

We are glad to learn from Your Excellency that during the recess your advisers thought the time opportune for making another attempt to carry out the declared preference of Parliament for the construction and operation of the Canadian Pacific Railway by means of an Incorporated Company, aided by grants of money and land, rather than by the direct action of the Government; that three of Your Excellency's Ministers therefore proceeded to England for the purpose of carrying on negotiations to that end; and that their efforts were so far successful that a contract has been entered into, subject to the approval of Parliament, with men of high financial standing in *Europe*, the *United States* and *Canada*, for the speedy construction and permanent working of this great national enterprise.

The Contract and the papers connected therewith, which Your Excellency has been pleased to say will be submitted to us without delay, will not fail to receive from us that early and earnest consideration which Your Excellency has invoked for them.

It is with that view, we note, that Your Excellency has summoned us before the usual period, as no action can be taken by the Contractors to prosecute the work, and no permanent arrangement for the organization of a systematic Emigration from *Europe* to the *North-West Territories* can be satisfactorily made, until the policy of Parliament with respect to the Railway has been decided.

It affords us pleasure to be informed by Your Excellency that steady progress has been made in the construction of those portions of the Railway now under contract, and that two additional sections have been recently opened for traffic, one from *Winnipeg* to *Portage la Prairie*, the other from *Cross Lake* to *Keewatin*; so that there are now in all two hundred and sixty-four miles in operation.

We are glad to learn that the measures adopted to promote economy in the working of the Intercolonial and Prince Edward Island Railways have resulted in a large reduction of the difference between Revenue and Expenditure; and that the steadily increasing traffic warrants the expectation that during the current year these Railways will be self-sustaining.

We derive great gratification from the announcement that Her Majesty's Government has generously presented to Canada, for training school purposes, the steam corvette *Charybdis* lately returned from service in the Chinese Seas; and we thank Your Excellency for saying that the correspondence on this subject will be laid before us.

We hear with interest that Your Excellency has thought it well, in consideration of the increasing duties thrown by the development of the Country upon the Civil Service, and for the more efficient organization of such service, to issue a Royal Commission to examine and report on the whole question.

When the Report of the Commissioners is laid before us, as Your Excellency has been pleased to intimate that it will be at an early day, we shall apply ourselves with pleasure to the consideration of such Report and of the whole subject of Civil Service Reform.

We thank Your Excellency for informing us that a measure for the enlargement of the boundaries of the Province of *Manitoba* will be submitted to us.

We greatly regret to hear from Your Excellency that the entire failure of the usual food supply of the Indians in the *North-West*, to which Your Excellency called our attention last session, has continued during the present season, and has involved the necessity of a large expenditure in order to save them from absolute starvation. We are glad to learn, however, that several of the Bands have already applied themselves to the cultivation of their Reserves and the care of their cattle, and that no effort will be spared to induce the whole of the aboriginal population to betake themselves to agricultural pursuits.

It affords us pleasure to learn that several measures of importance will be submitted to us, and that, among them, will be Bills for the winding up of Insolvent Banks and Incorporated Companies; for the amendment of the Railway Act of 1879; for the revision and consolidation of the Laws relating to Government Railways; and for the improvement, in several respects, of the Criminal Law.