

R E T U R N

To an Address of the Honorable the Legislative Assembly, of the 12th June, 1866,
asking for Correspondence relative to the Union of the North American
Provinces.

By Command.

W. McDOUGALL,
Secretary.

SECRETARY'S OFFICE,
Ottawa, 20th June, 1866.

RETURN TO AN ADDRESS

From the Legislative Assembly, dated 12th June, 1866, for "Copies of all correspondence
"with the Imperial Government and the Governments of the Maritime Provinces,
"since the last Session of the Provincial Parliament, relating to the proposed Union
"of the British North American Provinces."

DENIS GODLEY.

Governor's Secretary's Office,
Ottawa, 20th June, 1866

SCHEDULE.

1. Mr. Cardwell to the Administrator of the Government of Canada; No. 159. 24th November, 1865.—Bearing of the proposed Union of the B. N. A. Provinces on the negotiation of Commercial Treaties.
2. Governor of Newfoundland to Lord Monck. 19th February, 1866—with Speech on opening Session.
3. Lord Monck to Governor Musgrave. 5th March, 1866—in reply to the above.
4. Extract of a Despatch from the Governor of Newfoundland to Lord Monck. 21st March, 1866—Proceedings in Newfoundland Legislature on the subject of Union. (Enclosures—Resolutions; Amendment).
5. Lord Monck to Governor Musgrave. 31st March, 1866—Acknowledges the above.
6. Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia to Lord Monck. 24th April, 1866—with copy of Resolution passed by both Houses—(Enclosure).
7. Lord Monck to Sir F. Williams. 8th May, 1866—acknowledges the above.
8. Lieutenant Governor of New Brunswick to Lord Monck. 9th April, 1866—with Resolution and Addresses of Legislative Council—(three enclosures).
9. Lord Monck to Lieutenant Governor Gordon. 16th April, 1866—acknowledges the above.
10. Lieutenant Governor of Prince Edward Island to Lord Monck. 22nd May, 1866—with Addresses of Legislative Council and Assembly against Confederation—three enclosures.
11. Lord Monck to Mr. Dundas. 1st June, 1866—acknowledges the above.

(Copy—Canada—No. 159.)

Mr. Cardwell to Administrator of the Government of Canada.

DOWNING STREET, 24th November, 1865.

SIR,—I think it right to acquaint you that I have been informed by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, that in the opinion of Her Majesty's representative at Washington, the necessity of having to submit a Treaty of Commerce to the separate action of the various Provincial Legislatures would be a serious difficulty in his way, and that the union of the Provinces would afford the best hope of obtaining such a treaty. It is evident that if the gentlemen who are now about to proceed to Mexico, the British and Spanish West Indies, and Brazil, for the purpose of ascertaining in what manner the trade and commerce of those countries with British North America can be extended, shall bring their journey to a successful conclusion, and shall be able to suggest to Her Majesty's Government on the part of the British North American Provinces, any new arrangements with the countries in question for the benefit of those Provinces, a similar difficulty may be expected to arise in every such case, and on the other hand the union of the Provinces would, in every such case, afford the best hope of bringing such arrangements to a speedy and satisfactory conclusion.

I have the honor to be,

 &c., &c., &c.,

(Signed,) EDWARD CARDWELL.

[Copy—No. 109.]

Governor Musgrave to Viscount Monck.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, NEWFOUNDLAND,
19th February, 1866.

MY LORD,—I have the honor to forward to your Lordship a copy of a Speech with which, on the 30th January, I opened the annual session of the Legislature of this Colony, and the Addresses of the Council and Assembly in reply.

I have, &c.

(Signed)

A. MUSGRAVE.

His Excellency the Right Honorable
Viscount Monck, Governor General of Canada.

EXTRACT.

“The proposed Union of the British Provinces in North America continues to engage the anxious solicitude and friendly interest of Her Majesty's Government. Despatches from the Secretary of State upon this subject will be laid before you. Believing, as I do, that the abstract advantages of Union; upon general principles, must be so obvious as to be almost necessarily acknowledged, it would appear that any question which may be raised can only affect the terms upon which it may be possible equitably to accomplish such a Union as would be desirable. I am satisfied that Her Majesty's Imperial Government, as well as the Governments of the other Provinces, will receive and consider with courteous attention, any proposals that you may think fit to offer on this subject. That the completion of the Union between the other Provinces is certain, and will only be a matter of time and arrangement, most thoughtful persons are convinced. It may become an affair of vital consequence to this community not to fall into an isolated position, in the final settlement, which cannot fail to exercise the greatest influence on the future of all the British possessions in North America.”

