

more perfectly I cannot wish; and, when I see an opening, it is fully my intention to hint the matter to Lord Bathurst, and put the paper into his hands, without, however, telling him from whom I have it, though I shall urge him to have some conversation with you relative to it. Permit me, however, just to ask you whether it was not an oversight in you to state that there are *five* Houses of Assembly in the British Colonies in North America? for if I am not under an error, there are *six*, viz. Upper and Lower Canada, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, the Islands of Prince Edward and Cape Breton. Allow me also to beg of you to put down the propositions in which you think the thirty members of the representative Assembly ought to be furnished by each province; and, finally, to suggest whether you would not think two Lieutenant Governors, with two Executive Councils, sufficient for the Executive Government of the whole, viz. one for the two Canadas, and one for Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, comprehending the small dependencies of Cape Breton and Prince Edward's Island; the former to reside at Montreal, and the latter at whichever of the two situations may be considered most central for the two Provinces, whether Annapolis Royal or Windsor. But at all events, should you even consider four Executive Governments and four Executive Councils requisite, I presume there cannot be a question of the expediency of comprehending the two small islands in the Gulf of St. Lawrence with Nova Scotia.

"Believe me ever to remain, with the most friendly regard,

"My dear Sewell, yours faithfully,

(signed) "Edward."

I know of but one difficulty in the way of such an union; and that arises from the disinclination which some of the Lower Provinces might feel to the transference of powers from their present Legislatures to that of the Union. The objection to this would arise principally, I imagine, from their not liking to give up the immediate control which they now have over the funds by which their local expenditure is defrayed. I have given such a view of the evils of this system, that I cannot be expected to admit that an interference with it would be an objection to my plan. I think, however, that the Provinces would have a right to complain, if these powers of local management, and of distributing funds for local purposes, were taken from Provincial Assemblies only to be placed in the yet more objectionable hands of a general legislature. Every precaution should, in my opinion, be taken to prevent such a power, by any possibility, falling into the hands of the Legislature of the Union. In order to prevent that, I would prefer that the Provincial Assemblies should be retained, with merely municipal powers. But it would be far better, in point both of efficiency and of economy, that this power should be entrusted to the municipal bodies of much smaller districts; and the formation of such bodies would, in my opinion, be an essential part of any durable and complete Union.

Difficulty in the way of union.

With such views, I should without hesitation recommend the immediate adoption of a general legislative union of all the British Provinces in North America, if the regular course of Government were suspended or perilled in the Lower Provinces, and the necessity of the immediate adoption of a plan for their government, without reference to them, a matter of urgency; or if it were possible to delay the adoption of a measure with respect to the Canadas until the project of an union could have been referred to the Legislatures of the Lower Provinces. But the state of the Lower Province, though it justifies the proposal of an union, would not, I think, render it gracious, or even just, on the part of Parliament to carry it into effect without referring it for the ample deliberation and consent of the people of those Colonies. Moreover, the state of the two Canadas is such, that neither the feelings of the parties concerned, nor the interests of the Crown or the Colonies themselves will admit of a single Session, or even of a large portion of a Session of Parliament being allowed to pass without a definite decision by the Imperial Legislature as to the basis on which it purposes to found the future government of those Colonies.

Legislative union should have the consent of the colonial people.

In existing circumstances, the conclusion to which the foregoing considerations lead me, is, that no time should be lost in proposing to Parliament a Bill for repealing the 31 Geo. 3; restoring the union of the Canadas under one Legislature; and re-constituting them as one Province.

Recommendations of the High Commissioner.