

CORRESPONDENCE

RELATIVE TO THE

AFFAIRS OF CANADA.

(No. 8.) Confidential.

No. 1.

CANADA.
No. 1.

COPY of a DESPATCH from Governor the Right Hon. Sir C. T. METCALFE,
Bart., G.C.B., to LORD STANLEY.

Kingston, June 27, 1843.

(Received July 24, 1843.)

MY LORD,

YOUR Lordship is aware that there were circumstances connected with the union of the two provinces of Canada, at which the French Canadian party were dissatisfied, as well as, at the time of its accomplishment, with the union itself.

2. One of these was the clause in the Union Act which prescribes the use of the English language exclusively in legislative records. This is resented as one of the supposed attempts to destroy their nationality and Anglicise them by force.

3. If this were altered, either by rescinding the clause in the Imperial Act, or by allowing me to consent to an Act here giving equal validity to documents and records, whether in the French or English language, the effect would, I think, be good, as removing a cause of discontent, which, as long as it exists, will excite bad feeling, and be made use of by designing men for that purpose.

4. Taking this view of the matter, and being insensible of any great practical advantage in the present restriction, I have thought it right to submit the subject to your Lordship's notice.

5. I have little doubt that the question will be agitated in the Legislature if left in its present state.

I have, &c.

The Right Hon. Lord Stanley,
&c. &c.

(Signed) C. T. METCALFE.

(Confidential.)

No. 2.

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COPY of a DESPATCH from LORD STANLEY to Governor the Right Hon.
Sir C. T. METCALFE, Bart., G.C.B.

SIR,

Downing Street, August 18, 1843.

I HAVE had the honour to receive your confidential despatch, No. 8, of the 27th June, in which you bring under my notice the expediency of proposing to Parliament to rescind that clause of the Act for the re-union of Upper and Lower Canada, which enjoins the exclusive use of the English language in the legislative records of the Provincial Parliament, or of permitting you to consent to an Act of the Provincial Legislature giving equal validity to documents and records whether in the French or English language.

It appears to me that the second of these two objects could only be attained by the adoption of the first, and whatever might be the views of her Majesty's Government on the question were it presented in the form of an original proposal for the enactment of such a provision as that which is contained in the Imperial Act, the difficulty of entertaining a proposition for its repeal would be very serious.

The avowed purpose of the enactment was to promote the amalgamation of the French and English races. Its repeal therefore would, I think, be viewed in no other light than as an abandonment of that purpose, and would, I apprehend, be so considered by the British population.