

“The projected Tariff of Postage effects a considerable reduction upon the existing Rates, more especially in the longer distances. The tendency of this arrangement to encourage intercourse between the more widely separated portions of His Majesty’s extensive Territory in North America will not fail, I feel assured, to meet the approbation of the Legislative Council and Assembly. In settling the scale of postage His Majesty’s Government has been guided in a great measure by the report of a Committee of the House of Assembly in Upper Canada, which sat about three years ago, and which is understood to have founded its recommendation chiefly on the rates of charge in the United States.

“In the important matter of the charges on the conveyance of Newspapers and printed periodical Works, His Majesty’s Government has not been unmindful of the representations which it has from time to time received of the wishes of the people in British North America: a rate of Postage is proposed in the present Bill which is little more than one half of the rate charged in the United States, and which is as low as it could be unless the papers were conveyed for nothing; a course which might render the amount of business in the Post Office perfectly unmanageable.

“It will be observed that the Bill confers on the Deputy Post Master General the power of determining, with the concurrence of the Government and the Executive Council, what shall be deemed a Newspaper, printed Vote, &c. within the meaning of the Act.

“This power is designed to spare the necessity of tedious actions in Law to ascertain doubtful points, and is conformable with a power which has been given to the Post Master General in this Country, in concurrence with the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury, by the late Act 4 and 5 W. 4, c. 44.

“I have now to draw your attention to a very important part of the Bill:—Should the Post Office Revenue prove unequal to the expenditure, it is obvious that there must be some immediate means of supplying the want, a temporary deficiency in the Post Office Revenue, however short, must be attended with the most serious inconvenience, as affecting a service which could not stop for a day without injuring the Commerce, and confounding the general transactions of the whole Country. Impressed by this view His Majesty’s Government has determined, with a full sense of the magnitude of the discretionary authority which the measure will place in the Governor, to propose a clause authorizing him to grant a Warrant for any sum within certain specified limits, which may be shewn to his satisfaction to be necessary for the conduct of the Post Office Department.

“In considering the limits to be assigned to this authority in each Colony, the Government has been guided by the following portions of a report from the Deputy Post Master General at Quebec.

“The Deputy Post Master General of British North America supposes, upon a rough estimate, that the deficiency in Receipts, to meet the current expenditure in the management of the Post Office Department, may amount to even as much as £6,000 per annum, and he states that without some certain means of obtaining that, or any less deficiency, the business of the Department would come to a stand still, and the framers of the Law would be upbraided for not having provided against such a contingency. Calculating the supposed deficiency at the maximum of