

“The Fisheries have been successful; new markets have been opened to their produce; and we have reason to hope that this branch of industry may hereafter flourish with increased vigour.

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

“I have given directions, that the Accounts both of Revenue and Expenditure for the past year should be laid before you.

“You will bear in mind that the Loan Duty was remitted at the commencement of the year 1854, and that many of the productions of the United States, and some other articles of very general consumption, without reference to the country from which they may be imported, have been since freed from Duty.

“But you will observe with satisfaction that notwithstanding the remission of these Duties, and although the prevalence of Cholera disturbed, for some months during the Summer, Trade and Industry throughout the Province, the Public Revenue for the year 1854 is larger than that which was received in the preceding twelve months, and far exceeds the amount collected in any previous year.

“I congratulate you on this proof of the increased commerce of the Province.

“The Act of Assembly, under which the Provincial Customs' Duties are levied, will expire in the course of the present year, and this subject demands your immediate attention. In such circumstances it is of great importance that you should have before you early and full information with respect both to the amount which you might reasonably expect to derive from the continuance or imposition of any particular Duty, and of the amount which will probably be required to defray the public expenditure of the Province.

“Estimates of this nature have been prepared, and will be laid before you, but it is impossible to expect that these estimates can have that practical value, which would attach to them, were the Executive Government subject to any special responsibility with respect to the appropriation of the Public Revenues, or the mode in which these Revenues are to be raised.

“This is a subject worthy of your consideration.

“You must, I fear, be prepared to expect during the present year, a considerable reduction in the proceeds of any Customs' Duties on articles of Import; but I am confident that you will uphold the credit and maintain the character of the Province, by a scrupulous regard to all existing engagements, and by making ample provision for the requirements of the Public service, while you exercise a careful economy in your appropriations of the Public Revenue.

“A Freshet of unusual violence occurred in the course of last Autumn, and I regret to say, that it caused considerable damage to many Roads and Bridges in different parts of the Province. With the concurrence of my Council, I immediately made the necessary arrangements for the temporary repair or reconstruction of those works, the partial or complete destruction of which had interrupted existing lines of communication of considerable importance. I do not doubt that you will readily sanction the expense which has been incurred for this purpose.

“But although the damage occasioned by this Freshet was unusual in its extent,
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