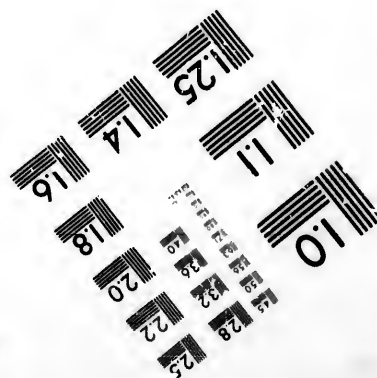
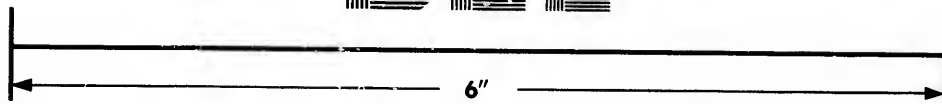
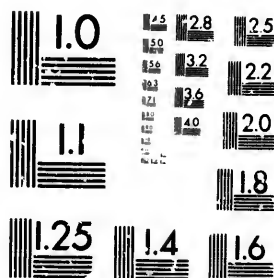


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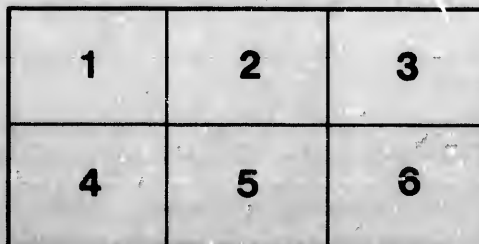
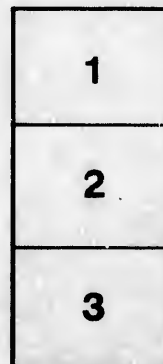
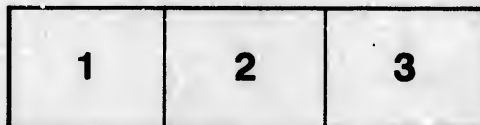
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# THE NEW CANADIAN DOMINION:

## Dangers and Duties of the People

IN REGARD TO

### THEIR GOVERNMENT.

BY THE REV. DR. RYERSON.

"The Middle Principles alone are solid, orderly, and fruitful."—Lord Bacon.

"I wish to see patriotism exalted into a moral principle, not a branch of avarice."—Dr. Channing.

"He who uses his power for the benefit of a section, or of a party, is false to his duty, to his country, and to his God. He is engraving his name on the adamantine pillar of his country's history, to be gazed upon forever as an object of universal detestation"—Dr. Wayland.

"Party undermines principles—destroys confidence in statesmen—corrupts private morals—unites sordid motives with pure—produces self-deception—destroys regard to truth—promotes abuse of the press—gives scope to malignant feelings—paralyzes public councils—promotes treasonable designs"—Lord Brougham. (*Contents of the 4th chapter. Part II., of his Political Philosophy.*)

TORONTO:

LOVELL & GIBSON, PRINTERS AND PUBLISHERS, YONGE STREET.

1867.

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## PREFACE.

I HAVE determined to write the following Address without the knowledge of any public man, in Church or State. I am alone responsible for what it contains.

In no respect is the education of a people more important than in respect to the principles of their government, their rights and duties as citizens. This does not come within the range of elementary school teaching; but I have sought to introduce, as much as possible, expositions on the principles, spirit, and philosophy of government, in my annual reports, and other school addresses and documents, during the last twenty years, and so to frame the whole school system as to make its local administration an instrument of practical education to the people, in the election of representatives, and the corporate management of their affairs—embracing most of the elementary principles and practice of civil government, and doing so to a greater extent than is done in the school system of any country in Europe, or of any state in America. And the strength and success of the school system in any municipality have been in proportion to the absence of party spirit, and the union of all parties for its promotion, while its efficiency and progress have been impaired and retarded in proportion as factional individuals or parties have fomented discord and created division. What is true in school polity is true in civil polity; and what is true in the educational branch of the public service, is true in every branch of the public service.

But, I am aware that many good and intelligent men, of different views and associations, regard partyism as a necessity, a normal element, in the operations of free civil government. I think they do so, as a matter of course or usage, without due



examination. I think they are in error, at least in the Canadian sense of the term party; and that this error has been at the bottom of most of our civil discords and executive abuses. I think that *partyism* is a *clog* in the machinery of civil government, as in that of school or municipal government;\* in which there is free discussion of measures, and of the conduct of Trustees and Councillors; and there have been elections and changes of men as well as of measures. When these discussions and elections have turned on the *merits* of measures and men, the result has been beneficial; but, wherever faction and party spirit characterized the discussions and elections, the result has been injurious, and, in some cases, disastrous. So, in a larger sphere, with more diversified subjects and interests, in civil matters the field of discussion and emulation is enlarged and varied; but, that does not affect the *principles*, or *spirit*, or *ends* of action, which should be as free from party faction, intolerance and exclusion in civil, as in municipal or school matters. When party assumptions and intolerance have gone so far as to interfere with the proper functions of government, with the constitutional rights of citizens, or of the Crown, I have, at different times, in former years, being trammelled by or dependent upon no party, endeavoured to check these party excesses, and oppressions, sometimes to the offence of one party, and sometimes to the offence of another, just

\* On this subject LORD BROUGHAM remarks as follows, even in an economic view of the question:—

"No contrivance can be more clumsy, than one which would secure a correct working of the machine [of government] by creating obstacles that may, at any moment, suspend its movements; and no check can be more costly than one which must occasion a perpetual loss of power, a loss, too, always great in proportion to the force required to be exerted; that is, in proportion to the necessity of union, and the danger of disunion. Only conceive a person's astonishment who should, for the first time, be informed that, in order to prevent an erroneous policy from becoming a guide to a nation's councils, one half of her statesmen, and nearly one half of her people, were continually and strenuously employed in working against the other half engaged in the public service."—*Political Philosophy*, Chapter iv., Part II.

as one or the other might be the transgressor. I was, of course, much assailed by the parties rebuked, as I may be now; but no consideration of that kind should prevent the public instructor—whether educator or preacher—from rebuking what he believes to be wrong in itself and injurious to the progress and interests of society, or from teaching what he believes to be true and essential to the advancement of society, please or offend whom it may, or however it may affect him personally.

I have rejoiced to observe, that many who have heretofore been men of party and of party government have resolved to inaugurate the new system of government, not upon the acute angle of party, but, upon the broad base of equal and impartial justice to all parties, the only moral and patriotic principle of government, according to my convictions, and the only principle of government to make good and great men, and make a progressive and happy country, as I have endeavoured to show in the following address.

From whatever motives, whether selfish or patriotic, any of our public men may have come to the conclusion of establishing a government of principle and patriotism, instead of a government of party, is of more importance to themselves than to others. If the principle is right and the act wise, the country will be equally benefitted, without regard to the motives of the actor or actors.

Thankful to find that the new system of civil government was to be established upon the same principles as those on which our school system has been founded and developed to the satisfaction of the country, and to the admiration of all foreign visitors; and believing that the present was the juncture of time for commencing a new and brighter era in the history of Canada—I have felt that it had a claim to the result, in epitome at least, of my fifty years reading and meditation, and more than forty years occasional discussion, respecting these first principles of government, for the freedom, unity, happiness, advancement and prosperity of a people. I hope that the question now formally opened, will receive that attention which its importance

demands, until it shall have been thoroughly discussed, fully and generally understood, and firmly settled.

In discussing these fundamental principles of good government, it has, of course, become a necessary duty to point out the errors and obstacles which oppose its establishment; and, the wider spread the delusion of those errors, and the more serious those obstacles, the stronger the necessity and the more imperative the duty of plainly exposing them. On that account, judging from the past, every species of vituperation and art will be employed to impugn my motives and character. But I believe there is a judgment, a conscience, a heart in the bosom of a people, as well as in that of an individual, not wholly corrupted—at least, so I have in time past found it in the people of Upper Canada—and, to that judgment, and conscience, and heart, I appeal. If what I have written is true, and if what I have suggested is wise, just, and patriotic, I am not concerned as to what any deceptive or dishonest art can do to the contrary; for, as ROBERT HALL beautifully said, on a similar occasion, “Wisdom and truth, the offspring of the sky, are immortal; but cunning and deception, the meteors of the earth, after glittering for a moment, must pass away.”

