

Honorable Gentlemen of the Senate,—
Gentlemen of the House of Commons,—

I have great satisfaction in having recourse to your advice, and I rejoice to think that on this, the first occasion on which I have had the honor of addressing you, we may congratulate ourselves on the aspect of public affairs at home and abroad, on the prevalence of peaceful counsels amongst nations, and on indications of agreement and tranquillity favorable alike to the development of foreign commerce and the prosecution of domestic industry.

The great scheme of Confederation was successfully inaugurated under the auspices of my Predecessor.

It is to me a source of pride to find my name in honorable association with the rising fortunes of the Dominion of *Canada*, and I shall count it a happiness, as well as a duty, to co-operate, to the utmost of my ability, in furthering your efforts to strengthen the ties that bind the different provinces together, and to ensure the attachment of the people to the soil, by the enactment of wise and equal laws.

Your efforts in these directions seem now, more than ever, likely to be called into action, inasmuch as the terms upon which great accessions are offered to the Dominion, will be submitted for your immediate consideration.

In consequence of the Duke of *Buckingham* and *Chandos'* despatch of the 8th August of last year, stating that His Grace proposed to enter into negotiations with the *Hudson Bay* Company, as to the terms on which they would be willing to surrender their rights and claims in the North West Territory, Lord *Monck* sent home to *England* two members of the Privy Council as a deputation to watch the course of the proceedings and attend to the interests of *Canada*.

The conferences in *London*, and the correspondence on the subject have been brought to a definitive issue by the proposal which, after a full review of the circumstances, Earl *Granville* made on the part of Her Majesty's Government for the consideration of the people of *Canada* and of the *Hudson Bay* Company.

I have received the intelligence that the *Hudson Bay* Company has, after some deliberation, decided upon accepting the terms laid down by the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

I have directed that the report of the mission, and all the papers connected therewith, shall be duly laid before Parliament, and I commend them to your serious consideration in view of the great importance of the subject, no less than in the hope that this long vexed question may be closed without further delay.

I was much gratified by communications from the Governor of *Newfoundland*, expressing the desire for admission into the Union which prevails amongst the inhabitants of that Colony, and especially by his despatch of the 20th March last, covering copies of Resolutions which have been passed by the Council and Assembly, and which set forth the conditions they consider it desirable to advance.

These documents shall be furnished at once for the information of Parliament, and I hope that before the close of the Session I may be in a position to submit the details of a provisional arrangement for your consideration.

It will be a sensible pleasure to me, as well as a topic of general congratulation, if at some early day the fine Colony of *Newfoundland*, unrivalled as the nursery of hardy seamen, and inexhaustible in its wealth of Fisheries becomes part of the Dominion.

In accordance with the suggestion of Her Majesty's Government, an earnest attempt has been made to allay the discontent unhappily existing in *Nova Scotia*. The papers connected with this subject will be submitted for your favorable consideration.

In continuance of the course commenced last Session, Bills will be presented to you for the assimilation of the Criminal laws existing in the several Provinces. No greater boon can be conferred on a Country than a well defined code of criminal law, of general application and easy ascertainment.

Among other measures, Bills will be presented to you for the establishment of uniform and amended laws respecting Parliamentary Elections, Bankruptcy and Insolvency, and Patents of invention and discovery.

Gentleman of the House of Commons,—

The estimates for the expenditure of the coming financial year will be submitted to you.