

Enclosure in No. 5.

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TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY,

Most Gracious Sovereign,

WE, your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of Canada, in Provincial Parliament assembled, humbly approach Your Majesty for the purpose of expressing our earnest hope, that in the great changes in commercial policy now contemplated by Your Majesty's Government, the just claims of this Province, as an integral portion of the British Empire, will not be overlooked, and that Your Majesty will be graciously pleased to recommend to Parliament, that wheat flour, and wheat and peas, and all grain and meal from all descriptions of grain and pulse, imported into the United Kingdom from Canada, may be admitted on the payment of the smallest possible specific duty, not exceeding a penny the quarter.

(signed) ALLAN N. MACNAB, Speaker.

Legislative Assembly Hall,
Thursday, 26 March 1846.

No. 6.

(No. 56.)

COPY of a DESPATCH from the Right Honourable W. E. GLADSTONE to
Governor the Earl CATHCART, K. C. B.

No. 6.
Mr. Secretary
Gladstone to
Governor Earl
Cathcart,
18 April 1846.

My Lord,

Downing Street, 18 April 1846.

I HAVE received and have laid before the Queen the address to Her Majesty from the "Commons of Canada, in Provincial Parliament assembled," dated the 26th of March 1846, and enclosed in your Lordship's despatch of the 27th of the same month (No. 30.)

I have received the Queen's commands to instruct your Lordship to convey to the House of General Assembly the assurance of Her Majesty's gracious desire and intention to pay every regard to the commercial interests of Canada, even in the consideration of measures which must be regarded as mainly and properly appertaining to the internal condition of this country, which may be compatible with justice to other classes of Her subjects.

I am further commanded by the Queen to state, that having consulted Her confidential advisers on the questions brought under Her notice in this Address, and having been pleased to approve and adopt the opinions submitted to Her by them on that subject, Her Majesty has directed me to explain to your Lordship those opinions, as comprising the substance of the answer, which Her Majesty has to return to the Address of the House of Assembly.

As respects the question immediately affected by the Address, Her Majesty's Government are of opinion, that the reduction of the duty on Canadian wheat, from 1s. to 1d., would fail to have the effect which the Assembly have, it is probable, anticipated and desired.

Use and convention, rather than any abstract principle, have established the rule, that in the Customs Law of this country, 1s. per quarter shall be regarded as the standard of a nominal or register duty upon corn. To reduce the charge upon foreign corn to a rate corresponding with this description, Her Majesty's Government stands pledged to Parliament; and if Her Majesty's Government were to concede the request which is preferred, the effect would not be the establishment of a minute preference, amounting to 11d. per quarter in favour of Canada grain as against the foreign article; but it would without doubt be this, that the same reduction would be applied by Parliament to foreign grain also, and an entire equality between the two would thus be still maintained.

For this reason, Her Majesty's Government are of opinion, that it would not be expedient to propose to Parliament the alteration which it is the object of the Address to recommend.

I am, &c.
(signed) W. E. GLADSTONE.