

To His Excellency the Right Honorable *James*, Earl of *Elgin* and *Kincardine*, Knight of the Most Ancient and Most Noble Order of the Thistle, Governor General of British *North America*, and Captain General and Governor in Chief in and over the Provinces of *Canada*, *Nova Scotia*, *New Brunswick*, and the Island of *Prince Edward*, and Vice-Admiral of the same, &c. &c.

May it please Your Excellency,

We, Her Majesty's dutiful and loyal Subjects, the Commons of *Canada* in Provincial Parliament assembled, humbly thank Your Excellency for your gracious Speech from the Throne, at the commencement of the present Session.

We beg to assure Your Excellency that this House cordially concurs in the satisfaction expressed by Your Excellency, that uninterrupted tranquillity has prevailed in the Province during the Recess.

The proofs which the people of *Canada* have furnished during this period of general excitement and disquietude, of their love of order, and of the attachment they bear to their institutions will, we feel assured, tend to establish the credit of the Province on a firmer basis and promote its prosperity.

We learn with the greatest satisfaction that it is the purpose of our beloved Sovereign to exercise the prerogative of Mercy in favor of all persons who are still liable to penal consequences for political offences arising out of the unfortunate occurrences of 1837 and 1838, and assure Your Excellency that we will with humble gratitude concur in passing any Act which may be proposed to give full effect to this Her Majesty's most gracious intention.

It affords this House much pleasure to learn, that in compliance with the desire of the Legislature of this Province, expressed in a joint Address of the two Houses of the Provincial Parliament, the Imperial Parliament has passed an Act repealing the Clause in the Union Act which imposed restrictions on the use of the French Language.

We learn with pleasure, that Your Excellency has during the Recess been in communication with Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies, and with the Lieutenant-Governors of *Nova Scotia* and *New Brunswick*, on the subject of the Provincial Post Office, and that on the meeting of the Imperial Parliament steps will be taken for conferring on the Provincial Authorities the entire control and management of this Department; and they trust that when the arrangements for effecting this object shall have been completed, it may be found practicable to establish a low and uniform Rate of Postage for the British *North American* Provinces.

We concur with Your Excellency in the belief that an increase in the Representation would be attended with considerable advantage to the public interest, and we assure Your Excellency, that the subject, which is one of no ordinary importance, will not fail to receive our best consideration.

We cordially concur in the gratification expressed by Your Excellency, at the opposition manifested at one time in certain parts of *Lower Canada*, to the School Act, having in a great measure subsided; and we will readily consent to make such alterations in it, as shall render it as little as possible onerous to the Rate-payer, without, however, compromising the important principle which it has consecrated, in securing for all the youth of this section of the Province, the blessing of Education.

The system of Judicature in both sections of the Province—the Laws for the regulation of Municipalities, and the Constitution of the University of King's College, shall receive our best attention.

We learn with great satisfaction that the Officers employed in exploring the Country between *Quebec* and *Halifax*, with the view of discovering the best line for a Railway to connect these two points, have presented a Report containing much valuable information, and setting forth in a strong light the advantages of the proposed undertaking; and that a Despatch from the Secretary of State for the Colonies has been received by Your Excellency, expressive of the interest taken by Her Majesty's Government in the execution of this great work.

We will give our best consideration to the Accounts for the past, and the Estimates for the present year, when they shall be submitted by Your Excellency; and we beg to assure Your Excellency, that you may rely on our readiness to grant the Supplies which are necessary for the Public Service.

This House participates in the concern expressed by Your Excellency, that *Canada* has been seriously affected by the Commercial depression by which the past year has been unfortunately characterised.

We feel grateful to Your Excellency for having impressed on Her Majesty's Ministers the urgent necessity which exists for the removal of such provisions from the Imperial Statute Book as may tend to restrict the Commerce of this Province, by checking the resort of foreign Shipping to its Ports in search of freight; and we receive with the highest satisfaction the information that Your Excellency's representations on this head have been cordially responded to by the Queen's Government.

Among the measures to which Your Excellency has been pleased to refer, as meriting the attention of the Provincial Parliament at the present time, as being calculated to raise the credit of the Province, to extend its trade, and to contribute to the development of its resources, this House is gratified at finding that Your Excellency has particularly directed their attention to the following as specially important.

The provision of such funds as may be required for the completion of the *St. Lawrence* Canals, at the earliest period. With respect to which great works, they are happy to learn that it is believed, that they may be so far perfected at small additional expense as to permit Vessels drawing nine feet on the outward, and eight feet on the inward voyage, to pass from Lake *Erie* to the Ocean, soon after the opening of the navigation; when this object shall be accomplished, *Canada* will possess an Inland Navigation unparalleled in capacity and length, and connecting the marts of a Commerce to the growth of which it is impossible to assign limits.

The enactment of a Law authorizing the alienation of works of a purely local character which have been executed at the cost of the Province, and giving the Government such powers as may be necessary for the re-organization of the Provincial Debt, and the creation of an efficient Sinking Fund. It is gratifying to feel that this debt has not been contracted in the prosecution of costly wars, whether of defence or aggression, but in the construction of works of utility, the more important of which can hardly fail, when completed, to prove remunerative; and further, that the existence of a large revenue, derived from Customs, places the creditor of the Canadian Public in a very advantageous position, which will be improved when the principle of a Sinking Fund is brought into active operation.

The amendment of the existing Immigration Act, with a view to the removal of such provisions as tend to prevent Immigrants who propose to settle in *Canada*, or the Western States of the Union, from proceeding to their destination by the route of the *St. Lawrence*. With respect to which important subject this House fully concurs with Your Excellency, that the Passenger Trade is an important branch of the