

tenant Governors of their respective Provinces, who assembled here, with the sanction of the Crown and at my invitation, to confer with the members of the Canadian Ministry on the possibility of effecting a Union of all the Provinces of *British North America*.

This Conference, after lengthened deliberations, arrived at the conclusion that a Federal Union of these Provinces was feasible and desirable, and the result of its labors is a plan of Constitution for the proposed Union, embodied in a series of resolutions, which, with other papers relating to the subject, I have directed to be laid before you.

The general design of a Union, and the particular plan by which it is proposed to carry that intention into effect, have both received the cordial approbation of the Imperial Government.

An Imperial Act of Parliament will be necessary in order to give effect to the contemplated Union of the Colonies, and I have been officially informed by the Secretary of State that Her Majesty's Ministers will be prepared to introduce a Bill for that purpose into the Imperial Parliament, so soon as they shall have been notified that the proposal has received the sanction of the Legislatures representing the several Provinces affected by it.

In commending to your attention this subject, the importance of which to yourselves and to your descendants it is impossible to exaggerate, I would claim for it your calm, earnest, and impartial consideration.

With the public men of *British North America* it now rests to decide whether the vast tract of country which they inhabit shall be consolidated into a State, combining within its area all the elements of national greatness, providing for the security of its component parts and contributing to the strength and stability of the Empire; or whether the several Provinces of which it is constituted shall remain in their present fragmentary and isolated condition, comparatively powerless for mutual aid, and incapable of undertaking their proper share of Imperial responsibility.

In the discussion of an issue of such moment, I fervently pray that your minds may be guided to conclusions which shall redound to the honour of our Sovereign, to the welfare of Her subjects, and to your own reputation as Patriots and Statesmen.

His Excellency the Governor General was pleased to retire, and the Legislative Assembly withdrew.

PRAYERS.

The Honorable the Speaker acquainted the House that Returns had been received from the Clerk of the Crown in Chancery.

The said Returns were then read by the Clerk, and are as follow :

PROVINCE OF CANADA, }
TO WIT :

This is to certify that in virtue of a Writ of Election, dated the thirtieth day of August last past, issued by His Excellency the Governor General, and addressed to the Sheriff of the District of *Quebec* (*William Smith Sewell*, Esquire), *ex officio* Returning Officer for the Electoral Division of *Stadacona*, for the Election of a Member to represent the said Electoral Division in the Legislative Council of this Province, in the room and place of the late Honorable *François Baby, Jean Elie Gingras*, Esquire, has been returned as duly elected accordingly, as appears by the Return of the said Writ of Election, dated the nineteenth day of September instant, which is now lodged of record in my office.

OFFICE OF THE CLERK OF THE CROWN IN CHANCERY,
Quebec, 20th September, 1864.

L. R. FORTIER,
Clerk of the Crown in Chancery.

To *John F. Taylor*, Esquire,
Clerk, Legislative Council,
Quebec.