

To the Right Honourable the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury.

The Memorial of the Belfast Harbour Commissioners, under their
Common Seal,

Respectfully sheweth,

THAT the recent aspect of affairs with the United States of America has naturally caused great anxiety as to the means possessed for the efficient defence, both of the territory and the commerce of the British North American Provinces, and more especially of Canada.

That in the opinion of your memorialists, it is essential to the safety not less than to the secure possession of the British North American Provinces, that they should possess within themselves an internal communication (which shall be at all times open, and secure from stoppage in winter) with the best open harbour on the Atlantic.

That the completion of this line of Railway would not only effect a great saving in military expenditure, and render Canada much more easy of defence, but would make the colony accessible from this country within 10 days at all seasons, whilst under present circumstances, it is, in a military point of view, almost excluded from communication for one half of the year.

That the completion of a line of Railway from Halifax to Quebec would render us perfectly independent of a foreign country; at present, our trade and correspondence with our own Province of Canada, and the local trade and correspondence between the lower British Provinces and foreign countries is, for half the year, subject to the will and fiscal enactments of the United States.

Your memorialists therefore respectfully pray Her Majesty's Government to co-operate with the Governments of Canada, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia, in affording such aid and encouragement as may be necessary to secure the formation as early as may be practicable of a Railway communication between Quebec and Halifax, which, upon general grounds, and for the reasons amongst many others, now respectfully submitted is, in the opinion of your memorialists, a work of great national value and importance.

(signed) *John Clarke*, Chairman.

Harbour Office, Belfast,
18 February 1862.

Wm. Thompson, Secretary.

71, Old Broad Street, E. C.,
25 February 1862.

My Lords,

As the Chairman of a Committee, recently appointed at a public meeting, for the purpose of carrying on negotiations with the Imperial Government in regard to the proposed Intercolonial Railway between Halifax and Quebec, I have been desired to place in your Lordships' hands the accompanying memorial from merchants, bankers, and others, of the City of London, in favour of the object in view; and in so doing, to submit to your Lordships a brief statement of the proceedings recently taken here and in the Colonies in connexion therewith.

On the 14th June last, a deputation waited upon His Grace the Duke of Newcastle, for the purpose of laying before His Grace a memorial showing the commercial, political, and military advantages of the proposed Railway, and the views of the promoters in soliciting the sanction and assistance of Her Majesty's Government in favour of the project on that occasion. His Grace remarked, that he was most anxious to consider favourably any feasible plan by which the proposed line of communication might be secured, but that it appeared to him, that the subject had not been placed before him in a shape which would enable him to propose it formally for the consideration of the Government. His Grace suggested at the same time, that a responsible body should be constituted, with whom he could communicate, and that more definite proposals should be submitted, as to the extent to which the Colonies of Canada, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick, would bind themselves to afford financial support to the undertaking.