

**INTERCOLONIAL TRADE
OUR ONLY SAFEGUARD
AGAINST DISUNION**

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Intercolonial Trade Our Only Safeguard Against Disunion by R. G. Haliburton

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AGAINST

DISUNION

BY

R. G. HALIBURTON, M.A.

FELLOW OF THE SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES OF LONDON, AND OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF
NORTHERN ANTIQUARIES OF COPENHAGEN,
AUTHOR OF "NEW MATERIALS FOR THE HISTORY OF MAN," "NOVA SCOTIA IN 1862,"
"THE COAL TRADE OF THE NEW DOMINION," ETC.

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RUSSELL HOUSE,

Ottawa, March 25, 1868.

MY LORD,

It was my intention to have availed myself of your kind permission to submit the accompanying *brochure* to the public in the form of a letter to Your Excellency. The importance of the subject and the impossibility of doing justice to it in the narrow limits of a letter, will account for the present publication.

The facts and the figures, which it contains, will speak for themselves. The views which it advocates can claim no weight, as coming from a statesman,—the only political act of my life having been my advocating confederation, and my voting for the Union of British North America. If I am now trespassing on a field, which is the property of politicians, it is my first offence of the sort, and will probably be my last. The present crisis is however exceptional, as the future of every inhabitant of the Dominion depends upon the issue. Nor is it impossible that a private spectator, being free from the excitement or prejudices that sometimes influence the views of public men, may be able to judge more calmly and more justly of the dangers that beset our political experiment, and of the policy on which the future existence of the New Dominion now depends.

Trusting that the accompanying pamphlet may repay the trouble of a perusal,

I remain,

Very respectfully,

Your Excellency's most obedient
and humble servant,

R. G. HALIBURTON.

The Right Honorable
VISCOUNT MONCK,
Governor General of
the Dominion of Canada.



INTERCOLONIAL TRADE

OUR ONLY SAFEGUARD AGAINST DISUNION.

The title of this publication sufficiently indicates its object. The subject has too deeply engrossed the attention of the public, throughout the length and breadth of British America, to need any explanation.

The enquiry being a practical one, I shall for convenience of reference specify under their respective heads, as I proceed, the more important points for our consideration, and dispensing with figures of rhetoric, shall rely on more matter of fact and more common-place figures.

When the subject of Confederation was for the first time agitating the public mind in Nova Scotia, the various organized societies of mechanics at Halifax, puzzled by the arguments *pro* and *con.*, and being desirous of having the subject explained by some unprejudiced person who was out of the influence of political excitement, and who was not likely to share in the dignities of the new nation, did me the honour of selecting me as their adviser in the matter, and heard at least a candid and sincere statement of the importance of confederating British America. As a comparative stranger to the people of Canada, I may venture to plead the confidence of those with whom I have lived, as an excuse for asking to be heard by the public.

DISUNION AGITATION IN NOVA SCOTIA.

At this moment a deputation from one of the Provinces of the Dominion is endeavouring to enlist the sympathies or prejudices of the British Government against Confederation, and to obtain a dissolution of the Union. While we cannot for a moment suppose

that the Imperial authorities will condemn our constitution without a trial, we can hardly imagine that if, after having tested it, the people of Nova Scotia are opposed to it, they will be forced to remain under the Government of the Dominion. A short stay in Canada has convinced me that all classes here are disposed to show fair play to Nova Scotia, and if that will not satisfy her, to let her go her way in peace. It is useless to deny that the feeling excited in that Province is very deep and strong, and that it may be fomented into disaffection against British connection itself, if it is not met with prudence and forbearance. The causes which have led to this state of things are not generally understood, and should be explained, in justice not only to the statesmen who represented Nova Scotia at the convention in London, but also to the people of that Province. The causes are to be traced to the isolating prejudices inherent in all provincial institutions, and to peculiarities in the history of Nova Scotia, which have tended to deprive its people of their self-reliance, and to make them shrink from the thought of sharing in the burthens or responsibilities of national existence. In addition to all this, the fact that they had no commercial or political ties with Ontario and Quebec, provinces so remote that they could only be reached through the United States, and that the scheme was adopted in the face of petitions demanding delay and an appeal to the people, was sufficient to arouse the strongest prejudices and the loudest abuse against Confederation and its authors.

The lethargy and want of enterprise and of self-reliance which strangers so often notice in Nova Scotia, are most conspicuous in the City of Halifax, and date back to the very origin of that town. More than a century ago it was built at the expense of British taxpayers, the first settlers drawing government rations and allowances. Nay, to such an extent did this liberality go, that the first natives of Halifax came into the world with the aid of the government, the Lords Commissioners of Trade and Plantations having provided an official *Lucina*, who in common with other Heads of Departments, drew her salary from the Imperial Treasury, and her *protégés* were in due time baptized and buried by ecclesiastics paid by the government. The same aid that assisted their entrance into the world, they were taught to look upon as

necessary to help them through life, and they obtained it. A century of government contracts, of lavish expenditure on fortifications, and the presence of a large fleet and of a numerous garrison built up the town and the fortunes of its leading families, the outlay from the Imperial treasury directly, and indirectly, having up to the present time amounted to a sum that, if returned to the pockets of the British tax-payers, would enable them to buy up the whole freehold of the Province, or at least to secure the somewhat unsubstantial privilege of being a friendly counsellor as to our future. Protected from the possibility of invasion by the armaments of Britain, and enriched by the lavish outlay of the Imperial government, the inhabitants of Halifax have never been able to learn those habits of self-reliance, which are essential alike to national and individual success. In the country districts, it is true, the people have escaped from the contagious effect of this lack of enterprise, and have turned their attention to shipbuilding so successfully, that they have made Nova Scotia one of the first maritime countries in the world in relation to the population of the province. Scores of villages with not a twentieth part of the population of Halifax, leave it in the shade by their busy ship yards, while hers are empty and silent. A stereotyped trade in fish with the West Indies and the United States still exists; but the merchants and capitalists of Halifax, accustomed to move on slowly in the same groove as their fathers before them, have been brought to a stand still by the obstructive tariff of the United States, and folding their hands have done nothing to open up new markets, or to face and overcome the difficulties in their way. The vast mineral resources of the province have been recently thrown open, but the measure would have been a dead letter for many years to come, if American and Canadian enterprise had not been attracted by our mines. A Canadian capitalist who recently visited them, had he listened to his friends at Halifax, would have returned with the impression that our gold mines are a myth, and our coal mines valueless. A personal inspection, and his subsequent experience have satisfied his mind as to their value. Though there is no town in America in which there is so much wealth, in proportion to its population, as in Halifax, it is of but little service to the province, a larger amount having been invested in mining and other enter-