

for contingencies were considered as an unjustifiable diversion of the public revenue from its proper objects to the personal advantage of the individual Members of the House of Assembly. However much the deficiency of the supply, or the extreme minuteness of the appropriation might justly be regretted, these circumstances do not seem to afford any valid reason for the rejection of the bill. The third reason indeed involves so grave an imputation that it is difficult to discuss it without trenching on the deference due to the Representative Assembly of Newfoundland. Such an imputation, it is clear, ought not to be cast without the utmost caution, and on the clearest proof. It is, of course, not to be admitted merely on inference and conjecture, nor does the amount of money involved in the question warrant such a conclusion. Considering, also, that so unworthy an abuse of the most sacred and honorable public trust could hardly fail to be visited with the censure of society at large, the Council might, it should seem, safely refer the offending parties to the tribunal of public opinion, with a reasonable security that at no distant time it would be expressed in unequivocal terms, even against those who for the moment might appear to enjoy the most unbounded popularity. If it were necessary to believe that such abuses had been really practised, it might well be doubted whether the authors of them would not derive impunity and encouragement from the public favour so readily bestowed on those who are engaged in a contest of which popular franchises are at least the invariable pretext. The case, therefore, ought to be exceedingly clear and strong which would justify the rejection of a bill of supply on the ground of a selfish misappropriation of the public money by the House of Assembly.

During a session of four months continuance, the sums appropriated under the head of contingencies amounted to £2393 6s. 3d., a sum considerable, it is true, when compared with the expenditure of other branches of the public service, and probably admitting of some retrenchment in future years, but not so large as to justify the very serious reproach cast on the Assembly of lavishly voting for their own benefit as individuals, money which ought to have been applied for the good of the public collectively. The practice of claiming a remuneration for serving in the Assembly, or at least an indemnity against the expenses of such service, cannot reasonably be condemned: it is sanctioned by many precedents and by many considerations of great weight. In the very delicate office of assessing the amount of their own remuneration there can hardly be a doubt that the members of the House of Assembly will, on consideration, see the propriety of leaving to the Council a controul of the most unfettered kind, and will admit that this is a branch of the public expenditure over which it is emphatically needful that a constitutional jealousy should be exercised.

Adverting to the whole of this subject, the Queen commands me to signify through you to the Council her Majesty's opinion that if a bill of supply and appropriation, substantially corresponding with the present, should again be sent up by the House of Assembly, it ought not to be rejected on the grounds assigned by the Council for the rejection of the present bill.

I have, &c.

(Signed) GLENELG.

Governor PRESCOTT,
&c. &c. &c.