

took place in Her Majesty's Councils—a dissolution of the Imperial Parliament followed,—and well knowing the mass of business which must necessarily occupy the attention of the Colonial Minister, I abstained from communicating with him on this subject, believing that if I did so he would naturally refer me to the Despatch of his predecessor of Nov. 6, 1851, in which Earl Grey says:—

“I observe that the provision of the Act is confined to cases in which the Landlords have been already in the habit of receiving their rents on a calculation assuming less than the actual depreciation of the currency. This gives me reason for hoping that no serious practical inconvenience will arise from its not being confirmed, since I am not aware of any good reason for supposing, that Landlords will, in future, shew less indulgence than they have hitherto done.

“There may be special cases of hardship and injustice likely to arise from the state in which the law will be left from the non-confirmation of this Act, for which it may be proper to afford a remedy; but it has not been shewn that this is the case.”

As you are again assembled to legislate impartially for all classes of the community, I leave with great confidence this important question to your deliberation, wisdom and discretion, and have given directions to lay before you a Minute of the Lords of the Treasury, dated 27th June last, relative to the Currency of the North American Provinces. A Bill has been introduced in the Canadian Legislature, with the view of adopting one uniform system. If such a measure be submitted for your consideration, it might afford a suitable opportunity to provide a remedy for those cases of hardship and injustice which Earl Grey admitted may arise from the state in which the law is left.

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

The Public Accounts will be laid before you, and you will be gratified at seeing a clear indication of the increasing prosperity of the Colony: the revenue in 1851 having been £22,800, while in 1852 it has reached £31,300; and you will, perhaps, be enabled to make some reduction in the duty on tea, an article of general consumption among all classes. After providing for the public obligations and the salaries of those whom you entrust with the management of the different departments of the Government—(many of them, in my opinion, along with you, Mr. Speaker, being very inadequately paid)—the annual appropriation of the revenue devolves on you, to be distributed for public purposes, and, consequently, for the benefit of the tax-payer, on whom it is levied. I shall only, therefore, again observe, that nothing will tend more to enhance the welfare and credit of the Colony, than by limiting its expenditure within the income, to enable you to meet emergencies, should they occur, if it please God to be less bountiful to this Island in those blessings which we have now such reason to be grateful for. The Estimates will be submitted for your consideration, and I have no doubt you will readily provide for the public service.

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

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

A Bill to empower the Government to purchase the Township lands will be submitted for your consideration.

Despatches will be laid before you relative to the very important question of the Fisheries; they contain representations which I considered it necessary, with the advice and cordial concurrence of the Executive, to make to Her Majesty's Government, on the daily infraction of the Convention of 1818, carried on along the shores and in the harbours of this Colony, by United States fishermen, to an extent which I am confident was unknown to their Government. In reference to these representations, I received a communication from Sir John Pakington, dated the 27th May, announcing that a small Naval force was to be despatched for the protection of the fisheries. You are aware of the very efficient manner in which that service was performed. And I am happy to bear testimony to the discretion and forbearance of the officers to whom Vice Admiral Sir G. Seymour entrusted so delicate and difficult a duty. And I believe that the wise, necessary and well-timed course adopted by the British Government will avert serious disputes and future collisions with the subjects of a friendly power, and otherwise lead to happy consequences.

After the close of the fishery season Her Majesty's Government and that of the United States were about to enter into “a Negotiation upon the broadest basis of reciprocal and equivalent concessions in Trade,” and it was my duty, (indeed I was instructed,) to furnish a statement of the several points affecting the interests of this Island, proper to be considered in such negotiations. You may be assured that those interests will not be neglected.

You will therefore, I hope, concur with me that it would be desirable, at present, to abstain from taking any active measures on the subject of the Fisheries or of Trade, which might by any possibility embarrass or impede the proceedings of the respective Governments, in bringing these negotiations to a successful and amicable termination; an event which I am sure would be hailed by you and the people of Prince Edward Island with the greatest satisfaction,—for you will remember the excitement which prevailed in the United States in the early part of last Summer on the Fishery Question, which partly arose from statements promulgated in the Colonies, without that due caution, the want of which was foreseen by the Minister who held the colonial seals in 1845, when he alluded “to the danger which cannot fail to arise from an overstrained assumption of the power of excluding the fishermen of the United States from the waters in which they have the right to follow their pursuits.” On the other hand, the American Press, at the time I refer to, seemed entirely to overlook the flagrant breaches of the Treaty which were daily committed by American subjects, *within limits* where their ablest Statesmen admit their countrymen have neither right nor title to trespass. By the Convention of