

lency's will and pleasure that they do forthwith attend at the Bar of this House ; and they being come thereto, His Excellency was pleased to open the present Session of the Legislature by the following gracious Speech to both Houses :—

Governor's Speech *Mr. President and Honorable Gentlemen of the Legislative Council:*

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

Placed as I am at the head of a Representative Government, a situation which devolves upon me many onerous duties, it is gratifying to have the opportunity, at least once a year, to meet the Legislature of the Colony to lay before it such matters of importance as affect the interests of the people, and to be guided by the advice and assistance of their Representatives and the other Branch of the Legislature.

With that view I have summoned, and am happy to meet you on this occasion, although I have to communicate to you, with deep regret, what you are already too well aware of—an unprecedented and almost total failure of the Seal Fishery of last spring, arising, I have no doubt, from the unusual pressure of Ice along our coasts ;—a circumstance over which human agency can have no control, and which must be submitted to when Providence may so direct. I am sorry, also, to add that the failure of the Seal fishery was followed by partial, but extensive failures of the Cod fishery, particularly on the coast of Labrador, where so bad a fishery has not been known to occur for many years. Such calamities have naturally occasioned great distress and privations among our people, with but very insufficient means of alleviating that distress,—the Colony being, at present, in circumstances of difficulty, and requiring your utmost and united efforts for its relief.

On the success of the Fisheries our material prosperity has hitherto depended, and any continued falling off of the average catch cannot fail to create anxiety