

No. 2.

Colonial Office to *Isaac Butt*, Esq., M.P.

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*Isaac Butt*, Esq.,  
M.P.  
2 August 1878.

Sir,

Downing-street, 2 August 1878.

I AM directed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 17th of July, transmitting, for presentation to the Queen, a Petition to Her Majesty largely signed by Irish Canadian Roman Catholics of the Province of Ontario, praying that the Royal Assent may be refused to any enactment granting a special Charter to the Orange Society within the Dominion of Canada.

Sir Michael Hicks Beach desires me to inform you in reply that, in accordance with the standing rules of the Colonial service, all communications from the Colonies should be transmitted to this Department through the Governor of the Colony from which they proceed, in order that they may be duly verified and reported upon by the responsible authorities.

The Petition which accompanies your letter will therefore be forwarded to the Governor General of Canada, by next mail, for such observations as the Dominion and Provincial authorities may think proper to make upon it; but in the meantime I am to intimate that the question to which it relates would appear, under the provisions of the British North America Act, 1867, to fall within the exclusive powers of the Provincial Legislatures of the Dominion, and that it is contrary to established constitutional procedure for Her Majesty's Government to interfere, unless in very special circumstances, with such legislation as is within the competency of a Provincial Legislature.

Isaac Butt, Esq., M.P.

I am, &c.  
(signed) *Robert G. W. Herbert.*

No. 3.

The Right Hon. Sir *M. E. Hicks Beach*, Bart., to the Earl of *Dufferin*.

No. 3.  
The Right Hon.  
Sir *M. E. Hicks*  
*Beach*, Bart., to  
the Earl of  
*Dufferin*.  
2 August 1878.

My Lord,

Downing-street, 2 August 1878.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to you, for communication to your Ministers, a copy of a letter which I have received from Mr. Isaac Butt, M.P., accompanied by a Petition addressed to the Queen by Irish Canadian Roman Catholics of the Province of Ontario, praying that the Royal Assent may be refused to any enactment granting a special Charter to the Orange Society within the Dominion of Canada.

I also enclose a copy of the reply which I have caused to be sent to Mr. Butt's letter, and I should be glad to receive from you such observations as the Dominion and Provincial Authorities may think proper to make in the matter.

17 July 1878.  
*Petition in original.*

Governor General,  
The Earl of *Dufferin*.

I have, &c.  
(signed) *M. E. Hicks Beach.*