E. R.

TORONTO, July, 1867.

**ADDRESS**  
**TO THE**  
**PEOPLE OF THE PROVINCE OF ONTARIO,**  
**LATE UPPER CANADA,**  
**ON THE NEW DOMINION.**

**BY THE REV. DR. RYERSON.**

**PART I.**

**1. Introduction.**

**MY FELLOW COUNTRYMEN:**

While I heartily unite in your rejoicings over our new birth as a nation, I beg to address you some words on our national duties and interests. I do so because clergymen of various churches have done so in sermons, addresses and orations; because my opinions and advices have been requested by many persons deeply interested in the public welfare; because I am approaching the close of a public life of more than forty years, during which I have carefully observed the hindrances and aids of our social progress, and have taken part, since 1825, in the discussion of all those constitutional questions which involved the rights and relations of religious denominations and citizens, and which have resulted in our present system of free government and of equal rights among all religious persuasions; because my heart's desire and prayer to God is, that the new Dominion of Canada may become prosperous and happy, by beginning well, by avoiding those errors which have in time past been injurious to ourselves, and which have impeded the progress and marred the peace of other peoples, and by adopting those maxims of both feeling and conduct which the best and most experienced public men of Europe and America have enjoined as essential to the strength and happiness, the advancement and grandeur of a nation.

## 2. *Situation, Freedom, Responsibility.*

We occupy a country on which Divine munificence has lavished all the needful elements of wealth and greatness. By a parental and liberal policy, and not by the claugour and bloodshed of revolution, we are architects of our own fortune; it depends upon ourselves, under Providence, whether we shall be a virtuous, intelligent, happy and prosperous people—a welcome member and honor of the family of nations—or whether, by domestic quarrels and divisions, and consequent weakness and degeneracy, we disappoint the expectations of our best friends and well-wishers, and become the outskirt hewers of wood and drawers of water to a neighbouring republic. And it devolves on the electors of Canada, in the spirit we now cultivate, and in the choice we now make of our first legislators, to stamp upon our country its future character, and determine for our children their future destinies.

## 3. *How to fulfil this Responsibility.*

To fulfil this great responsibility and discharge this great duty, we must feel as parents and Canadians, and not as partisans; our affection and solicitude must embrace our whole country, and not, by the jaundiced venom of partisanship, view one half of our fellow citizens as our enemies to be assailed and trampled down.

Will you with me look at our present situation, and listen, not to my feeble and unauthoritative words, but to the counsels of wise and good men on both sides of the Atlantic—the noblest advocates of civil freedom and the ablest expounders of patriotic government.

## 4. *Transition—First Duty.*

We are passing from an old into a new state of political existence. The alleged evils of former civil relations have induced the creation of new ones; and the denounced evils of a former system of government have led to the establishment of a new system. We are as emigrants to a new country, or as minors who have attained their majority, and have been aided and counselled by their parents to provide for themselves. We have been raised from a state of colonial subordination to one of affectionate alliance with the mother country. Then the first act of wisdom and duty is, to note and avoid the evils which marred our peace and prosperity in our former state, and cultivate those feelings and develop those principles of legislation and government.

which have contributed most to the promotion of our own happiness and interests as well as those of other nations.

5. *Personal hostilities and party strife the causes of past misfortunes to the country.*

If you will call up to your recollection the events of our country's history for the last twenty years, I am sure you will agree with me that personal hostilities and party strife have been the most fatal obstacles to our happiness and progress as a people—an immense loss of time and waste of public money in party debates and struggles—a most fruitful source of partiality and corruption in legislation and government, by opposing men and parties to establish and sustain themselves against their adversaries—a prolific cause of moral degeneracy in public men, and a melancholy perversion of the very purposes of government, the true office of which is to be “a minister of God for good,” and not a game of party, much less an instrument of party favoritism and proscription. While, on the contrary, during the last two years that there has been a cessation of party hostilities and a union of able men of heretofore differing parties for the welfare of the country, there has been an economy, intelligence, and impartiality in legislation and in the whole administration of government not equalled for many years past, a corresponding improvement in the social feelings and general progress of the country, as well as an elevation of our reputation and character abroad in both Europe and America.

6. *Questions for the consideration of the Reader—Absurdity of reviving former disputes.*

Are the personal and party disputes which paralysed and debased the former system of government to be re-kindled and blown to a flame under the new government on which we are now entering? Are men and parties to be branded and proscribed in the new state of civil polity for what they have said or done under the old? Are the emigrants to a new country to carry the personal and party quarrels of their father-land into the land of their adoption? Are the members of a family who may have quarrelled and acted very reprehensibly during their minority, to renew and perpetuate their mutual recriminations and hostility in manhood life? And besides, if one grown-up man of a household is to be taunted and outlawed by his brother



for indiscretions and bad things which he may have done in his youth, is the accusing brother who may have done many worse things, not to be reminded and made responsible in turn for his youthful offences against order and decency? If the one brother may have been too merry among his companions and too fond of spending his father's money, the other brother may have pursued a career of quarrelsome and cowardly bullying and unscrupulous falsehood, if not even of moral forgery, and may have been publicly convicted of it. If the one brother in his earlier days objected to the representation of the family according to population in their domestic councils, the other brother may in his earlier days have opposed the very system of education by which the whole family are educated. If the one brother have committed grave errors and offences in striving to adapt the system of educational food to even the whims and caprices of the most exceptional members of the family, the other brother may have committed greater fraternal offences by demanding and making one "plank" of his creed the legislative abolition of the schools and conventual institutions of one large branch of the family, though he might now wish to include them in his own party of the household. But many pages, instead of a few sentences, might be filled with these fair, but profitless comparisons, which illustrate the absurd folly—to call it by no harsher name—of pot reprecaching kettle with being black, and demanding its exclusion from the culinary furniture, while the "corruptionist" and "traitor" blackness of the former may equal, if not distance, the latter in the comparison of ebony.

7. *Principles and method adopted under the Administration of Lord Sydenham and Sir Charles Bagot (1840-4,) to establish a New System of Government.*

When Lord Sydenham initiated the union of the Canadas in 1841, by establishing the system of responsible government in place of the colonial system, and when Sir Charles Bagot gave it more extended practical effect in 1843, loud complaint was made by some that men were appointed to office who had always been hostile to government, whose lives had been stained by rebellion itself. In May, 1843, I wrote a tract illustrating (a week before Sir Charles' death), by the facts of history, the wisdom of such a policy, remarking as follows in the prefatory note:

"As the subject of which I have briefly written belongs not to party, but relates to Canada, I deem no apology necessary for me, (who advocate the



supremacy of no party, but the interests of all), in attempting to supply a  *desideratum*  which I have not seen supplied from any other quarter."

In that tract, (copied with applause into nearly all the Canadian newspapers), occur the following passages.

"But that which, as it appears to me, will invest the name of Sir Charles Bagot with the brightest halo of glory, and render his administration the greatest benefit to Canada, is the very point on which he has been most assailed—namely, *his effacing the lines of former party demarcation*, his countenance of classes of the community and selection of individuals for civil employments upon the ground of personal qualifications, without reference to former party associations or political predilections. It has been alleged that Sir Charles Bagot has encouraged and protected the disaffected and the disloyal—a charge which, as may be easily shown, involves a fallacy in argument, if not falsehood in fact. The proof of the allegation is laid in transactions, which took place (to give the longest period), between the years 1830 and 1840. Were all that has been stated, with every real or imaginary aggravation, correct, it would amount to no proof in the present instance."

"To render the proof satisfactory in the present case, it must be shown that the same system of government existed in Upper and Lower Canada from 1830 to 1840, which has obtained in *United Canada* since the latter period. If sections of the inhabitants of either or both Provinces have manifested disaffection to a former system of government, the imperial parliament has participated in that disaffection by repealing the old system of government and establishing a new one, as different from the old, as was the British Constitution after the revolution of 1688, administered according to the 'Bill of Rights' by William and Mary from what had been the *régime* of the Tudors and Stuarts."