The Governor General to Governor Musgrave.

MONTREAL, 5th March, 1866.

SIR,—I have the honor to acknowledge, with thanks, the receipt of your Despatch (No. 109, of February 19th), transmitting a copy of the Speech with which you opened the Session of the Parliament of Newfoundland, and of the Addresses of both Houses in reply to it.

I observe with great pleasure the assent given by both Houses to the principle of Union of the Colonies of British North America, and I trust that means may be discovered in the course of the present year to harmonize the views of all the Colonies as to the details of a plan for applying the principle in practice.

His Excellency A. Musgrave, Esq.,
&c., &c., &c.,
Newfoundland.

I have, &c.,

(Signed,) MONCK.

EXTRACT of a DESPATCH from the Governor of Newfoundland, to Lord Monck, dated

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, NEWFOUNDLAND,

21st March, 1866.

"I have had the honor to receive Your Lordship's despatch of the 5th instant, acknowledging mine of the 19th of February—No. 109—with the copy of my Speech at the opening of the Legislative Session, and the replies of the Council and Assembly.

"2. Some days after the date of that despatch, Mr. Hogsett gave notice of motion for a Committee of the whole House on the subject of Confederation, and of his intention to move the Resolutions which I enclose, of which the adoption would, of course, have been tantamount to entire rejection of the proposal of union.

"When the motion of Mr. Hogsett came on for discussion, the Attorney General, therefore, introduced the Amendment, which I also enclose, which was passed by a vote of seventeen to seven.

"For my own part I am tolerably well satisfied with the present position of the matter.

"It is much to have so decided a refusal to pronounce against the union. In this, I think, it may be regarded that we have virtually a concession of the principle, and if the other Provinces consent to the union, I have little doubt that it will only remain for us to settle the terms on which Newfoundland shall unite in the measure.

"But, meanwhile, I think there might be the risk of losing ground already gained, by pressing for further steps in this Government before we learn that something has been accomplished in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.

"I have the honor to be, my Lord,

"Your Lordship's most obedient humble servant,

(Signed,) A. MUSGRAVE."

His Excellency

The Right Honorable Viscount Monck.

RESOLUTIONS to be proposed in Committee of the Whole on Confederation of the North American Provinces.

Whereas the question of Confederation has been brought before the people of this Colony, and the Legislature thereof, by a despatch from the principal Secretary of State for the Colonies, bearing date, "Downing Street, 3rd December, 1864," and by Resolutions adopted by the Quebec Conference accompanying the same;

Resolved, That the circumstances of this Colony present insuperable difficulties to the adoption by its people of the proposed Confederation; and that the almost universal opinion of the inhabitants of Newfoundland is opposed to an union with Canada.

Resolved, That under the constitution at present enjoyed by the people of Newfoundland, the principle of self-government has been fully conceded and recognized by the parent State; and, therefore, this House cannot assent to the proposition contained in His Excellency's reply to the Address of this House, and that "the minor objections of this Colony should, of necessity, give way before the pressure of the more weighty motives of national interest," without the assent of the people of this Colony being first had thereto.

Resolved, That under any circumstances the conditions of the Quebec Resolutions, as regards this Colony are, for the most part, inapplicable to its necessities, and are not calculated to carry out the objects proposed to be subserved by the said Resolutions.

AMENDMENT on Resolutions proposed in Committee of the Whole on Confederation of British North American Provinces.

Whereas this House has recently, in reply to the Speech of His Excellency the Governor, on opening the present Session, abstained from pronouncing any decision on the proposal for a union of the Colonies, or on the details of that measure as regards this Colony, and considering the present uncertain state of public sentiment on this grave question, and being unadvised of the action thereon that may be taken or contemplated by the other Provinces, it is

Resolved, That whilst duly regardful of the momentous character of this subject, and of the promise to His Excellency to give it attention, yet as no information has been received demanding its immediate reconsideration, this House does not deem it expedient to enter upon its discussion with a view to any decision thereon.

The Governor General to the Governor of Newfoundland.

MONTREAL, 31st March, 1866.

SIR,—I have the honor to acknowledge, with thanks, the receipt of your Despatch, No. 115, of the 21st instant, enclosing copies of Resolutions introduced into the House of Assembly of Newfoundland, on the subject of Confederation.

I have, &c.,

(Signed,)

MONCK.

The Governor of Newfoundland, &c., &c., &c.

Lieutenant Governor Sir F. Williams to Lord Monck.

(Copy.)

HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA,

24th April, 1866.

