

Recent events, however, have clearly demonstrated, that the fidelity of the mass of the people of this Province is not to be shaken by the severest trials. Experience has also proved, that under all circumstances you may confidently rely on the fostering care of the British Empire ; and I have been directed by Her Majesty to convey to you the most positive assurances of Her continued protection and support.

Speech at opening of Session.

At the same time, I do not wish to inspire you with a belief, which I am very far from entertaining, that the dangers with which we have been threatened are at an end. The hopes of our enemies have certainly been greatly humbled, and their schemes disconcerted, by the failure of their repeated attempts to seduce the Queen's subjects from their allegiance, and thus to overrun the country ; but all the motives in which these attempts originated—the love of plunder—an avidity to seize our fertile lands, and an impatient desire to extend Republican institutions, continue to operate with unabated force, while unhappily new and deeper passions have since been superadded. That men agitated by such feelings will remain quiet, longer than they are constrained by fear, is not to be expected ; and whilst I most sincerely desire conciliation, and conjure you to promote it by every honorable means, I do not hesitate to assert, on the sure ground of experience, that upon our own ability to repel and punish hostile aggression, we must henceforth chiefly depend. Among the considerations arising from this impression, I deem it advisable to invite your early and most serious attention to such amendments in our Militia Laws as shall place this force upon the best possible footing—efficient, but not burthen-some, either to the Government or to the People.

One of my principal and most arduous duties, has been the disposal of the numerous criminals who have fallen into the hands of Justice. With respect to such of the Queen's subjects as were concerned in the civil commotions during last winter, Her Majesty's Government have uniformly desired a merciful administration of the Law. In the punishment of the invaders of the Province, I have acted upon the same principle, and have anxiously endeavored to confine capital punishment within the narrowest limits, which a due regard to the public welfare and security would admit. But the reiteration of unprovoked injuries, called for increased firmness in the administration of Justice, and forced upon me the painful necessity of making some severe examples.

The case of Her Majesty's subjects who have suffered in their persons or property, claims your early attention. The wanton destruction of the Steamboat *Sir Robert Peel*—the pillage of the farms on Point au Pelé Island, and the River St. Clair—the robberies at the Short Hills—the damage done at Prescott and Sandwich, with the burning of the *Thames Steamer*, form together an aggregate of extensive loss, most serious to the sufferers, and have occasioned earnest application for relief.

It gives me the greatest pleasure to inform you, that Her Majesty has been most graciously pleased to extend to the wounded Officers, Non-Commissioned Officers and Men, of the Provincial Militia, in arms since the insurrection last winter, the same liberal provision as is granted to Her Majesty's Regular Land and Naval Forces, and to make a similar beneficent provision for the Widows of those Officers in the Provincial Corps, who may have fallen in action.

The strongly-excited feelings to which the long-agitated question of the Clergy Reserves has given rise in the Province, have sensibly impaired that social harmony, which may be classed among the first of national blessings, and have augmented the hopes of the enemies of the country, in proportion as they have created divisions among its defenders. It is painful to reflect, that a provision, piously and munificently set apart for the maintenance of Religious Worship, should have become the cause of discord among professors of the same faith, and servants of the same Divine Master ; and I feel that, on every account, the settlement of this vitally important question ought not to be longer delayed ; I therefore earnestly exhort you to consider how this desirable object may be attained—and I confidently hope, that if the claims of contending parties be advanced, as I trust they will, in a spirit of moderation and Christian charity, the adjustment of them by you will not prove insuperably difficult. But should all your efforts for the purpose, unhappily fail, it will then only remain for you to reinvest these Reserves in the hands of the Crown, and to refer the appropriation of them to the Imperial Parliament, as a tribunal free from those local influences and excitements which may operate too powerfully here. My ardent desire is, that keeping in view as closely as you can, the true spirit of the object for which these lands were originally set apart, this embarrassing question may be settled on equitable principles, in a manner satisfactory to the community at large, and conducive to the diffusion of religion and true piety throughout the Province.

Second only in importance to the subject of the Clergy Reserves, is that of General Education. A system of sound and religious instruction for the rising generation, ought to be established under every Government, and it is most particularly requisite in a young country in the situation of this Province. I therefore strongly recommend to you a careful revision of the enactments relating to the Common Schools ; and the early adoption of some plan calculated to secure the assistance of properly qualified teachers.

*Gentlemen of the House of Assembly ;*

I am commanded by Her Majesty's Government, again to bring under your consideration the surrender to your disposal of the Casual and Territorial Revenues of the Crown ; and I shall take an early opportunity to submit to you the conditions annexed to this offer, in the confident expectation that the liberal intentions of Her Most Gracious Majesty will be duly appreciated by you, and that a satisfactory arrangement of this important subject will speedily be accomplished.

With much regret I inform you, that in addition to the large sums disbursed by Her Majesty's Government, in the protection and defence of this Colony, the late events have also burdened the Provincial Revenue with a very considerable extraordinary expenditure, not contemplated or provided for by the Legislature.

The capture, detention, trial and punishment of State Criminals, have been a principal source of this extraordinary outlay ; and you will find, from the accounts which will be presented to you, that the sum you appropriated in the last Session to these purposes, has been greatly exceeded.