

No. 10.

COPY of a DESPATCH from the OFFICER ADMINISTERING the GOVERNMENT to the Right Honourable EDWARD CARDWELL, M.P.

(No. 13.)

New Westminster, March 1, 1866.

(Received May 14, 1866.)

SIR,

At the request of the Bishop of Columbia, I have the honour to forward a letter addressed to you by his lordship on the subject of the division of the Diocese.

2. I refrain from commenting upon the views entertained by Bishop Hills, as I am opposed to the division recommended by his Lordship, while I should much regret to throw any obstacle in the way of a division of the Diocese, which, however arranged, must prove of advantage to the Church in this Colony.

BRITISH COLUMBIA AND VANCOUVER ISLAND.

No. 10.

The Bishop of Columbia to his Honour A. N. Birch, with enclosure and maps.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ARTHUR N. BIRCH.

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

Enclosure in No. 10.

Encl. in No. 10.

The BISHOP of COLUMBIA to the OFFICER ADMINISTERING the GOVERNMENT of BRITISH COLUMBIA.

SIR,

Victoria, Vancouver, February 5, 1866.

MAY I ask you to forward the enclosed letter (with two maps) to the Secretary of State for the Colonies. I shall be thankful if you can feel it consistent with your duty to support the views I have submitted.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. COLUMBIA.

SIR,

Victoria, Vancouver, February 5, 1866.

IN case further explanation may be necessary respecting the proposed boundary of the Diocese of New Westminster, I have the honour to forward two maps, one (A.) representing the division which has met the approval of the Archbishop and the Colonial Bishoprics Council, and the other (B.) showing the division suggested by Mr. Seymour.

By the former (A.) the present Diocese of British Columbia (comprising the two Colonies) is divided into eastern and western portions by the natural watershed between the Fraser and the Pacific, and by the Gulf of Georgia, the western consisting of North-west Columbia, together with the Islands of Vancouver and Queen Charlotte.

This division (A.) gives a fair distribution of area and work, leaves the chief centres of Indian population with the coal mines and seafaring population and interests for the Western, while the gold fields and agricultural districts are the principal area of population in the Eastern or New Westminster division. North-west Columbia is geographically and commercially in connexion with Vancouver and Victoria, not with New Westminster. The Hudson Bay Company ships, the navy and trading vessels by which we communicate with it, belong exclusively to Vancouver, and sail from Victoria and Esquimalt. To connect these portions ecclesiastically, therefore, is the most practical arrangement. The only argument advanced in favour of the plan (B.) is, I believe, that the two Dioceses would be conterminous with the two Colonies; but this will cease to apply as soon as the now universally desired union is effected. It ought not, however, I would respectfully submit, to prevail in any case against the serious disadvantage it would entail upon the spiritual work.

One disadvantage is the great disparity of area, one Bishop having a Diocese 800 miles by 400 or 500, together with an island 150 in length, while the other Bishop would have only an island 290 by 60. Another disadvantage would be the inconvenient and oppressive distribution of work. Besides having to take journeys to the interior, north, south, and east, 500 miles in each direction, the Bishop of New Westminster, in order to visit the north-west coast and islands, would have to travel out of his Diocese—

To Victoria	- - - - -	70 miles.
Then along Vancouver	- - - - -	290 "
Thence to Queen Charlotte Island, Metlacatla, and Stickeen	- - - - -	500 "
		860 "
And back	- - - - -	860 "
Total	- - - - -	1720 "

Occupying at the least two months each year, and, as the missions extend, requiring even a second visitation, which could be taken readily by the Bishop residing in Victoria, whose Diocese would run nearly 380 miles in the same direction. Since then the Diocese suggested in map (B.) is unequal in area, and imposes a needless burden of labour, expense, and time upon the Bishop of New Westminster, I venture to hope you may be able to recommend to Her Majesty the ecclesiastical organization already submitted to take effect, and which I have not proposed without careful and mature consideration, and a personal knowledge of the whole country.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. COLUMBIA.

The Right Hon. Edward Cardwell,
Secretary of State for the Colonies,
&c. &c. &c.