MY LORD,—In reference to the Confederation of the British North American Provinces, I have the honor herewith to transmit a copy of a Resolution which passed both Houses of the Legislature by the following majorities:

In the Legislative Council	13 to 5.
In the Legislative Assembly.....	31 to 19.

I have the honor to be, My Lord,

Your most obedient humble servant.

His Excellency

Viscount Monck, Governor General.

(Signed,)

F. WILLIAMS.

(Copy.)

"Whereas, in the opinion of this House, it is desirable that a Confederation of the British North American Provinces should take place ;

"Resolved, therefore: That His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor be authorized to appoint Delegates to arrange with the Imperial Government a scheme of Union, which will effectually ensure just provision for the rights and interests of this Province, each Province to have an equal voice in such Delegation—Upper and Lower Canada being, for this purpose, considered as separate Provinces."

The Governor General to the Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, OTTAWA,
8th May, 1866.

SIR,—I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated the 24th of April, transmitting a copy of a Resolution which had passed both Houses of the Legislature of Nova Scotia on the subject of the Confederation of the British North American Provinces.

I have, &c.,
(Signed,) MONCK.

Lieutenant Governor
Sir F. Williams of Kars, Bt., &c., &c., &c.,
Nova Scotia.

Lieutenant Governor Gordon to Lord Monck.

FREDERICKTON, April 9, 1866.

MY LORD,—I have the honor to enclose copies of a Resolution and Address passed by the Legislative Council of this Province, praying Her Majesty that an Act may be introduced into the Imperial Parliament to the end of a Confederation of British North America, and of my Reply thereto.

I have the honor to be, My Lord,
Your Excellency's most obedient servant,
(Signed,) ARTHUR H. GORDON.

His Excellency
The Viscount Monck, &c., &c., &c.

(Copy.)

ADDRESS of the Legislative Council of New Brunswick to the Queen's most Excellent Majesty.

MOST GRACIOUS SOVEREIGN,—We, Your Majesty's faithful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Council of New Brunswick in Provincial Parliament assembled, humbly approach Your Majesty with the conviction that a union of all Your Majesty's British North American Colonies, based on the Resolutions adopted at the Conference of Delegates from these several Colonies, held at Quebec on the tenth day of October, one thousand, eight hundred and sixty-four, is an object highly to be desired, essential to their future prosperity and influence, and calculated alike to strengthen and perpetuate the ties which bind them to Your Gracious Majesty's Throne and Government, and humbly pray that Your Majesty may be pleased to cause a measure to be submitted to the Imperial Parliament for the purpose of thus uniting the Colonies of Canada, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island, in one Government.

[Signed,] JOHN S. SAUNDERS,
Acting President of the Legislative Council.

(Copy.)

RESOLUTION of the Legislative Council of New Brunswick.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
6th April, 1866.

Resolved,—As the opinion of this Committee, that a union of all the British North American Colonies, based on the Resolutions adopted at the Conference of Delegates for the several Provinces, held at Quebec on the 10th day of October, 1864, is an object highly to be desired, essential to their future prosperity and influence, and calculated alike to strengthen and perpetuate the ties which bind them to the Mother Country; and further,

Resolved,—as the opinion of this Committee, that the Legislative Council should concur in any measure which may be necessary to carry such union into effect.

(Copy.)

REPLY to the ADDRESS of the Legislative Council of New Brunswick.

Mr. President and Honorable Gentlemen of the Legislative Council:

I will immediately transmit your Address to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, in order that it may be laid at the foot of the Throne.

Her Majesty the Queen has already been pleased to express a deep interest in the Union of Her North American dominions, and will no doubt graciously appreciate this decided expression of your opinion.

I rejoice to believe that the avowal of your desire that all British North America should unite in one community under one strong and efficient government, cannot but tend to hasten the accomplishment of this great measure.

The Governor General to the Lieutenant Governor of New Brunswick.

MONTREAL, 16th April, 1866.

SIR,—I have the honor to acknowledge with thanks the receipt of your letter of the 9th instant, enclosing copies of a Resolution and Address passed by the Legislative Council of New Brunswick, praying for an enactment for the purpose of uniting the British North American Colonies, together with a copy of your reply thereto.

I have, &c.,

(Signed,) MONCK.

Lieutenant Governor

The Hon. A. H. Gordon, C. M. G., &c., &c., &c.
New Brunswick.*Lieutenant Governor Dundas, enclosing Copies of Addresses from the Legislative Council and Assembly against Confederation.*GOVERNMENT HOUSE, PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND,
22nd May, 1866.

MY LORD,—I have the honor to transmit copies of Addresses to Her Majesty, adopted by the Legislative Council and House of Assembly of this Province, against a Confederation of the British North American Provinces.