"If the old systems of Canadian government have been abolished by the supreme authorities of the Empire, the *party distinctions and organizations* engendered under them, ought, of course, to be abandoned—which was indeed one essential object in the establishment of the new system. *No man, therefore, whom the law protects, ought to be judged by what may have been his views and conduct in respect to an abrogated system of government, but by his views and conduct in respect to the present established system.*"

#### 8. *Historical illustrations of the wisdom and patriotism of Abolishing Past Party Disputes, in restoring Peace and Unity to a Country.*

Such were my position and views in 1843, in regard to the fathers and friends of some who would now exclude others from public offices and employments for views and conduct in regard to a former and abrogated system of government. After arguing the question at some length, I remarked as follows,—a remark applicable to the present times, but to persons the very opposite in party to those in regard to whom it was made:—

"The present argumentation in the abstract is, I am aware, prohibited by the

blindness of passion, and the obliquity of prejudice, and the selfishness of party; but even when abstract reason and truth will not convince, the illustrations and analogies of history may impress."

I adduced examples from Grecian, Roman and English history, of the noble acts and happy effects of prohibiting the mention of past differences and of treating all parties alike, after periods of anarchy, and civil discord. I will here repeat in brief three out of the several examples then given at length.

After Attica had been desolated during a long period of anarchy and civil war, which was terminated by Thrasybulus, he—the heathen general and statesman—adopted a very different system towards his adversaries in arms and war from that which is now advocated among us by professing christians in regard to opponents in opinion under a former regime:—

"Thrasybulus (says Rollin) rising above those resentments from the superiority of his more extensive genius, and the views of a more discerning and profound policy, foresaw that by acquiescing in the punishment of the guilty, eternal seeds of discord and enmity would remain, to weaken by domestic divisions the strength of a republic which it was necessary to unite against the common enemy, and occasion the loss to the state of a great number of citizens who might render it important services with the view of making amends for past behaviour. Such conduct after great troubles in a state has always seemed to the ablest politicians the most certain and ready means to restore the public peace and tranquillity."

Thrasybulus, instead of proscribing his former adversaries as "corruptionists" and "traitors," proposed the celebrated amnesty by which the citizens *engaged upon oath to bury all past transactions in oblivion*. "This," says the historian, "is one of the finest events in ancient history, worthy of the Athenian lenity and benevolence, and has served as a model to successive ages in good governments." In comparison with this masterly statesmanship of the Athenian patriot, how contemptible, narrow-minded, mean and selfish does the pretended christian Canadian statesmanship appear which would brand and treat as traitors and enemies one half the public men of the land for even opinions and policy under an abrogated system of government!

The Roman general and conqueror of armies and provinces, *Julius Cæsar*, surpassed his other conquests when he conquered his own personal resentments and party feelings (after having grown up and lived amid the asperities of both) and "pardoned all who had carried arms against him, and made no distinction with regard to parties,

saying, "I will lay aside the sword, and endeavour by my good offices to gain over those who continue to hate me?"

And how has all history honoured the Earl of Pembroke—the ablest statesman and general of his age—who, during the minority of Henry III., was protector of the kingdom, and who, after having suppressed the rebellion which had commenced during the latter part of the reign of King John, pardoned the disaffected, restored them to their possessions, and endeavoured, (as Hume says), "by an *equal* behaviour, to *bury all past animosities*."

How universally has been eulogized the noble conduct of Henry V.—the most heroic monarch in English history—who found the kingdom convulsed by the contests which had been commenced by his father, Henry IV., between the houses of York and Lancaster, to the latter of which Henry V. himself belonged. Yet, says Hume:—

*"The King seemed ambitious to bury all party distinctions in oblivion; Virtue seemed now to have an open career, in which it might exert itself; the exhortations and example of the Prince gave it encouragement, and all now were unanimous in their attachment to Henry."*

How much more just and Christian was such conduct than that of Henry VII., who united the rival houses of Lancaster and York by his marriage with Elizabeth, heiress of the house of York, and whose reign was able, and, in many respects, useful; but who, as Hume says,—

*"Instead of embracing the present happy opportunity of abolishing these fatal distinctions, of uniting his title with that of his consort, and of bestowing favours indiscriminately on the friends of both families, carried to the throne all the partialities which belong to the head of a faction; and even the passions which are carefully guarded against by every true politician in that situation. To exalt the Lancastrian party, and depress the adherents of the House of York, were still the favorite objects of his pursuit; and through the whole course of his reign, he never forgot his early prepossessions."*

I submit whether it is the duty of the people of Canada, and of every good and honest man in Canada, to imitate the just and liberal conduct of Henry V., or the unjust and party conduct of Henry VII.? Whether we are to embrace the present happy opportunity—on, not the marriage union of two rival families, but the more important union of several provinces—to abolish the fatal distinctions of the past, and not to carry into our new civil state "the partialities which belong to the head of a faction," and the passions which have been the curse of Canada in past years, and which, if predominant, must destroy our peace, and blight our prosperity in time to come?

The great Napoleon I., while the first of generals on the battle-field, had the discrimination and wisdom to adopt as the maxim of his policy in regard to men, "Tell me not what a man *was*, but what he *is now*." But there are parties in Canada who reverse this maxim. They say,—“Tell us not what a man is now, since a marriage union and a new constitution of government; he may be a blameless man now, as well as a man of capacity, and may have done much to confer upon us our present constitution, and elevated state of political existence; but tell us what he *was*, in a former and abrogated state of social and civil existence.” Their doctrine is, a man once a sinner, and a transgressor at certain times, and in certain circumstances, is always a sinner, and is to be treated as such by God and man. Yet in this profession, uncharitable and ungodlike as it is, they are more inconsistent with themselves than were the affected moral reformers when they brought an adulterous woman before an infallible Judge, who decided that he that was without sin among them should cast the first stone. The accusers were so taken aback, conscience-smitten and ashamed, that they all sneaked off one by one, and not one of them cast a pebble at the unfortunate woman. But we have pharisees in Canada who have no such conscience or sense of shame.

Thus much then on the first great question before the country—namely as to whether we are to lay the foundations of our new Dominion by recognizing and acting upon all the party disputes and divisions as they existed in the old and abandoned civil polity, or whether we are to lay those foundations by the whole people ignoring, and, as it were, like the ancient Athenians, taking an oath not to mention past transactions, and uniting, as the heart of one man, to build up a polity and country worthy of our name and of our children's grateful affection, judging of every man and of every party by what each may do and may appear to us to be, in our present new Dominion.

## PART II.

### 1. *The Second Great Question stated.*

The second great question before the country is,—whether the functions of government shall be exercised upon the principles of party, or for the equal benefit of all classes in the country, and ap-

pointments to office made upon the grounds of personal character and qualifications, without reference to sect or party.

The decision of the present electors on this, as on the preceding question, determines the future institutions and character of the people of Canada. It will be seen that on the one side of this question is exclusion, on the other side is comprehension; on the one side is partyism with its selfishness, its tricks, its slanders, its proverbial dishonesty,—on the other side is patriotism, with its largeness of heart, its manliness, its generosity, its nationality; on the one side the pyramid of government is inverted, and placed upon the apex or point of egotism and injustice; on the other side, the pyramid of government is placed upon the broad base of equal justice and good-will to all men; on the one side, government is converted and debased into a party domination—sometimes worse than that of any individual tyrant,—on the other side, it maintains the office of its divine origin, “a minister of God for good,” without respect of persons.

## 2. *Four arguments stated against a partisan system of Government.*

I will now proceed to show that this party domination and party exclusion system of government attempted to be established in our New Dominion is—*first*, contrary to what good men approve and practise in other similar relations of life; *secondly*, contrary to the principles of public morality, and the essential elements of social progress; *thirdly*, contrary to the avowed principles of reformers in what may be justly termed the heroic age of Canadian Reform, and a revival of the vital principle of old Canadian toryism; *fourthly*, contrary to the opinions and advice of good and experienced men in both England and the United States as to the true ends of government and the best interests of society.

