

3. The disposal of this question involves the question of the maintenance of public faith. The Act 3 & 4 Vict. c. 78. was regarded and held by all parties, and was accepted by the parties interested, as a final settlement of the long agitated questions respecting the reserves,—a settlement, it is also to be remembered, which was *anterior* to the establishment of responsible Government within the colony. It has been distinctly recognized as final in the formal language of the Provincial Legislature; and if the conclusive arrangements of that Act can be now disturbed, and its provisions can be upset, it would be difficult to show how any rights or interests in the province can be safe.

My Lord Duke, these are of themselves considerations which, if I am not guilty of presumption in saying so, call for the exercise of the maxim, “Be just, and fear not;” and if the Government of this great country had long ago had the firmness to apply this principle to the question, all injurious disturbance in connexion with the Clergy Reserves would have been saved. Respect would be felt for it, if such firmness was exercised now. Most certainly the surrender of control over the Clergy Reserves to a party now raising agitation in Canada will not prove to be the pacification of the colony; and that it never can be too late to do that which is called for by the rule of right, and that consequences are not to be argued upon when this rule is once clear, is what no person will more promptly acknowledge than your Grace.

The matter being once rested upon foundations such as these, it seems almost to be a work of supererogation to reiterate additional arguments, however correct and forcible in themselves, which have at different times been urged upon the attention of Her Majesty's Government, and which will be found stated in the documents to which I have above referred. I will only trespass upon your Grace by noticing too further points, which I number as continuing the series of the considerations already in part here submitted.

4. The nature of this endowment is not such as to be properly productive of any odium or discontent. It carries with it no burden imposed upon any class of religionists within the country. It operates in no vexatious manner. It presents no obstruction to the improvement and advancement of the country, the utmost facilities being given, and the most favourable terms afforded, in throwing the lands into the market for the creation of the necessary fund.

5. That whereas it is anticipated, in different quarters, that the party in the colony now intent upon the confiscation of the Church property, and engaged in embroiling the country for the attainment of their object, may be counted upon, in the event of their gaining the principle for which they contend, to deal not ungenerously in the actual disposal of their prize, and to manifest some mindful sense of the ample generosity of the Home Government towards themselves,—the fact stands before the world, and cannot be put out of sight, that the members of the Local Government now in power, who have identified their policy with the aims of the party in question, are pledged, to a man, in their places in the Provincial Parliament, to the secularization of the Reserves, if placed within their control.

I will not, my Lord Duke, abandon the hope that Her Majesty's Government will pause before committing itself to this threatened sacrifice of a sacred patrimony,—and will not, by the side of the magnificently endowed and largely favoured Church of Rome in the colony, consent to have the Church of the Sovereign and of the Empire thrust down to a position which will compel her to come before this country, in order to obtain the means of carrying on the work committed from above to her hands, as a plundered and a persecuted Church.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. J. QUEBEC.