

## P A P E R S

CONNECTED WITH

## THE INDIAN LAND QUESTION.

By Command.

A. C. ELLIOTT,  
*Provincial Secretary.**Provincial Secretary's Office,  
7th April, 1877.*

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*Copy of a Report of a Committee of the Honourable the Executive Council, approved by  
His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor on the 30th day of January, 1877.*

The Committee of Council having had before them the letter of the Honourable the Provincial Secretary, dated 27th January, 1877, addressed to the Honourable the Minister of the Interior of Canada, respecting the manner of adjusting the Indian land claims, recommend that the said letter attached to this report be adopted, and that it form a portion thereof.

The Committee further request that if this report be approved by His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor, the Honourable the Provincial Secretary be authorized to forward the letter to the Honourable the Minister of the Interior.

Certified,

(Signed)

W. SMITHE,

*Minister of Finance and Clerk of the Executive Council*

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*The Provincial Secretary to the Minister of the Interior.*

VICTORIA, B. C., 27th January, 1877.

SIR,—I have the honour to bring before your notice the extremely expensive method now in operation of adjusting the difficulties existing between the white and native population of this Province, and which the Commission appointed by the Dominion and Local Governments have been authorized to determine.

From the large number of Indians in this Province, the subject is naturally one of grave anxiety to the Provincial Government, but to preclude the possibility of any future controversy arising between the two Governments in respect to the apportionment of lands to the native tribes, I should recommend that whilst the Commission, as now constituted, be allowed for the present to persevere, their labours should be entirely confined to places where the whites and natives are living in close proximity, and to those localities where the Indians are dissatisfied with the area of land of which they now hold possession. Throughout the greater portion of this Province the Indians are, and will be for many years to come, completely isolated, having little or no intercourse with the whites; and in these remote places no difficulties are likely to be experienced.

It will therefore be apparent to you, that should the present elaborate and cumbersome mode of dealing with the Indian lands be continued until the entire number and extent of the reserves throughout the Province be determined and appropriated, many years will necessarily elapse before the work can be completed; whilst the costs to both Governments must be excessive, and entirely disproportionate to the results attained.

For these reasons I consider the actions of the present Commissioners should be restricted to the settlement of difficulties in the places referred to. All existing difficulties could be adjusted, and the Commission dissolved towards the close of the present year, should this suggestion be adopted. After the dissolution of the present Indian Commission, the Superintendents of Indian affairs in their respective localities should