## 3. *Misapprehension corrected.*

But before entering on this discussion, I must make a remark or two to guard against mistake or misrepresentation. I know it will be alleged, that I object to all parties or associations for legislative or governmental purposes. I do nothing of the kind. Parties have been formed and associations have been organized and sustained to abolish the slave trade and slavery, to promote parliamentary reform, to abolish the corn laws and establish free trade, and, in this country, to obtain equal rights and privileges for all classes, and to abolish an irresponsible system, and secure a responsible system of government.



Such associations, and many similar ones, have performed a noble work, after which they ceased to exist. But their object was not to elevate one part and abase another part of the community; much less were they an instrument and banded partisans to usurp the ordinary functions of government in general affairs, to appoint partisans to office, and to organize and maintain the whole machinery of legislation and government as an engine of party. With this preliminary remark I proceed to my reasons against this party domination and exclusive system of government attempted to be established in our new Dominion.

**4. *Partisan system of government contrary to Good and Wise Men's practice in other similar relations of life.***

1. It is contrary to what good men approve and practise in other similar relations of life. Officers are not appointed and affairs are not managed upon the principles of party in Agricultural Associations, Missionary, Bible, Tract Societies, in Church organizations, or even educational matters. Partyism in the management of any of these institutions would be regarded as incompatible with their principles and objects, and destructive of their best interests. The man best qualified for each office is selected without reference to any connexion or party; each office exists and its functions are exercised for the benefit of all parties concerned, and not as rewarding partisanship. In the public Educational Department of Upper Canada, not a partisan office has been created or a partisan appointment made from its very establishment more than twenty years ago. Out of the scores of appointments which have been made during that time in the Normal and Model Schools, and in different branches of the Educational Department, every appointment has been made upon the ground of personal character and fitness, and on a trial of six months, without respect of sect or party; and during that period, not a relative or connexion of the Chief Superintendent has been appointed to any office in the Department or in the schools connected with it; but every applicant has been told, that if on examining the list of candidates at the time of filling the office, he should be considered the best qualified, he would be selected,—not otherwise, as the office existed solely for public purposes, and in filling it, public interests alone must be considered. I am aware of very few instances of hostility on the part of even unsuccessful candidates and their friends; and each successful candidate feels and res-

pects himself as having been selected upon the ground of merit alone, and has, having not crept into office as a reward of active or noisy partisanship, at the expense perhaps of a better qualified candidate. Now, if the associations named are officered and managed, and if the Department of Public Instruction is and should be conducted irrespective of party, why should all the other functions of government be officered and administered upon the principles of party? What is there in the duties of any branch of the public service which would render partisanship superior or equal to merit in providing for the efficient fulfilment of its functions? And would it not add immensely to the dignity if not efficiency of one and all these offices, as also contribute to elevate the character and qualifications of the aspirants, if each one felt that his character and qualifications alone were to be the basis of his selection, and not his running about as an electioneering agent, or in attending conventions to shout for a particular politician or party? The Crown itself is degraded, and government is shorn of the Samson lock of its moral strength, and sinks into contempt, when it comes to be regarded as the mere tool of party domination, and not the seat of impartial justice, the fountain of honour, and the patron of virtue.

##### 5. *Demoralizing effects of a partisan system of Government.*

2. I observe, secondly, that this party faction system of government tends to eat out the life of religious feeling, subverts the principles of public morality, and undermines the essential elements of social progress. There is scarcely a municipality in Canada in which there are not examples of persons who have declined in their religious feelings and devotions just in proportion as they have entered into these party proceedings, and imbibed their spirit, and not a few who have made shipwreck of their religious principles and character. And few things are so demoralizing to a whole community as the banding of one part of it together against another part—calling fellow-citizens, and even fellow-Christians, enemies, deceivers, rogues, liars, corruptionists, plunderers, traitors, &c. A spirit of uncharitableness, calumny, and slander is thus engendered; the frequent and familiar application of these terms tends to create the feelings which such terms import; the moral sense is blunted; the moral standard of speaking and acting is lowered; the moral poison soon insinuates itself into other relations and stations of life, and society, throughout the circles of such actors and their influences,



becomes, at length, a putrid mass of deception, chicanery, over-reaching, falsehood, and dishonesty.\*

I know it has been said that every thing is fair in politics. This maxim of morality is the offspring of the partyism to which I refer. We have the highest authority for saying that offending the law in one point is to be guilty in all, and that he who is unfaithful in that which is least is unfaithful also in much. A man that will lie and cheat in politics cannot be held to be a truthful and honest man in any thing; at least he will not long be so. Truthlessness and dishonesty in politics—the essence of partyism—is the certain forerunner of truthlessness and dishonesty in all social relations. This evil is greatly extended and aggravated by a violent and unscrupulous press, which instead of being a channel of public instruction, discussing questions with intelligence and largeness of heart, as well as giving general news, merely discusses *men*, and that without the slightest claims to truth and justice—thus instead of enlarging and elevating the public mind, tending to belittle it, to sour, to embitter, to sophisticate, to corrupt, to degrade it.

Then look at the effect of partyism in vitiating and paralyzing the very elements of social progress, and especially in that portion of young men who should act and be regarded as the future hope of our country. A country's social progress, is the sum of the progress of the individuals that compose it. When the young men who aspire to be something more than units in their country, are impressed with the conviction that their success in life depends upon their character, their virtues, their qualifications in regard to any post in the public service, what an impulse and encouragement is given to their cultivation of the virtues and knowledge which would render them the ornaments and blessings of their social circles and faithful and useful public servants; whereas if these same young men see that *partisanship* is the shortest and surest way of appointment to office of any kind—that the active and unscrupulous partisan will distance the man of principle and merit in the race for office, what a premium is offered for the cultivation of party cunning and the other requisites of partisanship, instead of the manly virtues of truth and industry, and the right qualifications of knowledge and ability. The contagion spreads to other young men of the land and to other classes of the community, until the public taste becomes vitiated, society

\* See APPENDIX No. 1.

divided and often convulsed, and the primary elements of civil and social progress paralyzed and corrupted.

What I therefore wrote and published in July 1838, to protect reformers themselves, from the pretensions and proscriptions of party spirit, I repeat in July 1867:—

"How destitute of honour, of justice, of truth, of consistency is party spirit! How dangerous is party association! How many pious members of the church has it unsettled, and prejudiced, and ruined of late years? And it may do the same again. How unprincipled and unjust has a party government ever been, whenever and wherever it has existed! And how unprincipled and unjust must it ever be! I repudiate party spirit, party interests, party pretensions. Party spirit has been the bane and curse of this country for many years. It has neither eyes, nor ears, nor principle, nor reason. Its patriotism is pestilence, and both its loyalty and liberality are alike a baneful abomination."

6. *Partisan Government contrary to the avowed Principles and Objects of old Reformers.*

3. But I observe, thirdly, that this partyism in government is contrary to the avowed principles and objects of reformers in the true heroic age of Canadian reform. "*Equal rights and privileges among all classes, without regard to sect or party,*" was the motto of the reformers of those days, and was repeated and placed upon their banners in almost every variety of style and form. And what was understood and meant by that expressive motto, in the whole administration of government, will be seen from the following facts:—The reformers and reform press of Upper Canada, hailed and rejoiced in the principles of the government of Lord Durham, Lord Sydenham, and Sir Charles Bagot. The Earl of Durham, in his reply to the address of the citizens of Toronto, July, 1838, said:—

"On my part, I promise you an *impartial* administration of government. *Determined not to recognize the existence of parties, provincial or imperial, classes or races, I shall hope to receive from all Her Majesty's subjects those public services, the efficiency of which must ever mainly depend upon their comprehensiveness. Extend the veil of oblivion over the past, direct to the future your best energies, and the consequences cannot be doubted.*"

