

The Evening Telegram.

ST. JOHN'S, FEBRUARY 16, 1888.

OPENING OF THE LEGISLATURE.

"The Speech from the Throne."

At 2 o'clock this afternoon, in accordance with previous announcement, the General Assembly of this colony was opened in due form by His Excellency the Governor, Mrs. Blake, the Chief Justice, Assistant Judges, several leading citizens and a large number of ladies and gentlemen being present. His Excellency having taken his seat on the throne, and the members of the Assembly being duly summoned by the Usher of the Black Rod, Governor Blake proceeded to open the session by reading the following Speech in a remarkably clear and emphatic style. We publish the Speech to-day without comment, further than to observe that, if the public are to regard it as the key to the future policy of the Thorburn Government, it is fortunate for the country that there will soon be an opportunity to place men of real practical ability in the position of the present ministry:—

Mr. President and Honorable Gentlemen of the Legislative Council:
Mr. Speaker and Gentlemen of the Honorable House of Assembly:

It affords me much gratification to meet the Legislature of Newfoundland for the first time since my assumption of the Government of this ancient colony.

In calling you together for the despatch of public business, I desire to express to you my deep sense of the responsibility of my position and to assure you of my earnest intention to perform the duties of my office in strict accordance with constitutional principles.

Arriving near the end of the summer, I have not yet had an opportunity of acquiring an extensive knowledge of the colony from personal observation. I have, however, visited the greater portion of the Peninsula of Avalon, and wish to express my acknowledgment of the hearty and loyal reception given to me as the representative of Her Majesty at those places visited by me.

Although I am not in a position to congratulate you upon a condition of general prosperity, I feel gratified in being able to state that the year just closed has witnessed a marked improvement in the results of the staple industries of the colony, as compared with those of immediately preceding years. The seal fishery was conducted on a scale smaller than that of former years. A short catch, with low prices for its products, made the result unremunerative to those engaged in its prosecution.

The cod fishery on the coasts of the Island and Labrador was below the average, but this difficulty was largely compensated by good prices.

The prosecution of the Bank fishery was again attended with marked success, and there is no doubt that there will be a further increase during the coming season in the outfit for this now important branch of our fisheries.

The salmon fishery was fairly successful, but the herring fishery on the coast of Labrador was a failure.

The lobster fishery was prosecuted on an increased scale, and with much success. This industry now furnishes a large item in the export trade of the colony.

The large measure of success which attended agricultural operations has contributed in a great degree to the general improvement in the condition of the people.

It is satisfactory to note that the expenditure authorised by the Legislature towards the close of last session for the purchase of seed potatoes for distribution among the necessitous was productive of most beneficial results.

It is also gratifying to find that the inducements to the clearing and cultivation of the soil, afforded by the bounties provided under the Agricultural Act of the session of 1886, have led to a large amount of profitable labor in that direction, and the development of an active public interest in this most valuable pursuit.

Mining operations, which for some years past had been gradually declining, have recently received a strong impetus from a large advance in the price of copper.

With a view to the extension of the area of useful and remunerative employment during the winter months, my Government, in November last, assumed the responsibility of offering an increase upon the drawback or bounty provided by the recent Act for the encouragement of shipbuilding, to apply to vessels of a certain class, to be built during the present season. I am informed that a stimulus was thereby imparted to this most important industry, and, at the same time, a considerable amount of wages earned by many who would otherwise be destitute. I rely, with confidence, upon your legislative confirmation of the action of the Government in this matter.

The assent given by Her Majesty to the Act of last session in relation to the sale and export of bait fishes was accompanied by an opinion that it should not come into effect during the fishing season of the year 1887. I accordingly issued a proclamation fixing the second day of January for the commencement of its operation. The necessary measures for the enforcement of the provisions of the act will be adopted by the Government.

