Gentlemen constitute the committee above mentioned.

One of the Representatives requesting to be allowed to read a paper to the Meeting, the request was granted. The paper regarded certain partial proceedings in Courts of Justice, and attributed the same to the present corrupt state of public affairs. The gentleman wished the Meeting to take the same into consideration; but the proposal was lost, this being declared not a meeting of deliberation as to private or particular grievances—but for the pure purpose of Petitioning the Prince Regent generally, as to the state of the Province. It was admitted that this, or other papers respecting public grievances, might be given to District Representatives, sealed up,

and directed to be put into the hands of the commissioners, that they may make what use they please of the same, for the general good of the Province. Moved, and unanimously agreed, that the thanks of the meeting be given to John Clark, Esq. for his impartial conduct in the Chair.

The meeting then adjourned till Monday, 8th June, at St. Catharines, when the Petition will be finally adopted, and measures taken for its signature in the several Townships of this District.

JOHN CLARK, *Chairman.*

WILLIAM J. KERR, *Secretary.*



Draft of an Address proposed for presentation to the Prince Regent—submitted to the consideration of the people of Upper Canada, for animadversion and amendment.

TO, HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS, GEORGE, PRINCE OF WALES, REGENT OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND, &c. &c. &c.

The Humble Address of Inhabitants of Upper-Canada.

May it please your Royal Highness,

The subjects of your Royal Father, dwelling in Upper-Canada, should need no words to give assurance of their loyalty, if the whole truth had reached the Throne of their Sovereign. His loving Subjects have reason to believe that the truth has not been told.

During three years of war, Upper-Canada was exposed to the ravages of a powerful and inveterate foe. The Government of the United States had been long concerting the invasion of this Province: hostile preparations against it, had been long masked under other designs; and at last the accumulated torrent of violence burst on the defenceless children of the British Empire. Nor were they assailed by the weapons of war alone. An insidious Proclamation preceded the host of the enemy—forgetful of honor—regardless of humanity; and, daring to seduce the Subjects of Britain from their true allegiance. The Subjects of Britain remained dauntless and firm. It was not for property that they rose against the Invader: the Invader would have spared to them their property. They flew to arms in defence of the Rights and Sovereignty of Britain. Twice had the American Standard been planted in Upper-Canada, while yet but a handful of British troops aided the native battalions of the Province:—twice did these raw battalions wave the laurel of victory over the prostrate Intruders on their soil. The second year of war saw Canada contending with yet little assistance from the parent state:—the second year of war saw her sons confirmed in their virtue, and still more determined to resist. Wives and children had fled from their homes, the face of the country was laid waste, and the fire of revenge was sent forth to consummate distress and misery:—

still was the spirit of the people unextinguished—still did it burn with patriotism and loyalty.

By the third year, every risk of conquest was at an end; for now the British aids poured into the Provinces; and peace was proclaimed, when war was no longer to be feared.

It is now more than three years since there was an end of war; but, strange to say, these years of peace have manifested no appearance of affection or care from the mother country to the Canadas. Commercial treaties have been made, altogether neglectful of British interests, here: Government transactions, which used to give spirit to trade and industry, are at a stand: troops are withdrawn: fortifications are suffered to go to ruin; and rumours are abroad too shocking to be repeated in the Royal ear.

May it please your Royal Highness to listen calmly to the complaints and grievances of the people of Upper Canada, who are fully assured that your Royal Highness has been kept ignorant of most important truths,—who are well assured of the generous dispositions of your royal heart; and of your desire that British Subjects, should, every where, share equally, your paternal regard and affection.

It was matter of much provocation to the people of this Province, to see, even during the war, which afforded such striking proofs of their loyalty and valour, reports sent home, highly rating the merit of regular troops, while the tribute, due to Canadian levies, was unfairly let down. Nay the principles of the most loyal subjects here, were often stigmatised by British Officers, ignorant of human character, and still more so of circumstances which affect it, in this part of the world. It was not so with the immortal Brock. He justly appreciated Canadian worth; and his memory will happily long cherish, in the minds of the Canadian people, a due regard for the genuine spirit of a British soldier, at once generous and brave.

