

thinly provided with Responsible Advisers; for as far as I have been able to seize the spirit of political controversy in Canada, there is scarcely an eminent man in the country on either side whose character or integrity has not been, at one time or another, the subject of reckless attack by his opponents in the press. Even your Lordship and Mr. Gladstone have not escaped, for it has been more than insinuated that the Imperial Government have been "got at" by Sir John Macdonald, and that the law officers of Her Majesty were instructed to condemn the Oaths Bill contrary to their legal convictions.

In conclusion, I desire to call your Lordship's attention to the fact that in this Despatch I have made no allusion to the Royal Commission, which I have just issued under the advice of my Ministers.

My desire is to keep the transactions relating to the prorogation of Parliament and to the issue of the Commission entirely distinct. These two events are quite disconnected and independent. The reasons which induced me to agree to the prorogation of Parliament had to be considered without reference to the effect of prorogation on the Committee, or at least they appeared sufficiently cogent to overpower any countervailing arguments founded on the necessity of keeping the Committee alive. However much I might have desired to do so, I could not have treated Parliament as a pregnant woman, and prolonged its existence for the sake of the lesser life attached to it. If I have satisfied your Lordship that prorogation under the circumstances was the proper course, the extinction of the Committee was an ill effect with which I had no concern. It is necessary to keep this consideration very clearly before our eyes, otherwise a confusion of ideas will ensue prejudicial to a correct judgment of the case. The extinction of the Committee is being denounced as the worst feature in the transaction by persons who are ready to admit that prorogation was perhaps a necessity, and they insensibly transfer their dissatisfaction with the result to the circumstance which occasioned it. The same class of minds probably conjecture that the destruction of the Committee was the main inducement with my Government for insisting on prorogation; but with speculations of this kind I have nothing to do. I prorogued Parliament for what I considered not only full and sufficient, but imperative reasons. The subordinate consequences incident to the transaction do not therefore come under review.

There is one further point it may be well to remember. I see it is asserted that the Government purposely kept its sixty members away. Of course I have no means of knowing how far this may have been the case. It is probable that having concluded that the Session could not be prolonged, my Ministers may have notified their followers to that effect; but it is an indisputable fact that the absence of a considerable proportion was unavoidable.

In another Despatch I propose to address your Lordship on the subject of the Commission.

I have, &c.,  
(Signed) DUFFERIN.

The Earl of Kimberley,  
&c. &c. &c.

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Enclosure 1 in No. 4.

Montreal, July 18.

The following letter has been addressed by Sir Francis Hincks to the 'Gazette,' and will appear in that paper to-morrow morning:—

"To the Editor of the 'Gazette.'

"SIR,

"Although reluctant to anticipate the formal inquiry into Mr. Huntington's charges, I cannot allow the statement made in the 'Herald' of yesterday by Mr. Geo. W. McMullen to remain unnoticed. In all my proceedings regarding the construction of the Pacific Railway, I have been governed by an opinion, early expressed and never modified, which was that, if the construction of that work was undertaken by proper parties, the Government and the country, instead of thinking that they had conferred a favour on such parties, should feel deeply indebted to them. I shall at present confine my remarks on Mr. McMullen's letter to what affects myself here personally. I have a distinct recollection of Mr. McMullen's visit to Ottawa in July, 1871. He was accompanied by Mr. Smith, of Chicago; Mr. James Beaty, jun., barrister, of Toronto; Mr. Waddington,