The favourite phrase and avowed doctrine of Lord Sydenham was "equal and impartial justice to all classes of Her Majesty's subjects." After the union of the Canadas, Lord Sydenham appointed Mr. Draper Attorney-General, and the late Mr. R. Baldwin, Solicitor-General—the first "coalition" in Upper Canada. There was no newspaper or reformer so extreme and violent at that time as to denounce either Mr. Draper or Mr. Baldwin for uniting to carry on a new system of

government, under a new Constitutional Act of the Imperial Parliament; but the *Examiner*, a reform paper, opposed Mr. Draper and supported Mr. Baldwin, at the election, and one or two tory papers opposed Mr. Baldwin and supported Mr. Draper; and yet both the tory and reform papers professed equally to be favorable to Lord Sydenham's administration. Pending these elections, in April, 1841, Lord Sydenham directed his Private Secretary to write a letter, the substance of which was published in the newspapers, and the original of which is in my possession, and of which the following is an extract:—

"The Governor-General attaches equal importance to the return of Mr. Draper and Mr. Baldwin; and opposition to the one as well as to the other, under whatever pretence it may be got up, is equally opposition to the Governor-General's administration. *Parties and party spirit have nearly ruined the country; the object of the Governor-General is to abolish parties and party feelings by uniting what is good in both parties.* Therefore, the moderate of both parties, who possess superior personal qualifications to others, ought to be supported: and the violent extremes of both parties ought to be rejected as enemies both of the government and country. Adopting this course will be supporting the government, pursuing the opposite course will be opposing the government. Every man has a right to support or oppose the government; but every man ought to know when he is doing the one or other."

Lord Sydenham's two years' administration of the Canadian government proved the greatest boon to Upper Canada, and the principles and policy of it were highly approved by reformers and the reform press generally, as was shewn by a pamphlet published by the editor of the *Examiner*, containing the notices of the press of British North America, on the death of Lord Sydenham, and the character of his Canadian Administration. The all but universal feeling of Upper Canada was expressed by the writer of a notice of his Lordship's death in the following words:—

"His Lordship found the country divided, he left it united; he found it prostrate and paralytic, he left it erect and vigorous; he found it mantled with despair, he left it blooming with hope. His Lordship has solved the difficult problem that a people may be colonists and yet be free; and, in the solution of that problem, he has gained a triumph, less imposing, but not less sublime, and scarcely less important than the battle of Waterloo; he has saved millions to England, and secured the affections of Canada."

I have in a former part of this address, shown what were the just and liberal principles of Sir Charles Bagot's administration in 1842 and 1843, and how they were approved by reformers, and sanctioned

by the best examples of history in ancient and modern times. I will only here add Sir Charles Bagot's exposition of the principles and spirit of his own government, in reply (eulogized by the reform press throughout Canada) to an address of the Johnstown District Council, Sir Charles says :—

"I observe with pleasure your declaration that you wholly repudiate all selfish, all factious, all national, all religious distinctions, animosities, and exclusion; and that you desire to see all her Majesty's subjects in this country enjoy the most perfect toleration and equality, and *the distribution of the patronage of the executive government confined to no particular section or party, religious or political.* You may be assured that it is in accordance with these principles that I am determined to administer the government of this Province; and that in doing so I but execute the commands I have received from the Queen. I therefore call on you to co-operate with me in my task, and that with that view *to lay aside the by-gone dissensions and party distinctions* to which you advert, and which have been the bane of this fine Province." I call upon you to turn your attention to the practical measures necessary for the improvement of the country, and to prove your loyalty and earn the gratitude of your fellow subjects, by making this Province what it was intended by nature to be, the most valuable dependency of the British Crown—a source of wealth in peace and a means of strength in war."

Such were the avowed principles and aims of reformers in their admitted golden age of purity and patriotism. The present vicious and vitiating doctrine of partyism in the administration in government had no place among them then, and was then only advocated by the alleged tories of that day. Every one must rejoice that any of these have become the advocates of true progress—of a government of equal justice to all without respect to sect or party; while it must be amazing that there should be found one man in Canada professing to be a reformer advocating the corrupt and corrupting doctrine denounced by all old reformers as selfish toryism—the appointments to office and the administration of government according to party, instead of according to principle and merit—the very essence of tyranny and corruption in government in all ages. Yet it is attempted to palm upon the country this hermaphrodite spawn of cast-off colonial despotism and selfishness, as the doctrine of reform, and to brand every man with expulsion from the reform household who will not own this monstrous bastard as the true child and representative of the family! This is a gross apostacy from the doctrine of old reformers, and has no more affinity with it than has darkness with light.

§ 7. *The Doctrine of Partisan Government contrary to the Opinions and Advice of Good and Experienced Men in Europe and America—Examples of its Bad Effects in the United States and Canada.*

4. *Fourthly*, this partyism doctrine is contrary to the opinions and advice of good and experienced men both in England and the United States, as to the proper duty of public men, the true ends of government, and the best interests of society. I will cite but few authorities where I could fill a volume. The late Rev. Robert Hall, the brightest ornament of the Baptist church in England, and the eloquent advocate of reform, speaks as follows in his Tract on Reform of Parliament:—

"Freedom is supposed by some to derive great security from the existence of a *regular opposition*, an expedient which is in my opinion both the *offspring* and the *cherisher* of *faction*. That a minister should be opposed when his measures are destructive to his country, can admit of no doubt; that a *systematic opposition* should be maintained against any man merely as a minister, without regard to the principles he may propose, which is intended by a regular opposition, appears to me a *most corrupt and unprincipled maxim*."—"If a measure be good, it is of no importance to the nation from whom it proceeds; yet will it be esteemed by the opposition a point of honour not to let it pass without throwing every obstruction in its way. In an assembly convened to deliberate on the affairs of a nation, how disgusting to hear the members perpetually talk of their connexions, and their resolution to act with a particular set of men; when, if they have happened by chance to vote according to their convictions rather than their party, half their speeches are made up of apologies for a conduct so new and unexpected! When they see men united who agree in nothing but their hostility to the minister, the people fall at first into a sort of amazement and irresolution; till, perceiving political debate is a mere scramble for profit and power, they endeavour to become as corrupt as their representatives. It is not in the roar of faction, which deafens the ear and sickens the heart, the still small voice of Liberty is heard. She turns from the disgusting scene, and regards these struggles as the pangs and convulsions in which she is doomed to expire."

In the last speech the late Sir Robert Peel made in the House of Commons, June 28, 1850, while opposing the foreign policy of the Government, in the affairs of Greece, he remarked as follows:—

"Sir, I will not forget, and I need not remind the House, that I have given, or attempted to give, to Her Majesty's Government, my support—I will say my cordial support—*during the last four years*. (Cheers). In utter oblivion of the circumstances under which they succeeded to power (a laugh), I have felt it my



duty to give them not an ostentations, but, because it was not ostentations, a not less effective support. (Loud Cheers). I have not the honour or advantage of possessing their personal friendship; I have never been in political connexion with them. I have held no communication with them during the last four years which may not be had by any member of this House, who may be the most independent and the most unconnected with their policy. I have given them my support because I cordially approved of the policy which they carried into domestic affairs."

How nobly does the conduct of Sir Robert Peel illustrate the truly christian maxims expressed by Robert Hall, in the passage above quoted! And with what moral and withering power do they both condemn what we are painfully witnessing in this country, of a ministry being opposed by blackening the characters of its individual members, without specifying a single act of its policy that is objectionable, or any one of its opinions that are unsound, without its even having the opportunity of doing either! In all that I have read and observed, I do not recollect a more unprincipled proceeding—strikingly illustrating the selfish, factious, vicious character of the partyism attempted to be inflicted on the country, as its future system of government.

Listen on this subject to the words of the late Rev. Dr. Wayland, the late distinguished President of Brown University, the brightest ornament of the American Baptist Church, whose work on *Moral Science* is used as a Text Book in our own Toronto University College, as well as in various colleges of the United States. Dr. Wayland says:—

"And not only is an executive officer bound to exert no other power than that committed to him; but he is bound to exert that power for no other purposes than those for which it is committed to him. A power may be conferred for the public good; but this by no means authorises men to use it for the gratification of individual love or hatred; much less for the sake of building up one party and crushing another. Political corruption is no less wicked because it is so common. Dishonesty is no better policy in the affairs of state, than in other affairs; though men may persuade themselves and others to the contrary. He is not the organ of a section, or of a district, much less of a party, but of society at large. And he who uses his power for the benefit of a section, or of a party, is false to his duty, to his country, and to his God. He is engraving his name on the adamantine pillar of his country's history, to be gazed upon for ever as an object of universal detestation."

