

13th May, 1861.

His Excellency Sir Alexander Bannerman, Knight, Governor.

privileges which have at any time been enjoyed by your predecessors in office as Speaker of the Assembly.

His Excellency was then pleased to open the present Session by the following gracious Speech to both Houses :

Mr. President and Honorable Gentlemen of the Legislative Council :

Mr. Speaker and Gentlemen of the House of Assembly :

I avail myself of the earliest opportunity of assembling you after the recent General Election.

It would have afforded me infinite satisfaction to have announced to you that British subjects in Newfoundland had been allowed to exercise the undoubted right which they possess to vote for such persons as they might think were the fittest to represent their interests in the House of Assembly.

I am sorry to say that this has not been the case : serious riots and disturbances have occurred in several Districts—property to a considerable amount has been destroyed in Harbor Grace, and no polling took place there, the rioters having had their sway, notwithstanding that the authorities, at their own request, had a military force sent in aid of the civil power.

In St. John's, also, on the day of Nomination, outrages of a very serious character occurred, occasioning, as I hear, the use of fire-arms, and several persons were unfortunately wounded.

In the District of Harbor Main, I lament to say, more distressing events have occurred. In that District there were four Candidates, all of the same religious persuasion ; and there, also, fire-arms were resorted to, and I grieve to say that one man was killed and others severely wounded.

As these occurrences are all, at present, the subject of judicial inquiry, I shall abstain from further comment ; but I have to assure you that the Government is determined that all these most calamitous events, and the causes which gave rise to them, shall undergo the strictest investigation, with a view that, if possible, some of the perpetrators of these outrages may be discovered, and a repetition of them prevented—that the people of