The loyal Inhabitants of Upper Canada would disdain to notice the misrepresentations of individuals, so contrary to notorious truth, if these had not obviously conspired, with other causes, to lessen the regard, which should subsist between British subjects, here and at home—to influence the conduct of ministers towards the general interest of the Provinces.

The loyal subjects of His Majesty in Upper Canada, suffered grievously, during the war, in their property, and many were bereft of their all. A solemn investigation, on this subject, took place: the claims of sufferers were authenticated; and there was every reason to expect that recompence would immediately follow; yet nothing has followed, but delay and insult.—Surely, if there is among mankind, a single principle of justice, this is one, that the individuals of a nation ought not, partially, to bear the weight of public calamity,—surely, individuals who have exposed their lives for government, should not be disgusted, with finding government regardless of those very principles, which it is intended to sustain. The people of this Province are well aware, that their fellow subjects at home, are pressed hard with taxation; and far is it from their wish that relief should be afforded from thence. Canada contains, within itself, ample means of exonerating

government from the claims of sufferers by war ; and it is within the *fat* of your Royal Highness to remove, by a single breath, the evil now so justly complained of. Millions of acres of fertile land lie, here, at the disposal of your Royal Highness, upon the credit of which, put under proper management, not only the fair claims of loyal sufferers could be instantly advanced ; but vast sums could be raised for the improvement of the Provinces, and the increase of revenue to Britain.

Another grievance, manifesting the neglect of government to the concerns of Upper Canada is equally notorious ; and must be still more abhorrent to the generous feelings of your Royal Highness.

The young men of this Province, who were armed in its defence, had, for their spirited conduct, the promise of their Commanders, that land would be granted them, as a reward for their services, as soon as war was terminated ; and after this promise was universally confided in, the Parliament of Upper Canada passed an extraordinary law, in the face of established British principles, that the militia should pass beyond the frontier. With these promises, and in obedience to this law, the militia passed beyond the frontier with alacrity ; yet, since the peace, the greater part of them have been denied the pledge of their extraordinary services, and the land is unjustly withheld.

Such ingratitude—such dishonor—such errors in policy, your Royal Highness may be well assured, could not exist, without extraordinary influences ; and, were your Royal Highness sufficiently informed as to these, and of the true state of Upper Canada, we flatter ourselves, most important changes would speedily take place, as well for the glory of the Throne, as for the benefit of its subjects.

Permit the loyal subjects of His Majesty merely to say as much, at the present time, on this subject, as may induce Your Royal Highness to order enquiry to be made.

The lands of the Crown in Upper Canada, are of immense extent, not only stretching far and wide into the wilderness ; but scattered over the Province, and intermixed with private property, already cultivated. The disposal of this land is left to Ministers at home, who are palpably ignorant of existing circumstances ; and to a council of men resident in the Province, who, it is believed, have long converted the trust reposed in them to purposes of selfishness. The scandalous abuses, in this department, came some years ago to such a pitch of monstrous magnitude, that the home Ministers wisely imposed restrictions on the land Council of Upper Canada. These, however, have by no means removed the evil ; and a system of patronage and favouritism, in the disposal of the Crown lands, still exists, altogether destructive of moral rectitude, and virtuous feeling, in the management of public affairs. Corruption, indeed, has reached such a height in this Province, that it is thought no other part of the British Empire witnesses the like ; and it is vain to look for improvement till a radical change is effected. It matters not what characters fill situations of public trust at present :—all sink beneath the dignity of men—become vitiated and weak, as soon as they are placed within the vortex of destruction. Confusion on confusion has grown out of this unhappy system ; and the very lands of the Crown, the giving

away of which has created such mischief and iniquity, have ultimately come to little value from abuse. The poor subjects of His Majesty, driven from home by distress, to whom portions of land are granted, can now find in the grant no benefit; and loyalists of the United Empire—the descendants of those who sacrificed their all, in America, in behalf of British rule—men whose names were ordered on record for their virtuous adherence to Your Royal Father;—the descendants of these men find, now, no favour in their destined rewards: nay, these rewards, when granted, have, in many cases, been rendered worse than nothing; for the legal rights in the enjoyment of them have been held at nought: their land has been rendered unsaleable, and, in some cases, only a source of distraction and care.

