

In the late lamented death of Adelaide, the Queen Dowager, we have to deplore the loss of a most excellent Princess, and which will be mourned by all classes of Her Majesty's subjects, to whom her many eminent virtues rendered her the object of universal esteem and affection.

You will all, I am confident, unite with one voice in thanksgiving to Almighty God, that he has been so graciously and mercifully pleased to avert from this land that grievous pestilence the Cholera, with which other parts of this Empire have been so sorely afflicted.

It is also a cause of grateful acknowledgement that a bountiful Providence has, during the past season, vouchsafed an ample reward to the toil of our hardy fishermen, whose prosperity is essential to the welfare of the colony, and by the successful result of whose labours the energy of commercial enterprise is promoted.

It is further pleasing to me to be able to inform you that the results of the agriculture of the colony for the past year have more than realized the anticipations of those favourable to the experiment, and the progress made during that brief period has been such as to lead to the most encouraging anticipations for the future. The promotion of this branch of industry will merit your fostering care and encouragement, whether viewed in the light of a powerful auxiliary to the staple trade of the colony, or as a means of promoting some additional subsistence for our rapidly increasing population, for whose support the fisheries alone are becoming now inadequate.

As the Education Act will expire at the close of the present Session, the state of Education in the colony will necessarily engage your attention ; from the reports received of the condition of many of the Schools, a more efficient system of instruction is urgently required. Although our financial condition will not, I regret to say, admit of any increase being made to the present grant, yet the system is susceptible of much improvement, and I hope the Session will not be allowed to pass without the adoption of some measure that will secure a more effective superintendence of the Schools generally throughout the Colony.

I will cause to be laid before you copies of several Despatches which have been received from Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies.

*Mr. Speaker and Gentlemen of the House of Assembly—*

The Accounts and Estimates will be laid before you. I feel confident of your readiness to provide for all that is necessary for the public service, and in the expenditure of the monies placed at the disposal of the Execu-