PAPERS

-RELATING TO

The CONFERENCES which have taken place between HER MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT and a DEPUTATION from the EXECUTIVE COUNCIL of CANADA appointed to confer with HER MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT on SUBJECTS of IMPORTANCE to the PROVINCE.

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty.
19*th June* 1865.

No. 1.

COPY of a DESPATCH from GOVERNOR GENERAL Viscount MONCK to the Right Honourable EDWARD CARDWELL, M.P.

(No. 83.)

SIR,

Quebec, 24th March 1865.

I HAVE the honour to transmit for your information a copy of an approved Minute of the Executive Council of Canada appointing a Deputation from their body who are to proceed to England to confer with Her Majesty's Government on subjects of importance to the Province.

The gentlemen named on the deputation propose leaving by the steamer which sails on the 5th April.

The Right Honourable
Edward Cardwell, M.P.,
&c., &c.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MONCK.

Enclosure in No. 1.

COPY of a REPORT of a COMMITTEE of the Honourable the EXECUTIVE COUNCIL, approved by his Excellency the GOVERNOR GENERAL on the 24th March 1865.

THE Committee respectfully recommend that four members of your Excellency's Council do proceed to England to confer with Her Majesty's Government:

1st. Upon the proposed Confederation of the British North American Provinces, and the means whereby it can be most speedily effected:

2d. Upon the arrangements necessary for the defence of Canada in the event of war arising with the United States, and the extent to which the same should be shared between Great Britain and Canada:

3d. Upon the steps to be taken with reference to the Reciprocity Treaty, and the rights conferred by it upon the United States:

4th. Upon the arrangements necessary for the settlement of the North-west Territory and Hudson's Bay Company's claims:

5th. And generally upon the existing critical state of affairs by which Canada is most seriously affected:

The Committee further recommend that the following Members of Council be named to form the Delegation, viz., Messrs. Macdonald, Cartier, Brown, and Galt.

Certified,
WM. H. LEE, C.E.C.

No. 2.

COPY of a DESPATCH from the Right Honourable EDWARD CARDWELL, M.P., to Governor General Viscount MONCK.

(No. 95.)

MY LORD,

Downing Street, 17th June 1865.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that several conferences have been held between the four Canadian Ministers who were deputed, under the Minute of your Executive Council of March 24th, to proceed to England to confer with Her Majesty's

Government, on the part of Canada, and the Duke of Somerset, the Earl De Grey, Mr. Gladstone, and myself, on the part of Her Majesty's Government.

On the first subject referred to in the Minute, that of the Confederation of the British North American Provinces, we repeated on the part of the Cabinet the assurances which had already been given of the determination of Her Majesty's Government to use every proper means of influence to carry into effect without delay the proposed Confederation.

On the second point, we entered into a full consideration of the important subject of the defence of Canada, not with any apprehension on either side that the friendly relations now happily subsisting between this country and the United States are likely to be disturbed, but impressed with the conviction that the safety of the Empire from possible attack ought to depend upon its own strength and the due application of its own resources. We reminded the Canadian Ministers that on the part of the Imperial Government we had obtained a vote of money for improving the fortifications of Quebec. We assured them that so soon as that vote had been obtained the necessary instructions had been sent out for the immediate execution of the works, which would be prosecuted with despatch; and we reminded them of the suggestion Her Majesty's Government had made to them to proceed with the fortifications of Montreal.

The Canadian Ministers, in reply, expressed unreservedly the desire of Canada to devote her whole resources, both in men and money, for the maintenance of her connection with the Mother Country; and their full belief in the readiness of the Canadian Parliament to make known that determination in the most authentic manner. They said they had increased the expenditure for their Militia from 300,000 to 1,000,000 dollars, and would agree to train that force to the satisfaction of the Secretary of State for War, provided the cost did not exceed the last-mentioned sum annually, while the question of confederation is pending. They said they were unwilling to separate the question of the works at Montreal from the question of the works west of that place, and from the question of a naval armament on Lake Ontario. That the execution of the whole of these works would render it necessary for them to have recourse to a loan, which could only be raised with the guarantee of the Imperial Parliament. They were ready to propose to their Legislature on their return a measure for this purpose, provided that the guarantee of the Imperial Parliament were given now, and that they were authorized to communicate to the Parliament of Canada the assurance that, the occasion arising, England will have prepared an adequate naval force for Lake Ontario. They thought that if the guarantee were not obtained now it was probable that the Canadian Government and Parliament would think it desirable that the question of defensive works should await the decision of the Government and Legislature of the United Provinces.

On the part of Her Majesty's Government we assented to the reasonableness of the proposal that if the Province undertook the primary liability for the works of defence mentioned in the letter of Lieutenant Colonel Jervois, and showed a sufficient security, Her Majesty's Government should apply to Parliament for a guarantee for the amount required; and we said that Her Majesty's Government would furnish the armaments for the works. But we said that the desire and decision of the Provincial Legislature ought to be pronounced before any application was made to the Imperial Parliament. On the subject of a Naval Force for Lake Ontario, we said that, apart from any question of expediency, the convention subsisting between this country and the United States rendered it impossible for either nation to place more than the specified number of armed vessels on the lakes in time of peace. In case of war it would, as a matter of course, be the duty of any Government in this country to apply its means of naval defence according to the judgment it might form upon the exigencies of each particular time, and the Canadian Ministers might be assured that Her Majesty's Government would not permit itself to be found in such a position as to be unable to discharge its duty in this respect. This was the only assurance the Canadian Ministers could expect, or we could give.

Upon a review of the whole matter, the Canadian Ministers reverted to the proposal which has been mentioned above, that priority in point of time should be given to the Confederation of the Provinces. To this, we, on the part of Her Majesty's Government, assented. In conformity, however, with a wish strongly expressed by the Canadian Ministers, we further said, that if, upon future consideration, the Canadian Government should desire to anticipate the Confederation, and to propose that Canada should execute the works, they would doubtless communicate to Her Majesty's Government that decision; and we trusted that after what had passed in these conferences they would feel assured that any such communication would be received by us in the most friendly spirit.

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On the third point, the Reciprocity Treaty, the Canadian Ministers represented the great importance to Canada of the renewal of that treaty, and requested that Sir F. Bruce might be put in communication with the Government of Lord Monck upon the subject. We replied that Sir F. Bruce had already received instructions to negotiate for a renewal of the treaty, and to act in concert with the Government of Canada.

On the fourth point, the subject of the North-western Territory, the Canadian Ministers desired that that territory should be made over to Canada, and undertook to negotiate with the Hudson's Bay Company for the termination of their rights, on condition that the indemnity, if any, should be paid by a loan to be raised by Canada under the Imperial guarantee. With the sanction of the Cabinet, we assented to this proposal, undertaking that if the negotiation should be successful we on the part of the Crown being satisfied that the amount of the indemnity was reasonable, and the security sufficient, would apply to the Imperial Parliament to sanction the arrangement and to guarantee the amount.

On the last point, it seemed sufficient that Her Majesty's Government should accept the assurances given by the Canadian Ministers on the part of Canada, that that Province is ready to devote all her resources both in men and money to the maintenance of her connexion with the Mother Country, and should assure them in return that the Imperial Government fully acknowledged the reciprocal obligation of defending every portion of the Empire with all the resources at its command.

The Canadian Ministers in conclusion said, that they hoped it would be understood that the present communications did not in any way affect or alter the correspondence which had already passed between the Imperial Government and the Governments of the British North American Provinces on the subject of the Intercolonial Railway. To this we entirely agreed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWARD CARDWELL.

Governor General
Viscount Monck,
&c. &c.

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