The late Mr. FENIMORE COOPER—whose fame as a scholar and writer is European as well as American—thus speaks in his "Ameri-

can Democrat," on the effects as well as cause of this abominable system of partyism in government :—

"Any one who has lived long enough to note changes of the sort, must have perceived how fast men of probity and virtue are losing their influence in the country, to be superseded by those who scarcely deem an affectation of higher qualities necessary to their success. This fearful change must in a great measure be ascribed to the corruption of the public press, which, as a whole, owes its existence to interested political adventurers. The press tyrannises over public men, and even our private life; under the pretence of protecting public morals, it is corrupting them to the core, and under the semblance of maintaining liberty, it is gradually establishing a despotism, as ruthless, as grasping, and one that is quite as vulgar as that of any christian state known. With loud professions of freedom of opinion, there is no tolerance; with a parade of patriotism, no sacrifice of interests; and with fulsome panegyrics on propriety, no docency."

The late celebrated DR. CHANNING, of Boston, speaks thus on the subject under consideration :—

"I am sorry to say it, but the truth should be spoken, that at the present moment, political action in this country, does little to lift up any who are concerned in it. It stands in opposition to high morality. Politics, indeed, regarded as the study and pursuit of the true, enduring good of the community, as the application of great and unchangeable principles to public affairs, a noble sphere of thought and action; but politics, in its common sense, or considered as the invention of temporary shifts, as the playing of a subtle game, as the tactics of party for gaining power, and the spoils of office, is a paltry and debasing concern.—The intellect in becoming a pander to vice, a tool of the passions, an advocate of lies, becomes not only degraded, but diseased. It loses the capacity of distinguishing truth from wrong; it becomes as worthless as an eye which cannot distinguish between colours and forms." (Works, Vol. III).

In another place Dr. Channing speaks of the despotism of the party press and party spirit as having extinguished in many individuals freedom of thought and independence of character. He says :—

"The individual in whose heart the thought of freedom has dawned, dares not breathe it into his neighbour's ear lest that neighbour should prove a spy. He has around him crowds of sycophants, men sold to selfishness and meanness, and sinks into despair. \* \* \* The faith of man in the capacity of men for self-government is shaken. \* \* \* The shouts of mobs will be the knell of freedom."

Judge Story, in his Commentaries on the Constitution of the United States, says :—

"The best talents and the best virtues are driven from office by intrigue and corruption, or by the violence of the press or of party."

In harmony with this statement of the great Judge Story, the



famous French writer M. de Tocqueville, in his *Democracy in America*, observes:—

"It is a well authenticated fact that, at the present day, the most talented men in the United States are very rarely placed at the head of affairs, and it must be acknowledged that such has been the result in proportion as democracy has outstripped its former limits. The race of American statesmen has evidently dwindled most remarkably in the course of the last fifty years."

These remarks of M. de Tocqueville apply to some extent to Canada where there has been a manifest decline in the standing and ability of our public men. There are exceptions, but what instances have we now of the representatives or equals of the Robinsons, the Willsons, the Macaulays, the Bidwells, the Jones's, the Lafontaines, the Hagermans, the Baldwins, the Drapers, and many other political men of forty and twenty years ago? To what is this decline in public men, in an otherwise advancing country, to be ascribed but to the unscrupulous partisanship of the press and politics, which blacken character instead of discussing principles, which fight for office instead of for the public good, and that by a barbarous system of moral assassination, instead of public men respecting and protecting each others' standing, and rivaling each others' deeds of greatness and usefulness. In England, the character of public men is regarded as the most precious property of the nation; and if the personal character of any member of Parliament, or other public man, is assailed by the public press or otherwise, you will see opponents as well as friends rallying round the assailed and sustaining and shielding him by their testimony, as a matter of common or national concern. When Sir Robert Peel, in the last great debate of his life, objected to Lord Palmerston's Grecian policy, he referred to Lord Palmerston's character and abilities,—not to depreciate and calumniate his great rival, but, to exclaim amid the applause of the House of Commons, "We are proud of the man! And England is proud of the man!" But in Canada, the language of a partisan press and politician is "down with man; execrate and execute the man as a corruptionist and traitor!"

This directly opposite mode of discussion and action in regard to public men in England and in the United States and Canada, is sufficient to explain the political and social phenomenon, that in England the succession of great men is maintained unbroken and even multiplied, while in Canada many able and most virtuous men, as in the United States, are deterred or driven from public life—are succeeded by inferior men, and often by partisans and sharpers, who deceive and

corrupt the people by their calumnies and pretensions, and then plunder them for their own selfish and party purposes.

The discussion of the great principles on which society is founded and by which it is advanced, enlarges and elevates the public mind; while the calumny and slander of character enfeebles and corrupts it. In former times in Canada, the vital principles of government, of civil rights and free thought, and social progress were discussed with a breadth and power not equalled now-a-days, but maintaining, with few exceptions, proper respect and sacred regard for individual character; and the country improved in public even as in public liberty; but the reverse is, to a large extent, the case of late years. If the real greatness of a country consists in the morals and intellect of its people, the most valuable public treasure of a country is the character of its public men; and every policy and act which depreciates and degrades that character, is an act of treason against the common wealth. The libeller of the character of private individuals is justly reprobated by all honest men; but the libeller of the character of public men is a much more gross offender against the interests of society, as, just in proportion to his success, he robs society of what is worth far more than gold or silver.

We see from the testimonies above quoted how this execrable system of partyism, with its proscriptions and calumnies, has deterred or driven from political life the best and ablest men in the United States, and has caused a melancholy decline in the character of their public men, even in comparison of old colonial times--has dwarfed, and in many instances extinguished individual freedom of thought, and individual independence in public affairs, has convulsed and corrupted society, and caused unprecedented civil war and bloodshed; and yet, instead of being warned by such an example, while laying the foundations of government and social progress in our new Dominion, we are urged to imitate what is the greatest public scourge and hindrance to statesmanship and the advancement of society among our American neighbours.

Under the upas influence of this partyism, young men who present themselves as candidates for political life--even young men who, by the liberality of their country, have received the advantages of the highest university and professional education--come forth, in some instances, not in the dignity of their own individual character and independence, to exert untrammelled their cultivated powers, in return,

for their country's best interests, but make their debut into political life bound hand and foot in the bonds of political partisanship, to wield the sword for party, and plead from its brief for the fee of its reward, as they would for a consideration plead in court for one party against another. This is not to look at their country as a whole, and to seek its elevation and advancement; this is not just to their own manhood and great advantages; this is not just to the independent development of the noblest qualities of statesmanship and patriotism. Very different is this from the entrance into political life of a man in England, who, from humble circumstances and slender attainments, became one of the ablest men of his age, conferred untold benefits upon his nation and the world, and died amidst universal regrets. The *North British Review* for March, in an article headed "The Political Writings of Richard Cobden," remarks:—

"Mr. Cobden entered Parliament, *not to support a party, to play for office, or educate himself for professional statesmanship, still less to gratify personal vanity, or to acquire social importance, but as the representative of distinct principles, and the champion of a great cause [free trade].* Mr. Cobden belonged to that school of political thinkers who believe in the *perfect harmony of moral and economical laws, and that, in proportion as these are recognised, understood, and obeyed by nations, will be their advance in all that constitutes civilization.*"

Did all young men and others among us enter Parliament in the spirit of Mr. Cobden, how would their office, their character, their services be ennobled, and how would the country rise and advance under their influence? And how would our public men, as in England, not only administer the affairs of the nation upon definite and patriotic principles, but would by their sound knowledge and well-considered speeches and writings, become the educators of the people in the very science of government itself, especially in the application of its principles to the varying state and diversified wants of society. But how lamentable is it, that instead of imitating such an example and adopting such a course of moral grandeur and public usefulness,

