

value of their estates. The assistance of one Imperial guarantee for a loan to be applied in purchasing the remaining estates has been flatly refused; so lately as March, 1869, the Secretary of State, when the Council had expressed a hope "that His Lordship would be guided by a full consideration of the facts of the case, rather than by the forgone conclusions of his predecessors," replied, that "he was not prepared to enter on the consideration of a question with which, if such union were to ensue, the Imperial Government would probably cease to concern itself; the land question, therefore," His Lordship continues, "should be left, as far as possible, for the decision of those who, under the altered circumstances of the Island, would have to carry into effect any measures connected with it;" and recently, in his despatch to the Governor General, No. 177, September 4th, 1869, His Lordship expresses his trust "that the Government of the Dominion will deal liberally, as well as justly, with the Island."

The long-delayed settlement of the land question is thus made contingent upon the entrance of Prince Edward Island into the North American Confederation; and the Dominion, from whom the Island has received no injury, and to whom no purchase-moneys or rents of land have been paid, is required to assume a duty which, clearly, is not hers, but which, if just and liberal treatment, is a debt due the Island—as Earl Granville seems to imply—undoubtedly belongs to Imperial Britain.

The Council can only further express a hope that the Government and Parliament of the Dominion will adopt this questions as their own, and make such persistent and powerful representations thereon to the Imperial authorities, as may result in obtaining redress for this injured Colony.

Success would be productive of the best results—it would establish the prestige of the Dominion, cause a spontaneous, not an artificial, reaction of public opinion in Prince Edward Island; it would demonstrate that the power and influence predicated for the Government and Parliament of the united colonies were realities, and if union of any or all of the colonies now outside the Confederacy should ensue with their hearty goodwill and concurrence, there would then be good reason to expect that the nation thus formed would quickly consolidate into a formidable power, able to repel invasion and punish aggression. But Prince Edward Island is invited to join a Dominion not yet consolidated. Nova Scotia continues discontented, and evinces her dissatisfaction by sending a deputation from her Local Government to Washington. Newfoundland rejects the overtures of the Dominion, while the inhabitants of Red River Territory refuse to recognise her sovereignty; while it must also be borne in mind that this Island is governed by a constitution guaranteed by the Imperial Government; and by which the well-understood wishes of the colonists are expressed through their representatives in Parliament. The opinion of the people of this Island on the question of Union has been expressed by them in the most decisive language as opposed to any union with the Dominion. This opinion the Council has no reason to believe has been changed, and therefore conceive it is unnecessary for them to enter into any discussion of other details to which, they believe, many valid and serious objections are entertained.

Under these circumstances, the intimation conveyed by the Council in their short Minute, that the settlement of the land question must be a condition precedent to the discussion of a Union—is, in reality, only a prudent precaution on the part of a Government acting on behalf of a people now invited to perform the important and irretrievable public act of choosing their future national destiny.

(Signed,)

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ROBERT P. HAYTHORNE, *President.*

W. H. LORD,

A. A. MACDONALD,

GEORGE W. HOWLAN,

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ALEXANDER LAIRD,

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PETER SINCLAIR.

Certified.

CHAS. DESBRISAY, A.C.E.C.