A new contract has been entered into for the performance of the Coastal Steam Service, and also for a winter service between St. John's and Halifax, to take effect from May next. The boats now in course of construction will be, as regards size, speed and accommodation, much superior to those that have hitherto been employed in the Coastal Service; and this improvement in efficiency has been effected with a large saving upon the present cost. In this connection it would appear that the time is opportune for dealing with the question of the further improvement in the means of communication by the employment of steamers in the bays, or at least in those in which connections with the Railway can be made.

During the past year an addition has been made to our system of telegraph communication, by its extension to the district of Fogo.

The work of construction of the Placentia Railway is progressing satisfactorily as regards efficiency, cost, and rapidity of execution. It is hoped that in the early part of the summer a connection, sufficient for the commencement of operations, will be made with, or near to, Placentia. It will be necessary during the present season to make some legislative provision for operating the line.

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

The revenue for the past year has been somewhat short of the estimates.

The expenditure in connection with the public service has been conducted with due regard to economy and efficiency, and the accounts, with the usual estimates for the present year, will be laid before you. I feel assured that you will make adequate provision for the requirements of the various departments of Government.

Mr. President and Hon. Gentlemen of the Legislative Council:
Mr. Speaker and Gentlemen of the Hon. House of Assembly:

Her Majesty's Government and the Government of the United States having agreed upon the appointment of a Joint Committee to deal with questions in dispute between the two nations in relation to the fisheries on the coasts of British North America, and other matters, with a view to a settlement upon some mutually satisfactory basis, of these and other cognate questions, the Commissioners met at Washington in the month of November and have not yet concluded their labors.

The Attorney General was appointed to proceed to Washington to confer with and assist the British Plenipotentiaries upon those points especially relating to the circumstances and interests of this colony. I expect to be in a position to inform you of the results of the deliberations of the conference.

The opening of the International Exhibition at Barcelona has been postponed till the 8th April next. The necessary preparations for the suitable representation of the colony at this Exhibition are in progress.

In compliance with your joint address of last session my predecessor appointed a commission to inquire into the constitution and working of fishery departments in other countries. I am informed that the commission have devoted much care and industry to the duties entrusted to them; I have no doubt that their report will be a useful guide to the adoption of intelligent action in the direction of the preservation and development of our fisheries.

The litigation between the colony and the Newfoundland Railway Company and their bond-holders, resulting from the failure to carry out the contract for the construction and operation of the line, has so far reached a decision of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council to the effect that a proportionate part of the entire subsidy under the contract is payable in respect of so much of the line as has been completed and operated, but that the colony is entitled to a counter claim or to set off its claim for damages for non-performance of the contract, which claim is to be the subject of further inquiry.

You will be again asked to deal with the question of the management of the local affairs of the town of St. John's, and a measure will be introduced for that purpose.

We have reason to be thankful for the immunity which the colony has enjoyed from any epidemic disease or other public calamity.

The absence of serious crime, and the general good conduct of our people, continue to afford matter for congratulation. In leaving you to the discharge of those duties which especially devolve upon you, I am sure that you will join with me in the prayer that your labors may be directed by Divine guidance to the promotion of the best interests of the colony and its people.

HENRY A. BLAKE.

Owing to the service in Gower Street basement to-night, there will be no meeting in Fleming Street Chapel.

"PUBLIC SPEAKING."

Lecture Delivered in the Athenaeum Hall on Monday Evening Last, by Rev. T. Hodgkinson.

(Continued.)

I strongly emphasize conversation—conference—as a great help to extemporaneous utterance. Private conversation lights up the public understanding. In talking to your intimate friend, he says, "Stop! I don't see what you are driving at." That is a valuable remark. If your intelligent friend does not understand you, be sure your audience won't. The remark causes you to remodel your thought: to put it in a lucid way.

