

TUESDAY, 10th FEBRUARY, 1829.

Mr. Secretary George also further acquainted the House, that he had a Message from His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor, signed by His Excellency, and he presented the said Message to the House; and the same was read by Mr. Speaker, all the Members being uncovered, and is as follows, viz:

MESSAGE.

P. MAITLAND,

Message from
Lieut.-Governor
relative to
Custom-House
Establishment

IN reference to the Communication which the Lieutenant-Governor acquainted the House of Assembly he was instructed to make, respecting the disposal of the Duties collected under the Statutes of the Imperial Parliament, for regulating the Colonial Trade, he has to intimate to the House of Assembly, that the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury, having given due attention to the representations submitted to them, have been pleased to observe, that their Lordships trust they shall have no cause to regret that the abolition of Fees upon Shipping, from which the Officers of the Customs had, for a long series of years, derived their emoluments, should have taken place before some satisfactory arrangements had been made with the Colonies for permanently providing for the Salaries of those Officers.

Their Lordships cannot believe that the circumstance of the relief to the Colonies having been given, in the first instance, by the immediate abolition of the Fees, can operate upon the Legislatures of the several Colonies to the disadvantage of the Officers themselves, or can be considered a ground for throwing a further burthen on the Mother Country, or for invading the just and acknowledged right of the Crown to appoint the Officers of the Customs, and to assign to them a reasonable and proper remuneration: on the contrary, my Lords have the fullest confidence, that, when the Colonial Legislatures shall have had under their consideration the actual circumstances of the case, they will not be indisposed to acquiesce in an arrangement which cannot but be for their own advantage.

Their Lordships, however, have been pleased to say, "that it was no part of their intention, nor is it proposed, that a larger charge for Officers Salaries should, in consequence of the abolition of Fees, be imposed on any Colony;" still less, that the Mother Country should derive pecuniary advantage from the change.

A main object of the abolition of Fees was Colonial relief, and all that their Lordships desire is, that the relief to the Colonies should not be made the means of additional and unreasonable burthens upon the Revenue at home.

In order to illustrate the advantages derived by the Colonies from the new system, their Lordships remark, that the sum levied in the several Ports in the shape of Fees on Shipping, previous to the 6th Geo. IV. amounted to above L.103,000, while the total of the new and reduced Salaries for the Officers of the Customs, proposed to be defrayed out of the Colonial Revenue, amounts to no more than L.73,000; and their Lordships further observe, that the Fees to a large amount heretofore paid to the Naval Officers in the several Colonies, have been abolished; and that the compensation to these Officers, in lieu of those Fees, is now paid out of the Revenue of Great-Britain.

In what proportion the Fees on Shipping were a Tax upon the Colony; and in what proportion they were a Tax upon the Mother Country; their Lordships have not thought it necessary precisely to define;—To the extent of that proportion which fell upon the Colony, the repeal of them has been a measure of Colonial relief, and that relief has been further extended by the addition proposed to be made to the charges on the Revenue at Home.

Their Lordships propose, that, the Crown Revenues should continue to be charged with the incidental expenses of the collection of the Customs, and with the compensation which it has been found necessary to assign to the Customs' Officers, whose Salaries have been reduced; and if there should be any Colony in which the Salaries,

See papers No.
1 and 2