

Speech at opening of session.

The expense of transporting convicts to Quebec and England, on the way to their ultimate destination, forms also a heavy item in the charge attending the administration of Justice, and I fear it must be further swelled, to a large extent, in consequence of there being a number of convicts, under sentence of death, to whom the only relaxation of capital punishment, compatible with the safety of the Province, seems to be transportation to a penal Colony.

I have likewise been obliged to expend considerable sums in procuring accurate information of the designs of the conspirators in the adjacent States, as well as of their confederates within the Province: and in supporting a frequent and rapid communication with Her Majesty's Government at Home, and her Minister at Washington.

In the confidence of your sanction being most readily given to these necessary disbursements, I have assumed the responsibility of advancing, from the Crown Revenue, the amount of the most pressing demands under these heads of Service; and a statement of those advances, together with the Public accounts and Estimates, shall immediately be laid before you.

I have applied myself most sedulously to the examination and settlement of the numerous and pressing claims arising out of the late disturbances. Such of them as I was authorised to satisfy from the Military Chest, have been discharged, or are in a course of settlement, through Her Majesty's Commissariat; but there remain others, founded on equitable considerations, the payment of which must necessarily depend upon your justice and liberality: and I shall accordingly direct a particular account of them to be laid before you.

The representations of the great inconvenience attending the negotiation in this market of the public Debentures payable in London were so strong, that I was induced to discontinue the practice entirely, until you should have an opportunity of taking the subject under your deliberation.

Their negotiation in England has been latterly impeded by the blow which recent disturbances had inflicted on the public credit of this Province, and was afterwards rendered impracticable by the circumstance, that the terms upon which the sale of those Debentures was authorised by Parliament, were less favourable to the purchaser than could be obtained by an investment of his capital in other securities.

You will be gratified to learn, that notwithstanding the interruption to which the trade of the Country has been exposed, there has been no falling off of the Commercial Revenue collected in the Lower Province; that a portion of the money placed in the hands of Messrs. Thomas Wilson & Company of London, has been paid, and that there is reason to believe that the remainder will shortly be received.

You will receive reports upon the state of the Public Works in progress; and I shall be most happy to co-operate with you in any wise and practicable measures for their completion.

The large sums heretofore granted for the improvement of the roads, do not appear to have produced results commensurate with the expenditure; and it is accordingly worthy of your serious consideration, whether some more efficient system may not be contrived for the management and direction of this branch of the public service. I need hardly add, that the formation of good roads is an object of primary importance in every Country, and most indispensably necessary to an Agricultural one.

Her Majesty's Government look forward with much anxiety to the resumption of cash payments by the Chartered Banks. I am induced to hope that no difficulty will present itself to the early accomplishment of this essential object.

*Honorable Gentlemen, and Gentlemen:*

The several Addresses to Her Majesty from the two Houses of Parliament, during the last Session, having been laid at the foot of the Throne, by Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies, were very graciously received; and I shall, without loss of time, transmit to you the answers which have respectively been returned to them.

I have, to a limited extent, exercised the power vested in me by the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act. In doing so, I have proceeded with the greatest caution, and with a sincere desire that no restraint might be imposed on personal liberty, which the public safety did not imperatively demand.

The progress which this beautiful country seems destined to make in population and wealth, has been materially obstructed by the difficulties and dangers with which it has, for some time past, been surrounded.

By the goodness of an over-ruling Providence, those dangers have, however, in a great degree been averted; and I humbly hope that the same Almighty Arm, which has hitherto protected us, will soon place Upper Canada in such a state of tranquillity and security, as will permit the full development of her vast natural resources.

To accelerate the arrival of that period, and in cordial conjunction with you to promote by wise and salutary legislation, the prosperity and happiness of this interesting Colony, will be the object of my earnest desire, and unceasing exertions.