

sion in the Act, which required that the title of the Sovereign should continue in the land, and thereby render valid any legal proceedings that might arise in reference to Crown Lands; a similar clause, under similar circumstances, was introduced into the Nova Scotia Act, and I am confident you will take an early opportunity to remedy the omission, in order that the Bill may receive the Royal assent.

The other Act is the One-ninth Bill. This Act has not been confirmed, Her Majesty's Government requiring clearer proof of its necessity. My belief of its equity and justice was fortified by both branches of the Legislature, although several Honorable Gentlemen, Members of the Legislative Council, considered that unless some case arose to call for Legislative interference, it was unnecessary: such cases have arisen, and more may follow; and I cannot help thinking, that all inconvenience and difficulty arising from uncertainty, might have been obviated, had the Legislature, on passing so important a Bill as one to regulate the Currency, also defined by Statute the just and equitable provisions, so necessary on such an occasion, for all the existing contracts and obligations according to the established practice, custom and usage of the Colony; in other words, that "parties should in future pay and receive at the rate at which they had before paid and received," without subjecting their contracts and obligations to the interpretation of the Courts of Law. It shall be my duty to endeavour to afford proof to Her Majesty's Government, of the necessity for legislation on the principle which I have just enunciated, and which induced me to give my assent to the Bill in question.

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

The state of the Revenue, notwithstanding that you made wise reductions of duties last Session on some articles of general consumption, you will, I think, have reason to be satisfied with. The amount for the year would have been larger, had it not been for the unusually early winter, which has frozen up and prevented several vessels from reaching the Island, laden with cargoes subject to revenue duties.

The Estimates will soon be laid before you, and I doubt not you will readily vote the necessary Supplies for the Public Service. By a wholesome control over the expenditure, and keeping it always within the amount of the revenue, you will soon increase the credit of the Colony, enable its Government to carry on a better system of Finance than has hitherto prevailed, which cannot but prove to be acceptable and advantageous to the community at large.

*Mr. President and Honorable Gentlemen of the Legislative Council:*

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

A Bill for the Recovery of Small Debts will be submitted for your consideration.

I shall not farther trespass on your time at present than by directing your attention to a question which has become of great importance to Prince Edward Island. In 1849 its Legislature passed an Act for reciprocal free Trade with the United States, in certain enumerated articles. That Act has remained a dead letter, and we have no right to complain of the policy which may prompt the United States' Government to adopt such legislation as they may think most conducive to the interests of the citizens of that great Republic, with whom, I trust, we shall always continue on terms of amity and friendship. But while concessions are sought for, advantageous to the United States, we have a right to expect, before they are granted, to be met in a corresponding spirit of reciprocal advantage. And I am induced to express that opinion, because I observe, during the same Session of 1849, the Legislature of this Colony agreed to a joint Address to Her Majesty, apparently unconditionally, praying for the abrogation of the Treaty of 1818, which prohibits others than British Subjects from prosecuting the Fisheries at a less distance from the Shore than three miles, the construction put upon that Treaty being, that the distance shall be computed from the head lands. The Address to which I have alluded was very graciously received by Her Majesty, and was to meet from her Government with that earnest consideration which so important a subject demanded. But no further correspondence seems to have taken place with my Predecessor. The importance of the Fishery, and the magnitude of the United States' fleet of Fishermen may be estimated, when I inform you that upwards of two hundred sail were at one time in one of our harbours in the autumn, and no fewer than seventy-two of their vessels were cast ashore, or were more or less damaged on the Shores of this Island during the disastrous gale at the beginning of October last. I have, therefore, considered it to be my duty, with the advice of the Executive Council, to renew the correspondence with Her Majesty's Government on the Fishery question. Negotiations, I am informed, are now pending, which, I trust, will terminate to the mutual advantage of both Countries. But if no concessions can be granted by the United States, I hope you will direct your energies to induce British Capitalists to prosecute that important branch of trade and industry, and afford every facility to erect fishing stations along the shores of this Island.

With the blessing of God, I trust that your endeavours to promote the welfare and prosperity of the Colony, and the happiness of the People, may meet with success.

**Resolved,** That a Committee of three Members be appointed, to provide Stationery for the use of the House.