

Such is the present system, and so perceptible are its pernicious results, that the House of Assembly, unwilling to further trespass upon your Majesty's attention, would here conclude this address, did not circumstances force upon the House the belief that the cause of these restraints is to be found in the alleged expense of the increase of the establishment of the customs, which the extension of these privileges would require. This subject, as well as that noticed in the previous part of the present address, was brought under the consideration of your Majesty by an address of the House which passed in the session of 1832, to which no reply has yet been communicated to the House.

To that address, the resolutions upon which it was founded, and to the following brief detail, the attention of your Majesty is humbly, yet earnestly, solicited.

During a period of many years, the colonies of which your Majesty's province of Nova Scotia was one, complained that the fees exacted on their coasting trade were burthensome and disproportionate to the services performed; they sought relief from the burthen, but did not complain of the system of remunerating the officers of customs by fees. They knew that thus all classes of your Majesty's subjects, as well those residing in the mother country as in the colonies, contributed to bear a burthen necessary to the due enforcement of the navigation laws of the empire.

When it pleased the Imperial Parliament to abolish this system, it was declared that the measure was one of relief to the colonies, and that it was not intended that the mother country should benefit by the change. Yet Nova Scotia, preceding the other colonies, was the first to grant, not merely a sum equal in amount to that which had been previously paid in fees, but a larger sum; for your Majesty will perceive that the total amount which, in currency, was paid in the province in fees, was but 6,958 *l.* 18 *s.* 2 *d.*, when the free system was abolished; whereas the sum granted by the Act, to provide for the custom-house establishment in Nova Scotia, was 7,144 *l.* 18 *s.* 9 *d.* currency, or 6,430 *l.* 9 *s.* sterling.

The House then felt, as they now feel, that the very fees which had burthened their coasting trade, and of which alone they had for many years complained, had swelled the sum paid to the officers to an amount far beyond what ought in justice to have been awarded to them; they observed that the scale of salaries proposed was extravagant; that it was intended to appoint several officers to do duties which, under the fee system, had been, or might be performed by one: yet, foreseeing that the extension of the trade of the colony would probably require an increase of their establishment; that it was the prerogative of the Crown to establish the amount of their salaries; that it was to the colony immaterial whether the whole sum given was allotted to one officer or distributed among many, the Assembly at once gave the sum required from them.

They did more; they granted, as a free gift to your Majesty's late Royal Brother and Predecessor, the whole sum of 25,087 *l.* 1 *s.* 11 *d.* sterling, which had been previously retained by these officers, and for which the House had before held them personally responsible.

Of this measure your Majesty's Lieutenant-governor, Sir Peregrine Maitland, in his address to the House at the conclusion of the session of the year 1829, remarked as follows: "Your Bill, making permanent provisions for the custom-house establishment, I will transmit with pleasure for the consideration of His Majesty. It will not fail to convey a fresh proof of the enlightened public spirit, and the sense of justice towards the mother country, which have guided your legislative proceedings, and tended to confer on them a character so honourable to the province."

Nor did the House refrain from distinctly announcing the principles upon which they adopted this step. Your Majesty will see, by reference to their address of the 16th April 1829, and the scale of salaries which accompanied it, that they were candidly submitted to the King's Government; and in the acceptance of their humble, yet to them large contribution, the people of the colony saw these principles sanctioned and confirmed.