I have heard of speakers, and especially young ones, before delivering a speech, going into the garden and giving a rehearsal to the cabbages. For my part, I don't approve of this time-honored custom. Suppose a stranger happens to be passing when, in tones of thunder and prophetic attitude, you are addressing the cabbages. What will the stranger think? That you are a modern Demosthenes and privately improving your elocutionary powers? Oh, no! He will have no suspicion of that sort, but he will think that you are an escaped lunatic, and will hasten his footsteps lest you address him. I fail to see how addressing cabbages can give any conception of what it is like addressing a public audience, except that cabbages are in rows and don't create a disturbance. But there is nothing inspiring in talking to, or thundering before, cabbages. They can't assent or dissent. I think a better plan with cabbages is to eat them. They are very good and succulent in Newfoundland!

Talk to your friend, or sister, or wife, or somebody you hope some day will be, about your forthcoming literary effort? Sensible conversation dispels the fogs, lets in light, makes your subject grow in grace and strength. So much for the preparation for public speaking. It is absolutely necessary. You quote to me men who can get upon a platform and talk about a subject as easily as the birds sing. Don't be deceived! These men were prepared. The facts were carefully stored in their craniological compartments. These speakers have been hard students. It has taken them many lessons to think and speak on their feet. No ability dispenses with study. A man may have the form of Adonis and his voice be sweet as Apollo's lute, but if he has no message worth uttering, the audience will soon want to see not his handsome face but his shapely back. He will share the fate of a certain prosy, lengthy preacher. He had been speaking for a long time. At length he paused, but only for a moment. With a heavy sigh he resumed: "What more shall I say?" A hungry youngster in one of the pews shouted: "Say Amen!"

And on the other hand, a man may have no claim to good looks, and yet, if he utters his message aright, he will magnetize his audience. Aye! though his presence be contemptible; or his voice be "sharp and untunable"; or his face be disfigured with warts; or his back has a camel's appendage; or his legs be of that irregular construction which cannot possibly afford pleasure to spectators on earth below or heaven above. Mighty is the force of speech, and famous are the victories the great mind has gained over the defects, deformities and superficialities of matter.

We have considered the private preparation of the speaker. Let us now consider some of the qualities which come into play on the platform. A public speaker must possess courage. It is so easy to sit in the audience and criticise, and it is so difficult, after picturing the dreadful moment, to meet the gaze of eyes of all colors and degrees of intensity.

The late Rev. Frederick Robertson of Brighton—one of the most gifted and original preachers in the Episcopalian fold—once remarked that "he would rather lead a forlorn hope than mount the pulpit stairs." There is nothing for it at this time but boldly to face the difficulty. Gilbert Stewart, in answer to a question as to how artists are to commence their studies, said: "Just as puppies are taught to swim—chuck them in." The same answer is applicable to public speakers. Don't "stand shivering on the brink," but plunge in. After the first shock you will recover warmth and breath, and get on better.

It is interesting and instructive to note how, in their first endeavors, great men have broken down signally. In his first speech in the House of Commons, Mr. Disraeli, afterwards Lord Beaconsfield, brought his speech to an untimely end amid jeers and roars of laughter. In sitting down the crestfallen speaker uttered a significant prophecy: "I will sit down now; but the time will come when you will hear me!"

Now, I do not say that in the moment of dire failure memories of the defeats of afterwards illustrious orators will afford you much comfort; but certainly their remembrances ought to nerve you to try again. If great heroes of speech in their first efforts come to

grief, it is not to be wondered at if ordinary mortals do.

In public speaking the old adage is true: "Nothing venture, nothing win." In the business life men have to run the risk of failure. The goodly ship, with her precious freight, is sometimes wrecked. So it is in affairs of love—"Nothing venture, nothing win."

Sometimes an excellent young man proposes to a young lady that the apparent miracle, yet really simple act, of making two one, be performed, and the stammering pleader has to run the risk of a "thundering no," point blank, from the loved one's mouth. Is it to be wondered at, then, that the hopes of a speaker are sometimes blighted?

