

I regret to say that the presentments of numerous Grand Juries throughout the Country, which I have directed to be laid before you, shew too clearly the want of improvement in the construction and discipline of our Gaols.

Your zeal in the cause of Education is known and appreciated by all the world. It is important to consider whether we cannot combine the reform of the juvenile offenders with the punishment of their crimes. At the very least, it is incumbent upon us to take care that such punishment does not in itself afford fresh opportunities for debasing the criminal and instructing him in vice.

The Board of Audit, constituted by the Act of last Session, is already at work, and it will, I trust, contribute to ensure a satisfactory examination of the Public Accounts.

With regard to the Militia Act, the ready loyalty of the inhabitants both in *Upper* and *Lower Canada*, has enabled me to authorize the formation of numerous troops and companies of Volunteers, whose conduct and discipline will undoubtedly do credit to the Province. I have moreover, with the assistance of the Adjutant General, done my best to carry out your wishes by organizing the Sedentary Militia.

The Government in pursuance of the wishes of the Legislature, has taken on itself to conclude a fresh arrangement calculated to secure a line of Ocean Steamers from the *St. Lawrence* to *England* during the approaching season.

That the timber trade has been depressed is a deep source of regret to me and to all others who have at heart the welfare of the Province. I trust that we are about to witness its revival, and that the commerce of *Quebec* and *Montreal* will have suffered but a temporary check.

Gentlemen of the Legislative Assembly,

The Accounts for the past year and the Estimates for the present will be laid before you.

You will find that, on the whole, our finances are in a satisfactory state. The people at large have reaped the benefit of those reductions in the Customs Duties which you made last year.

The diminution in the receipts consequent on such reductions, nearly corresponds with the calculation submitted to you by my advisers. A large decrease has been caused by the Reciprocity Treaty with the *United States*, but I conceive that any such apparent loss is more than compensated by the increased commerce, and by the facility of intercourse between the two Countries.

It will be the duty of my Council to ask you in the present Session for such Supplies for Her Most Gracious Majesty, as you may see fit to grant.

Honorable Gentlemen, and Gentlemen,

The year just ended has been one of difficulty and conflict in *Europe*: on this side of the *Atlantic* we have, by the blessing of Providence, escaped the direct evils of war. In no part, however, of the Queen's Dominions, has deeper sympathy with her arms been shewn, or more fervent prayers for their success been offered, than in *Canada*.

Our people have eagerly watched every turn of the contest, and consisting as they do, of men of *French* and *English* origin, equal members of the same free community, and loyal subjects of the same Queen, they have grieved at the sufferings and exulted in the success of the Allied Armies.

In like manner, should it please *God* to establish a firm and honourable peace, *Canada* will, I doubt not, rejoice at the termination of the war. May it be my lot before the end of the present Session, to congratulate you on so auspicious an event.

At present, I have only to leave you to the discharge of your important duties.