

“ In the event of your passing any Act imposing Duties on Imports, I seriously recommend for consideration the expediency of promoting Commerce, by insuring greater certainty in our Revenue Laws.

“ The mere fluctuations of Markets render commercial speculations hazardous without the additional risk attaching to the shipment of goods, whilst the rate of Duty which those goods may have to pay is wholly conjectural.

“ I am persuaded that such uncertainty is more injurious to the shipper and importer, and consequently to our own Revenue, than a higher Tariff would be on which they could calculate beforehand with tolerable security.

“ I trust you will not suppose me desirous of suggesting any course which should imply a diminished controul over the Taxation of the Province by the Representatives of its People.

“ Under all circumstances, in your hands must rest the discretionary power of altering the Duties, and in your hands must remain the appropriation of the moneys so levied.

“ These Constitutional rights would not be affected by the adoption of a Bill exceeding in its duration the ordinary period, and whilst on the one hand it would be perfectly understood that the Provincial Legislature might alter or repeal any of the Duties at any moment, the Merchant would feel secure that no such change would take place without due deliberation, and without a special reason for such a course.

“ This is virtually the state of things in England, and this, I am fully persuaded, would be the principle most likely to foster Commerce in our own Province.

“ *Mr. President, and Honorable Gentlemen of the Legislative Council,*

“ *Mr. Speaker, and Gentlemen of the House of Assembly,*

“ I cannot conclude this Speech without expressing to you distinctly my own convictions on one or two Constitutional matters of the highest importance.

“ I believe, in the first place, that it is most desirable to define more accurately the responsibility attaching to the initiation of money votes. This can only be done by throwing such responsibility on the Executive Government.

“ The undisputed right to originate money votes is vested in the House of Assembly; and the Members of the Executive Council, it is now understood, practically retain their seats only so long as they are presumed to enjoy the confidence of the people, expressed in the Legislature.

“ To the people therefore through their Representatives, as well as to the Crown, they are strictly responsible; and although the burthen of being answerable for the introduction of money votes would be a heavy one, that burthen might be lightened by leaving to local controul such local charges as no central Government can by any amount of vigilance efficiently check. Local controul over local charges, presents moreover advantages of its own with which every man of English race is sufficiently familiar. Economy would be promoted—habits of self reliance and self government would be fostered—and the elements of true political freedom would be developed by the management of the affairs of each separate district.

“ I believe too, that an Audit based on powers more stringent and more searching than those which now exist, would ensure greater regularity in all our Accounts, and would give confidence to the public at large.

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