Every speaker has to run the risk of becoming a fool. But there is no strain of dishonour cast on this kind of folly. If there has been honest effort, no man need be ashamed of a break-down. There is consolation for the vanquished hero in the proverb: "A man who is not a fool sometimes is always one." And the courage of the speaker who fails is far higher than that of hearers who maintain an ignoble silence. A plucky man beaten is always sure of a certain amount of sympathy and the cheery words, "He will do better the next time." Therefore, as a renowned champion of speech observes: "Stand up cheerfully, speak up manfully, and leave off speedily."

A public speaker should endeavor to be self-possessed. I for one prefer to see a man very nervous than see a man on the platform strutting before his fellow-creatures like an inflated turkey-cock. I should expect a far better speech from the former than the latter. By self-possession I mean the speaker having the upperhand of his bodily and mental faculties.

When I came to St. John's I was struck by a word I sometimes heard used, in Water Street especially—"the boss." I don't need to stay and explain the word. Now, if I may use the word—and if I use another, you will probably forget the thought—a public speaker has to be "the boss" over a very difficult person at times to manage, namely: himself.

(To be Continued.)

AN ARBITRARY PROCEEDING.

A GREAT deal of dissatisfaction has been created by the determination of Mr. Speaker McNeily to prevent any person entering the People's House, except by ticket. What led to the adoption of such a rule it would be difficult to say; but there's no reason in existence for excluding the public in this arbitrary way. There's no cause of public excitement to show the necessity for such a step, and when there was such a cause a few years since, the very fact that the people were free to enter the Assembly at any time acted as a quietus to any ebullition of feeling; for in the Assembly they heard the spoken protests of their representatives, and came away satisfied when the grievances they suffered from were exposed. If this advantage were denied them there, and people generally found themselves shut out of their own House, while more privileged classes were admitted, it would only add to their discontent. Any restriction upon the right of constituents to see and hear what their members are doing, is injurious. If admission to the Assembly, as to the House of Commons, depended by long prescription in the use of tickets, everyone would acquiesce in the rule; but if the people had the same free access to the House of Commons that they always enjoyed here, who would think of circumscribing that right? This ticket business, so far as our Assembly is concerned, is a stupid, blundering piece of folly or worse, and will only have the effect of creating opposition to the Government where none now exists. It only shows to what oppressive lengths Mr. Speaker McNeily and Attorney General Winter would go if they could "rule the roost." Further, after the first few weeks of the session public interest in the debates of the House declines, and on many occasions the seats in the auditorium are empty.

MIRIAM'S CRIME.—The rendition of this splendid drama by the T. A. Dramatic Company, in the Total Abstinence Hall on Tuesday night last, was, perhaps, the best ever produced by the company. The audience wasn't over large, but a select and appreciative one. The number of persons in the cast is seven, and, on this occasion, were well chosen, the best talent of the company being represented. Messrs. White and O'Neil, who played pretty much together, were well up, and never seen to better advantage; whilst the ladies were all that could be desired, and seemed quite at home. The gentleman who played "Scumley," creditably acquitted himself, as also did Mr. Morrissey, in the role of porter. Special mention, however, should be made of Mr. Frank Walsh, as "Biles, the Lawyer"—the very life of the play. His easy and earnest style of acting, and the droll manner in which he brought out his "Biles," &c., fairly convulsed the audience. Indeed, the performance throughout was faultless, and all seemed, or felt with the comedian, that they "had much to be thankful for." An efficient orchestra from the society's band was in attendance and discoursed sweet music at intervals, and the best order was kept throughout.—Com.

SATURDAY NIGHT'S MEETING.

Some Remarks by "One Who Was Present."

How like a mounting devil in the heart Rules the unreined ambition! Let it once But play the monarch, and its haughty brow Glows with a beauty that bewilders thought, And unthrones peace for ever. Putting on The very pomp of Lucifer, it turns The heart to ashes, and with not a spring Left in the bosom for the spirit's lip, We look upon our splendor and forget The thirst of which we perish! Oh, if earth be all, and Heaven nothing, What thrice-mocked fools we are!—WILLIS.