\* It affords me pleasure to remark, and I do so without any reference to the political opinions or relations of the gentlemen concerned, that some of our rising Canadians have entered, and others are seeking an entrance into Parliamentary life as did Mr. Cobden, upon the ground of their own avowed principles, personal character and merit, as free men, and to exercise their talents as such, and not as the articulated confederates, or proteges, or joints in the tail of partisanship. Free and independent men in the Legislature, as in the country, are the best counterpoise to faction, and the mainspring of a nation's progress and greatness. Faction dreads independent men; patriotism requires them.

any young man, and especially any one of education and abilities, should make his first appearance before the public as the automaton of partizanship, and make his first speech by repeating borrowed scurrility against the elder public men of the land, who, whatever their merits or demerits, are entitled to the respect of having been entrusted and chosen again and again by the great majority of the people, mediately and immediately, as the chief managers of their affairs, who have been recently chosen with the consent and even union of all parties to fulfil the highest trust of a people and perform the highest act of statesmanship—to frame a constitution for the future government of their country: and who have executed that great and difficult task to the satisfaction of all parties, as well as to the marked approval of their Sovereign. Criticisms on the acts and policy of public men are always legitimate; but the abuse of the characters of the peoples' chosen servants, from whatever quarter such abuse may come, is in fact a very gross insult to the Sovereign who has honored such servants, and to the people who have chosen them, and who have continued them in their employment for so many years.

I maintain, therefore, that this system of partyism is debauching and debasing to the young men of our land, who are entering political life, as also to other young men who are candidates for public employment; perverts the ends of government; dwarfs the race of public men, as it debases their character, and destroys the essential elements of greatness in their career; belittles and corrupts the public mind, and weakens the bonds of society; is the source of the greatest possible evils and abuses in the neighbouring States, and must be equally injurious in this country. I submit, then, whether it is not the duty of every friend to the success and prosperity of the new Dominion of Canada to discountenance, by every lawful means, such partyism, from whatever quarter it may proceed, or by whatever parties it may be practised.

The late President Harrison, of the United States, uttered sentiments in the conclusion of his inaugural address, which, if he had lived to carry into effect, or if they had been carried into effect by his successors and fellow-citizens, would have saved them hundreds of millions of money, hundreds of thousands of human lives, and untold miseries. His words should be pondered by every

Canadian in commencing the new Dominion. President Harrison said:—

"If parties, in a Republic, are necessary to secure a degree of vigilance sufficient to keep the public functionaries within the bounds of law and duty, at that point their usefulness ends. Beyond that, they become destructive of public virtue, the parents of a spirit antagonistic to that of liberty, eventually its inevitable conqueror. It was a beautiful remark of a distinguished English writer, that, 'in the Roman senate, Octavius had a party, and Anthony had a party, but the commonwealth had none.' Always the friend of my countrymen, never their flatterer, it becomes my duty to say to them, from this high place, to which their partiality has exalted me, that there exists in the land a spirit hostile to their best interests, hostile to liberty itself—it is a spirit contracted in its views, and selfish in its objects. It looks to the aggrandizement of a few, even to the destruction of the interests of the whole. The entire remedy is with the people. Something, however, may be effected by the means which they have placed in my hands. It is the union we want, not of party, for the sake of that party, but a union of the whole for the sake of the whole country. As far as it depends upon me, it shall be accomplished. The true spirit of liberty, though devoted, persevering, bold, and uncompromising in principle, that secured, is mild and tolerant, and scrupulous as to the means it employs; whilst the spirit of party, assuming to be that of liberty, is harsh, vindictive, and intolerant, and totally reckless as to the character of the allies which it brings to the aid of its cause. The reign of an intolerant spirit of party amongst a free people, seldom fails to result in a dangerous accession of executive power."

I therefore conclude the argument of this Address in the potent words of Lord Brougham, the Nestor statesman of Europe:—

"Party undermines principles, destroys confidence in statesmen, corrupts private morals, unites sordid motives with pure, produces self-deception, destroys regard to truth, promotes abuse of the press, gives scope to malignant feelings, paralyses public councils, promotes treasonable proceedings."

#### 8. *Two Questions for the consideration and decision of the Country.*

I conclude by putting to the candid reader of any sect or party, two questions.

The first is this: If the reader had been authorised and enabled to devise and construct a machine of public utility, and if public satisfaction were expressed with the machine which the reader had thus devised and constructed; and if it were to be subjected to public trial in order to test its merits and efficiency; and if at this juncture, another party should step forward and say that the author of the machine was unworthy to put it into operation, and should be branded and treated as an outlaw for alleged malpractices before he had been



employed to construct the machine, though such alleged malpractices were known to the accusing party and not objected to by him when the order was given for the construction of the machine. Would the reader feel that he was honourably and fairly treated in such a case? Would he feel that such treatment of him was just between man and man? Now certain men have been authorised to devise and construct the political machine of a constitution for the future government of Canada, and of each of its Provinces. Their machine is approved; and they propose to test the constitutional machine which they have thus devised and got constructed. But at this juncture, an outcry is raised against them as having been conspirators, corruptionists, and traitors in former years. Though all these alleged malpractices were known to their accuser as well before as since their construction of the constitutional machine; yet he not only did not object to them on that account, but actually united with them to construct the machine, though he abandoned the work before its completion; but he now renews these old charges which he himself had ignored and abandoned, and declares that on the ground of these revived charges, the authors of the constitutional machine should not be suffered to test their machine by putting it into operation, but should be forthwith adjudged as traitors. Now, can what the reader would regard as inconsistent, most unjust, and cruel to himself, be otherwise when applied to others? Can what is so unjust and outrageous, when applied to an individual, be otherwise when applied to a number of individuals? And can what would be universally denounced, if done by an individual, be justified when done by a country? And would not Canada be disgraced and denounced by the civilized world, were it to do what all men would condemn and denounce in an individual? And can an honest man in Canada, of any sect or party, be justified in doing what would be unjust and base for the country to do? Is not the duty and honour of the country obligatory on each individual citizen of the country? If the framers of the constitutional machine should not work the machine satisfactorily, then it may be very proper to dismiss them and employ other engineers in their places. I put this question not in respect to party, but as a moral question of honour, justice, and humanity, between man and man, and between the country and any set of men of any party. And I put this question on the grounds of justice and morality, irrespective of the question of partyism, and its effects upon society, and the interests of the nation, as discussed above.

My second question relates to the inauguration of government in the Province of Ontario under the new Constitution. I submit to the candid reader of any party, that if the new constitution of government for Ontario has been constructed by the union of parties, whether that same union of parties ought not to put it into operation? Was ever such an outrageous proposition before heard of or conceived, of all parties uniting to form the constitution of an agricultural or any other society whatever, and then one party rising up and saying that no other party should have anything to do in inaugurating such a constitution? Is this doing to others as one would be done by? Is this the way to promote the great ends of the Constitution? Is this the way that men of common honesty, common sense, and common prudence, would act in any of the common affairs of life? Would not the propounder of a proceeding so unjust, so selfish, so enfeebling, and so injurious to the common weal, be scouted as the worst enemy of the society? Would not all candid and intelligent men say, if differences arise under the operations of the constitution, let them be expressed and let men then act accordingly as their judgments may dictate; but let not the work be begun by quarrelling and division.

And have we not the best guarantee attainable in the country, that our new Provincial Constitution will be put into operation upon the principles of justice, economy and patriotism, by the selection, not of the prejudiced head of a faction or party, but of a plain, sensible, impartial man, whose private life is above suspicion; and whom envy itself has never dared to accuse with having used political power for personal advantage; who has evinced more freedom from party bias and subserviency than any other leading public man in Upper Canada; who, if, as has been alleged, has no strong party following, is the more dependent on the wisdom of his policy and excellence of his measures for success; who selects his assistant colleagues from heretofore differing parties, thus giving assurance that no injustice will be done to the friends of those old parties; and who declares to the public, not on the pretence of oratory, noisy partizanship, or upon the ties of party pledges and domination, but upon the honour of a stainless public life, to employ his experience and energies, with the best assistance he can combine, to establish, under the new constitution, a system of just, economical government, with impartial and comprehensive policy and measures for the benefit of the whole country, without respect to sect or party. Happy will the



country be if these objects are attained ; and if not attained through the incompetence or unfaithfulness of the administration, the country will have the remedy of trying other men. But this much is certain, that such objects can never be attained by the partiality, the exclusive and the selfish spirit of partyism ; for, as Dr. Wayland has said, "He who uses his power for the benefit of a *section* or of a *party*, is false to his duty, to his country, and to his God."