I also transmit copy of an Address of the Legislative Council to myself, requesting me to cause the Address to Her Majesty to be laid at the foot of the Throne.

I have the honor to be, Your Lordship's

Most obedient humble servant,

(Signed,)

GEORGE DUNDAS,
Lieutenant Governor.

His Excellency the Governor General.

To the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty.

MOST GRACIOUS SOVEREIGN :

We, Your Majesty's loyal and faithful subjects the Legislative Council of Prince Edward Island, having had under our consideration a copy of a Despatch from the Right Honorable Edward Cardwell, Your Majesty's principal Secretary of State for the Colonial Department, addressed to His Excellency George Dundas, Esquire, Lieutenant Governor of this Island, bearing date the 24th day of June last, accompanied by a copy of a Correspondence between the Colonial Minister and His Excellency the Right Honorable Viscount Monck, Governor General of Canada, on the affairs of British North America, including the subject of the proposed Union of the British North American Colonies, in which Despatch His Excellency Lieutenant Governor Dundas is directed, by the said Colonial Minister, to communicate the said Correspondence to the Legislature of this Island, at its then next Session, and at the same time to express the strong and deliberate opinion of Your Majesty's Government, that it is an object much to be desired, that all the British North American Colonies should agree to unite in one Government; and having given the said documents that patient and respectful consideration to which all communications emanating from so exalted a source, and having reference to a subject of vital importance to all the Maritime Colonies and Provinces, are entitled, we humbly beg leave to approach Your Majesty's Throne for the purpose of conveying to Your August Majesty the result of our renewed deliberations upon the great question again brought under our notice by Your Majesty's Colonial Minister.

First.—We regret our inability to discover, in the correspondence above alluded to, any sufficient reason to induce us to depart from or modify the spirit of the Joint Address to your Majesty, unanimously adopted by the Legislative Council of this Island, on the third day of April, 1865, and subsequently transmitted by His Excellency Governor Dundas to Your Majesty's Colonial Minister, for the purpose of being laid at the foot of the Throne.

Secondly.—We do not deem it inconsistent with the most devoted and loyal attachment to Your Majesty's person and Government, to declare our firm conviction, that in deliberating upon a question so seriously affecting the liberty, happiness and prosperity of the inhabitants of this Colony, we ought to be guided mainly by the "well-understood wishes of the people" whom we represent, even should their wishes unfortunately conflict, as in the present instance, with the declared policy of Your Majesty's Government for the time being,—the inhabitants of this Colony being in our opinion fully competent to decide upon so vital a question as the constitution of the country in which their lot has been cast, and the means best adapted to promote and perpetuate the stability and prosperity of that country.

Thirdly.—Pregnant with advantages to the Province of Canada as the proposed union may appear, and fraught with corresponding benefits as such union may be, under certain modifications of the "Quebec scheme," to one or more of the Maritime Provinces, we regret our inability to suggest any modification of that "scheme," which could with safety be adapted to the peculiar position and circumstances of this Island, and which would at the same time prove acceptable to the people of Canada.

Fourthly.—To make suitable provision for the vast Public Works now contemplated by the Government of Canada, the Tariff of the Provinces, if united as proposed, must necessarily be greatly augmented, and the burdens of the people proportionately increased. That this Colony, if included in the proposed Union, would be subject to that tariff, is certain; but that its people would participate, in an equal ratio with the other Provinces, in the benefits anticipated as the result of this excessive taxation, is by no means probable,—believing, as we do, that although the trade, commerce and manufactures of the continental Provinces would be greatly stimulated by new and extended railways, new and improved canals, and the opening and working of valuable mines, the trade, commerce and manufactures of this Island would not, to any appreciable extent, be beneficially affected thereby.

Fifthly.—Since the year 1851, when Your Majesty was most graciously pleased to concede to the people of this Colony the rights and privileges of self-government, Prince Edward Island has made, and is still making, steady advances in population and material prosperity, and its inhabitants are perfectly satisfied with the free and liberal constitution

under which it is their happiness to live. The number of those who are willing to incur the risk and dangers inseparable from a union with the larger and more powerful Provinces of British North America being, in our opinion, extremely insignificant and unimportant.

Sixthly.—We are not insensible to the obligation resting upon this Colony to contribute its fair share towards defraying the expense of resisting foreign invasion or aggression, and have cheerfully sanctioned the placing of the entire resources of the Colony at the disposal of the Government for the attainment of this desirable object.