DEAR SIR,—If anything in the world—any event or circumstance—could possibly check the unreined ambition of those few position-seekers who appeared in the Court House on Saturday night last, as the originators and leaders of the volunteer movement, I think their reception by that intelligent audience ought to prove a salutary lesson to them for all time to come. Such a meeting, such a farce, in the name of patriotism and the public good, I think never before was enacted in this much-abused and insulted colony.

Mr. Outerbridge claimed that he had prepared the resolutions for the meeting, and that he had come before the public, in this movement, from purely patriotic motives. I am not inclined to question this gentleman's veracity, but, judging from some of his extravagant statements and unreliable figures, I, with many others, shall have to believe that there are other forces, besides patriotism, acting upon him and urging him forward in this movement.

The second resolution, to use a common expression, "let the cat out of the bag," and showed plainly to the audience that it was intended that the proposed volunteer force should be supported entirely out of the public funds of the colony. After having moved the second resolution, Mr. A. J. W. McNeily had the good sense and honesty to acknowledge that it was ambiguous and misleading, and he therefore linked himself with the audience in the feeling and expression that the British Government should be requested to stand the entire expense of the organization, equipment and maintenance of a volunteer force in and for this colony.

To my mind, sir, everything in connection with the order of procedure in this meeting was ridiculously absurd. To ask such a meeting to pass resolutions affecting the finances and the rights and privileges of every district and settlement in the colony, with the idea of rushing them into law, at the public cost, is preposterous in the extreme. Now, sir, why should any man, in the pursuance of a noble patriotic movement, put forward ambiguous statements and unreliable figures. Mr. Outerbridge stated that there were a "million pounds in the different banks here," and that not "ten thousand of it belonged to the merchants of St. John's." It was the people's money all over the island, "and it was for their protection that the volunteer movement was originated." This, at any rate, was the purport of Mr. Outerbridge's remarks. He further stated that 3 cents per head of our population would be sufficient to pay the entire cost of such a volunteer brigade as would be capable of defending, for "two or three days," our homes and our property from the "shot and shell" of an iron-clad enemy outside the Narrows. The public will observe again—sixty thousand dollars for a comparatively useless police force, and only six thousand dollars for a volunteer brigade capable of defending St. John's in any case of emergency. If Mr. Outerbridge's figures and statements are reliable, the way is clear. Let us have the volunteer force, which will "ensure safety and protection;" and surely it will not be considered injudicious, but highly recommendable, in view of such "safety and protection," to take a slice of six thousand dollars off the public grant for this laudable and necessary service.

But the meeting! Well, it was a "fizzle." Such a thundering, demolishing rebuff to inflated, "purse-proud" mortals, in the providential economy, must certainly accomplish some wise and foreseen purpose. Alas! "what is man?" With all his pride and vanity, "man proposes but God disposes."

Towards the close of the meeting there appeared to be a strong feeling of uneasiness and "retireishness" in the privileged part of the Court Room. In closing, there was no "National Anthem," no doxology or benediction; the meeting terminated abruptly.

ONE WHO WAS PRESENT.
St. John's, Feb. 14, 1888.

DIED.
On Friday, Feb. 3rd. at Burgeo, Placentia Bay, of consumption, Janet, youngest daughter of James and Susan Chambers, aged 22 years. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord." (Halifax papers please copy.)
On the 15th inst. Alice May, only daughter of Bartholomew and Bridget Walsh, aged 2 years and 8 mos.

SHIPPING INTELLIGENCE.

ENTERED.
15—Curlew, Delaney, St. Pierre, 2 days, Bowring Bros.—ballast.
16—Ariel, Tucker, New York, 10 days, Bowring Bros.—40 tons coal, 1 m staves, 859 brs flour.
CLEARED.
15—Nelly, Olsen, Pernambuco, A Goodridge & Sons—3601 qts fish. Ceylon, Cotten, Barbados, J Murray—1000 qts fish, 165 bris herring, 65 bdis hoops.