

12. I need only observe further, without in the least intending thereby to influence your ultimate determination, that it is obviously convenient, if not essential, for the Legislatures of all the Provinces concerned to observe uniformity in the mode of ascertaining their respective decisions on a question common to all. I have, therefore, desired to be laid before you some correspondence between the Governor General and myself on that point.

13. Scarcely less important or urgent is the question of internal defence. Much progress was made last year in the general enrolment of the Militia force of the colony, which numbered upwards of 53,000 men; of whom nearly 42,000 turned out for inspection and drill. When the heavy, direct tax, paid by those men and also by the Volunteers, both in time and labor, is considered, we must all feel that the country owes them a special debt of gratitude.

14. Nevertheless, though they have exhibited much military aptitude, no adequate means have yet been taken to render effective the excellent material of that large force. Without arms, accoutrements, uniforms, or any advantage except a few hours drill in each year, a succession of years similarly employed would teach them little more. A step in advance is necessary to fit them for the most ordinary service in the field. This Province can no longer expect to contribute for its defence only a fortieth part of the annual disbursements of Her Majesty's Commissariat chest at Halifax. Nor do I for a moment suppose you can either expect or wish the ample freedom which you enjoy here, to be always exempt from those honorable obligations which its preservation entails elsewhere.

15. I have therefore directed Estimates to be prepared for placing the Militia in a more efficient state, and feel confident that whatever may be the necessary cost, you will regard the defence of the Country not as a burthen, but a privilege and a sacred duty to be cheerfully performed.

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

16. The Public Accounts will also be submitted for your inspection, and the General Estimates be prepared with every attention to economy which the exigencies of the Public Service permit.

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

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

17. You will, I am satisfied, have heard with regret that proceedings are in progress to terminate the Reciprocity Treaty, which has conferred such extensive benefits on the trade both of this Province and the neighboring States, whilst it has also essentially promoted the most friendly relations between the two countries. I have directed the correspondence on that subject to be laid before you.

18. Strongly impressed with the advantage of making the great natural resources of this Colony better understood in the principal commercial centres of Europe, I have promised a limited amount of aid to a committee of gentlemen who are now employed in securing a due representation of this Province at the International Exhibition to be held in Dublin during the present year. I anticipate your hearty co-operation in promoting such a national object, when the papers upon this subject shall have been brought under your consideration.

19. Some modification of the law passed last Session for the better encouragement of Education will be laid before you, and no doubt you will gladly endeavor to render more available and better adapted to the wants of the country, certain provisions of a measure which so materially concerns the education of the great body of the people. I count on that important subject receiving the most enlightened consideration at your hands.

20. In accordance with the Act passed last Session providing for the extension of the Railway to Pictou, that work was put under contract, and will be completed with all possible dispatch.

21. Proposals for the construction of Railways to the border of New Brunswick and to Annapolis, will also require your consideration.

22. The grant of last Session on account of Saint Peter's Canal has been expended, and a full Report on that work will be laid before you at an early day.

23. I regret to be obliged to inform you that the crowded state of the Hospital for the Insane has made it impossible to provide adequate accommodation for the care of those who unfortunately need an asylum of that description. I trust the appeal thus made to the sympathy of the Legislature will lead to the extension of an Institution so indispensable.

24. You will be gratified to learn that the traffic on the Provincial Railways continues to exhibit a marked and steady improvement over any previous year, and that the increasing sale of the Crown Lands, and extended working of the Coal and Gold Mines, all evidence a high degree of prosperity.

25. These fortunate circumstances, enhanced as they are by the continuance of peace, will no doubt facilitate your discharge of those public duties for which I have called you together, and must awaken in us all a grateful recognition of the indulgent bounty of that Providence, which has bestowed so many blessings on this Province.

26. I now declare this Session opened.

Having returned to the Assembly Room, the Speaker read the Speech to the House.

Hon. PROV. SEC. laid on the table the election writs for the Counties of Annapolis and Pictou.

Mr. Ray and Hon. James McDonald were then presented and sworn in, in the presence of Hon. M. B. Ahaon, Hon. J. H. Anderson, and Hon. A. Keith, acting as Commissioners.

Dr. HAMILTON laid on the table, *pro forma*, a bill for the better protection of the estates and rights of married women.

ANSWER TO THE ADDRESS.

Mr. KAULBACK, in moving the answer to the address, said: The very great pleasure it gives me in moving the answer to the speech, with which His Excellency opened this Session, is greatly enhanced by the opening remarks of His Excellency in which he informed us of the unprecedented increase of our Revenue as well as the remarkable development of our most important Exports and Imports.

It affords me great pleasure to congratulate the Government and the Country on having a large Revenue, which tends so much to maintain the confidence and strengthen the ties between Government and Country.

We, the Representatives of the people, must feel this state of things highly encouraging to us as well as the Government, and a happy relief from the perplexities which attend an empty chest.

This unusual degree of prosperity is the more fortunate because it occurs at a time, as His Excellency has been pleased to remark, when we are invited to consider the greatest question ever submitted to this Legislature, the Union of British North America.

This question has engaged the attention of the leading public men for more than half a century, not only in those Colonies, but in England; and the subject years ago, and on several occasions was brought to the consideration of the Legislature by our leading public men of all parties. We are now invited by His Excellency to the serious consideration of this question embodied in seventy-two resolutions; the framers of which have received the highest praise in England from the Colonial Minister of the Crown, for the ability displayed, and for the warm sentiments of loyalty and attachment felt for the mother country. We must all, I think, highly approve of