Seventhly.—We rely with the utmost confidence on the wisdom and justice of Your Majesty in the present crisis, believing, as we do, that the necessities of Canada and the importunities of its Government will not be deemed by Your Majesty of sufficient importance to warrant a change in the constitution and form of government of this Colony, opposed to the wishes and hostile to the feelings of its inhabitants—a change which it is generally believed must prove subversive of our liberties and highly detrimental to our best interests.

May it therefore please Your Majesty graciously to withhold your Royal Sanction from any measure calculated to deprive Prince Edward Island of the constitution which it now happily enjoys; and more especially from any measure intended to effect a union of Prince Edward Island with Canada and the other Provinces of British North America.

To His Excellency George Dundas, Esquire, Lieutenant Governor and Commander-in-Chief in and over Her Majesty's Island of Prince Edward, and the Territories thereunto belonging, Chancellor, Vice-Admiral and Ordinary of the same, &c., &c., &c.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY :

The Legislative Council having unanimously passed an Address to Her Majesty the Queen, expressive of their opinion on the subject of the proposed union of the British North American Colonies, have respectfully to request that Your Excellency will be pleased to cause the same to be laid at the foot of the Throne.

The Legislative Council at the same time beg leave to express to Your Excellency their earnest hope that the opinion of the Legislative Council, as conveyed to Her Majesty in the said Address, may be deemed conclusive on the part of those whom they represent in this Island, in case any further action may be taken by Her Majesty's Government in reference to the question of Confederation, and that your Excellency may have no further cause of appeal to the Legislature of this Colony, or deem it necessary to take any further action on the part of this Colony respecting the further consideration of a question on which both branches of its Legislature have, for the second time, passed such a solemn and conclusive opinion.

(Copy.)

To the Queen's most Excellent Majesty.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR MAJESTY :

We, Your Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, the House of Assembly of Prince Edward Island, having had under consideration the Message of His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor, communicating a Despatch, dated the 24th day of June last, from the Right Honorable Edward Cardwell, Secretary of State for the Colonial Department, upon the subject of a Federation of the British North American Provinces, beg leave to approach Your Majesty for the purpose of expressing our respectful but deliberate opinion that any union of the British North American Colonies which would embrace Prince Edward Island upon the terms and principles set forth in the Resolutions of the Conference of Quebec, held on the 10th October, 1864, would not only be unjust to the inhabitants of this Colony, but prove disastrous to their dearest and most cherished rights and interests as a free people, enjoying the blessing of a priceless constitution, guaranteed to them by the Imperial Government of Great Britain.

That considering the isolated, peculiar, and exceptional position of Prince Edward Island, as contrasted with the other British North American Provinces and Colonies, this House deems it to be its duty, as the constitutional representative of the people of Prince Edward Island, to re-affirm the decision so clearly and unequivocally declared by this House in the Resolutions passed by it in its last Session upon the subject of a Union of the British North American Colonies, and afterwards communicated by the joint Address of the Legislative Council and House of Assembly of this Colony to Her Majesty's Imperial Government; and further, that even if a Union of the Continental Provinces of British North America would have the effect of strengthening and binding more closely together these Provinces, and advancing their material and commercial interests, this House cannot admit that a Federal Union of the North American Provinces and Colonies, which would include Prince Edward Island, could ever be accomplished upon terms that would prove advantageous to the interests and well being of the people of this Island, cut off and separated as it is, and must ever remain, from the neighbouring Provinces, by an immoveable barrier of ice for many months in the year; and this House deems it to be its sacred and imperative duty to declare its conviction that any Federal Union of the North American Colonies, that would embrace this Island, would be as hostile to the feelings and wishes as it would be opposed to the best and most vital interests of its people.

We beg further respectfully to state that while this House cannot assent to a Federal Union of this Island with the other Colonies, they recognize it to be the duty of this Colony to contribute from its local revenue towards its defence, in fair and just proportion to its means.

We do therefore most humbly pray that Your Majesty will be graciously pleased not to give Your Royal Sanction to any act or measure founded upon the basis of the Report of the Quebec Conference, or otherwise, that would have the effect of uniting Prince Edward Island in a Federal Union with Canada, or any other of Your Majesty's Provinces in America.

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND,
House of Assembly,
May 10th, 1866.

(Copy.)

Lord Monck to Mr. Dundas.

OTTAWA, 1st June, 1866.

SIR,—I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of Your Despatch of the 22nd May, enclosing copies of Addresses from the Legislative Council and Assembly of Prince Edward Island, against the Confederation of the North American Provinces.

I have, &c.,
(Signed,) MONCK.

Lieutenant Governor
George Dundas, Esq.