

placing the Disposal of the Clergy Reserves in the Hands of the Imperial Parliament. This Act was not confirmed for Reasons stated in Lord John Russell's Despatch to Lord Sydenham of the 7th February 1839. Another Act, providing for the Sale and Disposal of the Clergy Reserves, was subsequently passed by the Provincial Legislature. This Act would have received the Royal Assent but for a legal Objection which was found to be insuperable.

9. In consequence of the legal Difficulty to the Confirmation by the Crown of the Provincial Act, the Act 3 & 4 Vict. c. 78., similar in Principle though differing in Detail from the Act sent from Canada, was passed by the Imperial Parliament.

10. Her Majesty's Government cannot fail to remember that not only was the Imperial Act similar in Principle to the Provincial Act, but that the former was passed and regarded at the same Time, both in Canada and in this Country, as a final Settlement of a long agitated and most difficult Question, and the Settlement of which had moreover been pressed upon the Imperial Government by successive Governors of the Canadian Provinces, and by the general Wish of the Canadian People.

11. Her Majesty's Government would further remind the House of Assembly that the generally admitted Necessity of permanently settling this long debated Question had reference, not only to the manifest Evils of prolonged Agitation, but also to the Circumstances under which the Reunion of the Two Provinces of Canada was then about to take place.

12. It was held, and in the Opinion of Her Majesty's Government it was wisely held, to be of paramount Importance that a permanent Settlement of the Clergy Reserve Question should precede the Act of Reunion.

13. In considering, therefore, how far it is right or expedient to re-open this Question, it is impossible for Her Majesty's Advisers to overlook the Fact, that since it has been decided, the Two Provinces, with a Population for the most part distinct both in Race and Religion, have been united under One Representative Government.

14. Her Majesty's Advisers have Pleasure in expressing their high Sense of the Loyalty and good Feeling of the French Canadian Population of the Eastern Province. They have the Satisfaction of believing that friendly Feeling between the French and British Population is steadily and constantly increasing, and they would deprecate in the most earnest Manner any Course of Action on the Part of the Provincial Parliament which might have the least Tendency to interrupt those amicable Relations which now so happily subsist between the Two Races.

15. The French Population of the Lower Province enjoy the Blessing of an exemplary, a well educated, and a numerous Priesthood, with ample Endowments for the Support of the Priests, and for the Maintenance of exclusive educational Institutions.

16. From the Period of the Conquest of Canada till the present Day these Endowments have been scrupulously respected.

17. Her Majesty's Government have no Disposition to question the Right or to impugn the Motives of such of the Representatives of the French Population of the Eastern Province in the Canadian Parliament as may deem it their Duty to vote, either for the Repeal of the Clergy Reserve Act, or for the Secularization of the Clergy Reserves; but they feel a deep Interest in the Peace and Welfare of all Classes of Her Majesty's Subjects in Canada, and with past Struggles and Contentions fresh in their Recollection they would earnestly press on the Consideration of the Canadian Parliament, in no unfriendly Spirit, whether there would not be Danger of reviving Feelings of Animosity and Discontent if the British Inhabitants of the Upper Province were deprived by the Imperial Parliament of that Fund for the Support of Protestant Worship which they have so long enjoyed, and which is now, whether for general or for Missionary Purposes, more than ever necessary.

18. I cannot thus communicate the Views of Her Majesty's Government with respect to the Address of the House of Assembly which I have now to acknowledge without repeating in the most distinct Terms that nothing would be more painful to Her Majesty's Advisers, or more at variance with their real Feelings, than to be involved in any Difference or Controversy with the Parliament of Canada, and that their only Wish upon this difficult Subject is to co-operate with the Provincial Authorities in promoting the permanent Interests of all Classes of Her Majesty's Canadian Subjects.

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