Under this system of internal management, and weakened from other evil influences, Upper Canada now pines in comparative decay: discontent and poverty are experienced in a land supremely blessed with the gifts of nature: dread of arbitrary power wars, here, against the free exercise of reason and manly sentiment: laws have been set aside: legislators have come into derision; and, contempt from the mother country seems fast gathering strength to disunite the people of Canada from their friends at home.

The immediate interference of Your Royal Highness might do much to check existing evils; and might wholly remove those which spring from the system of patronage and favouritism, in the land granting department. Other evils however greatly retard the prosperity of Upper Canada—evils which have their root in the original constitution of the Province, and these can only be removed by the interference of the British Parliament, now most imperiously required.

Deeply penetrated with these sentiments, and most seriously inclined to have such needful changes speedily effected, the loyal subjects of Britain, dwelling in Upper Canada, now take the extraordinary step of sending home Commissioners to bear this to the Throne, and humbly entreat Your Royal Highness to give ear to the details which it will be in their power to relate: above all, that Your Royal Highness would, immediately, send out to this Province a COMMISSION, consisting of discreet and wise men—men of business and talent, who shall be above every influence here; and who may be instructed to make enquiry into all the sources of evil.



N. B. Should any person incline to draw out an ADDRESS, entirely different from the above, it is requested that a copy may be directed to "Mr. John Ross, Niagara," (for the District Committee,) and it is also requested that Reports of Township meetings, stating what persons are appointed to act as Representatives, Clerks, and Committee Men, be forwarded to the same, with all convenient speed, immediately after such meetings are held.

TO THE PUBLIC.

With consent of the Niagara Committee, I take this opportunity of notifying that, I have directed to be printed, together, the whole writings on the state of Upper Canada, which have appeared during the last six months in the Niagara Spectator, &c. with notes, &c. They will form a curious collection of political wrangling, and exhibit an important species of evidence as to causes which now retard the prosperity of this fine country.

Those inclining to have a copy of this work, will be so good as to give in their names to storekeepers who may be willing to become agents in the business; and as soon as such storekeepers either severally, or by joining their lists of subscribers with others, can give an order for 20 copies, they will be so obliging as write to me, at the Post-office of, Queenston, Kingston, or Montréal, noting on the back of the letter the word "order" by which means I shall be able to have the same attended to in the speediest and best manner.

My experience in Upper Canada assuring me that an independent newspaper, established on a footing of such strength as to secure its delivery regularly, on a certain day of every week, in every organized Township above York, would not only pay, but become of infinite advantage to the Inhabitants, I now beg leave to propose such an undertaking before I return to Europe. If the proposal is liberally received, I should make arrangements, there, for laying a substantial ground work, and for obtaining, regularly, the best and earliest intelligence of the great political movements of the old world, thereby to be enabled to keep up a journal of occurrences, in which the people of Canada, it is hoped, will long continue to have the warmest interest.

During the sitting of parliament I should remove the press to the seat of Government, if not stationary there during the whole year—so that faithful Reports might be given of legislative proceedings; &c. In short the scheme should reach, if possible, every desirable object, and stamp "the very body of the time—its form and pressure."

Persons, favourably disposed to such an undertaking, will use the same mode of expressing their will, as above pointed out; and, should single individuals wish to correspond directly with me on the subject, I have only to request, in such cases, that the postage may be paid, for obvious reasons.

ROBERT GOURLAY.