#### 9. Conclusion.

It is with a view to the best interests of our whole country, that I have thus addressed my fellow countrymen, contributing the results of my best thoughts and experience to your beginning well, that you may do well and be well under our new Dominion, though I cannot expect long to enjoy it. My nearly half a century of public life is approaching its close. I am soon to account for both my words and my needs. I have little to hope or fear from man. But I wish before I go hence to see my fellow citizens of all sects and parties unite in commencing a new system of government for our country and posterity, "that all things may be so ordered and settled by their endeavours, upon the best and surest foundations, that peace and happiness, truth and justice, religion and piety, may be established among us for all generations."

E. RYERSON.

Toronto, July, 1867.

## APPENDIX.

### No. 1.

#### *Lord Brougham on the demoralizing influence of Partyism.*

No apology is required for the length of the following quotation on this subject, from the *Political Philosophy* of the venerable LORD BROUGHAM, published by the Society for the Diffusion of Christian Knowledge:—

"Men bind themselves together, and obtain the support of their followers, that they may be enabled to engross the whole power in administering public affairs. The possession of power, with its attendants, patronage, honours, places, &c., all the benefits that uncontrolled dominion can bestow upon those who are clothed with it—this is the object of the party combination; and to this every other consideration, among the rest all regard to public duty, all concern for the interests of the community, is sacrificed without hesitation, without scruple, without remorse. There is, generally, a pretext of principle put forward to hide the nakedness of the party association; but no one is ever deceived by it, and the less, that the same principles are successively taken up and abandoned by all factions successively, as it suits their position and serves the purpose of the day. Principles are no longer held sacred in the estimation of mankind; they become secondary and subordinate considerations; they are no more the guides of men's conduct, but the false fabricated pretexts under which the real motive and object is cloaked; they are the mere counters with which the profligate game of faction is played. A low tone of political morality becomes the prevailing sentiment. Stern principle is scorned; rigid virtue is a laughing-stock; and men in the humblest stations see those who should be their patterns, set them an example of the most scandalous profligacy. Add to this the disgusting hypocrisy which men practise in their loud assertions of opinions which they care nothing about; their earnest expression of feelings no deeper than their mouths; their inflated avowal of devotion to principles wholly foreign to their nature and habits. All this makes up a picture which the people must be debauched by beholding so continuously unveiled before their eyes. Akin to this, is the fatal tendency to corrupt public and even private morals of the party union, as removing both the great incentive to virtue, and the most powerful barrier against vice. Public praise and public blame are no longer distributed according to men's deserts. Whatever a man connected with party does well, he is quite sure to be undervalued, perhaps discountenanced, possibly assailed, by one-half the community; and let him act

ever so ill, he is sure of defence, at least, if not of commendation by others. The tribunal of public opinion becomes corrupt; it no longer deserves the name of a tribunal. Whoever is cited to its bar, knows that half the judges are for him, and half against him, and no sentence, nor anything that may fairly be called a sentence, can be pronounced. Well might Mr. Hume remark, a hundred years ago, that 'it is no wonder if faction be so productive of vices of all kinds; for, besides that it inflames all passions, it tends much to remove those great restraints, *honour* and *shame*, when men find that no iniquity can lose them the applause of their own party, and no innocence screens them against the calumnies of the opposite.'—(*Hist.*, chap. lxi.) Even with those who form party combinations with purer views, and for the promotion of worthy and patriotic objects, it inevitably works a corruption of the deepest root, and most extensive contagion. This is the necessary consequence of the union, and this explains the conduct of men, who, upon other matters, are not deficient in moral principle, but who cast all such ties away where party objects are concerned. The process of self-deception is plain. The partisan covers over the iniquity of his conduct with the guise of principle and patriotism, pursues his personal gratification as if he were performing only a public duty, and not only affects to be guided by the purest motives, but often blinds himself into a belief that he has no other incentive to a course of conduct the most sordid or the most malignant. His experience of party movements must be exceedingly limited, who cannot, at once, point to numberless instances of men, in all the other transactions of life, tolerably honest and pure, who have gratified the most selfish propensities of our nature, or given vent to its most spiteful feelings, while they covered over the naturally hideous aspect of their intrigues or their rancour with the party vernish for the good cause, and a vehement hostility to its enemies. It is in two ways that injury is done to men's morals by the party tie. A regard for the truth is abandoned, and kindly, charitable, and even ordinarily candid feelings are blunted, nay, extirpated. The basis of all morals is a sacred and even delicate regard for truth, a sentiment of high disdain at the base thought of being humbled to a falsehood, a feeling of disgust at all intentional violation of that paramount duty. But how many men are there who will scruple little to exaggerate or extenuate facts, nay, suppress the truth they know, and even forge what they are well aware is false coin, so as they make concealment available to the defence of their party, or give fiction currency to that party's gain. It is no light thing in any community that one part of it are trained by party trick and deception, while the others are drawn into unreflecting dupery. Next to the encouragement of falsehood, the gratification of malignant feelings is the worst point of the party compact. This guides most partisans, more or less, and converts society into a multitude of beings actuated towards each other rather with the spirit of fends than of men. They never would feel such unworthy sentiments, assuredly they never would give them vent, but for the party spirit that moves their souls, and makes them pretend, nay, often makes them really think, that they are only furthering an important principle when they are vomiting forth the venom of 'envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness' against their adversaries."

## No. 2.

*Duty of a Legislator.**(From Gisborne's Duties of Men.)*

"While the Legislator is earnestly engaged in augmenting the treasures of his mind, let him remember that their proper application depends solely on the disposition of the heart. It is there that he is to fix that resolute and stubborn sense of duty, which may fortify him against the attacks of selfishness and ambition, the partial solicitations of friendship, and the overwhelming influence of false shame; and may even supply, to a certain degree, the place of a superior understanding, by relieving his judgment from the bias of those culpable motives and prepossessions which frequently prove the sources of erroneous conclusions. In order to preserve this principle at once pure in itself and efficacious in governing his conduct, let him resolve from the first moment of his outset in public life, *to shun the snares of party*. Let him learn to detect the hackneyed sophism, by which he will learn the sacrifice of every upright motive palliated and recommended; that a concurrence of many is necessary to the success of every plan; that no man can expect the aid of others without being ready to make reciprocal concessions and compliances. Let him tell those who urge it, *that to co-operate is not to be a partisan*; that co-operation asks no concessions but such as are consistent with morality and religion; that party requires her votary to violate, either expressly or impliedly, the dictates of both; to affirm what he believes to be false; to deny what he knows to be true; to praise what he deems reprehensible; to countenance what he judges unwise. Let him implicitly make known to those with whom he co-operates in political undertakings, that he is an independent friend, who will support them in every measure which he shall think equitable in itself, and conducive to the national welfare; not an articulated confederate, pledged to concur in proceedings which his judgment or his conscience disapproves."

Lord Brougham, in his *Political Philosophy*, thus speaks of the press brow-beating public men, and of their conduct in respect to it.

"When the virulence of personal attack deters a representative from pursuing the course which his honest and deliberate judgment dictates; when dread of incurring pointed censure deters him from doing what his duty, according to his own conception of it, requires; when to gain the applause of such as regulate the press, or to disarm their hostility, he shapes his conduct according to their wishes; then he shamefully betrays his trust. Those who thus beleaguer him, and he who suffers himself to be swayed by his fears or by his love of praise, equally commit an offence of a grave kind in the eyes of all rational men."

