

Mr. Reilly, Chairman of the Committee on the Address, presented a Draft which, on motion, was received and read.

Ordered, that on Saturday next, the House in Committee of the whole, take into consideration the said Draft Address, which is to the following effect, viz :—

*To His Honor Sir Robert Hodgson, Knight, Administrator of the Government, and Commander-in-Chief, &c., &c., &c.*

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR HONOR:

We, Her Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, the House of Assembly of P. E. Island, respectfully tender our thanks to Your Honor for the Speech with which you opened the present Session. In doing so, we avail ourselves of the opportunity afforded us of expressing the pleasure which we feel in meeting Your Honor as the Administrator of the Government, and of congratulating you upon the distinguished mark of favor which you have recently received from your Sovereign, in being raised to the dignity of a Knight.

We entertain the hope that when the answer to the Address adopted last Session in reference to the Salary of the Lieutenant Governor, shall be received, it will be such as to afford satisfaction to Her Majesty's loyal subjects in this Island.

We are glad to learn that the appropriation of last Session, to assist destitute farmers in purchasing Seed Grain, was judiciously expended, and that much destitution has been thereby averted.

We thank you for the assurance that the Accounts for the past year, and the Estimates for the present, will be laid before us. It is satisfactory to learn, that, whilst the various branches of the Public Service are to be efficiently conducted, yet, that the Estimates have been prepared with a due regard to economy.

Although the Expenditure for the past year has been in excess of the Receipts, owing principally to the purchase of Lands and the advances for Seed Grain, yet we rejoice to know that the Revenue evidences a steady increase in the trade of the Colony.

A period of eight years having elapsed since the last Census of the Colony was taken, we agree with Your Honor as to the necessity of adopting measures to renew it, and it will be our duty to carry out your wishes in regard to this important matter.

Believing that some change is necessary in the system by which the Public Works Service has been heretofore supervised, in order to increase its efficiency and to promote economy, any measure, with this object in view, which shall be laid before us, will receive that attention which its importance demands.

The propriety of appropriating a sum of money for the purpose of making permanent improvements in the Highways, under the direction of the Board of Works, will receive our serious attention.

Aware of the advantages which a judicious encouragement of Steam Navigation would confer upon the Colony, we shall be prepared to give this subject our careful consideration.

We are aware that the large increase in the business of the Postal, Judicial, Customs and other public departments, demands increased accommodation, adequate to the public wants, and we shall be prepared to deal liberally with any measure which will provide additional accommodations for those departments, and give security against accidents by fire to the records and Public Securities in the Offices referred to by Your Honor.

Any papers which your Honor may cause to be laid before us, in reference to the necessity of appointing an additional Judge in the Supreme Court, will meet with due attention.

The assurance that steps have been taken to secure the laying down of a new Cable, and the extending of

Inland Telegraphic Communication, meets our cordial approval.

It is gratifying to learn that a Committee of the Congress of the United States paid a visit to this Colony, during the past Summer, with a view of obtaining information upon the important subject of Reciprocal Free Trade between this Island and the United States. It will be a matter for general rejoicing should the information furnished to the Committee on that occasion by the Executive Council result in extending the trade relations of the Colony. We shall be glad to have laid before us the report of members of the Executive Council, and the correspondence between the local Government and Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies on this subject.

We are pleased to be informed that the Bill for the settlement of Wilderness Lands, passed last Session, is working satisfactorily, as evidenced by the fact that 13,368 acres of Land have been taken up under its provisions by substantial settlers.

We shall be glad to receive from your Honor particulars of the purchase of Estates by the Government since the last Session.

It is satisfactory to find that the returns from the Land Office evidence an appreciation on the part of the occupants of Government Lands of the advantages of the Land Purchase Bill, as also a desire to avail themselves of its assistance in becoming freeholders.

We believe that the Laws relating to the Militia and Volunteer Forces can be amended so as to be less burdensome upon the people than heretofore. The modification of the drill of the general Militia, and the encouragement of the Volunteer Force so as to increase its efficiency, will, we believe, give general satisfaction. Any Bill having these objects in view will receive our hearty support.

The general prosperity with which Providence has favored the Colony is truly a matter for heartfelt gratitude to the Bountiful Giver of all good, and in entering upon our legislative duties, our desire will be to be guided by Him in dealing with the various subjects which shall come before us, so as to promote the happiness, contentment and prosperity of the people.

House Adjourned.

SATURDAY, March 6th.

Morning Session.

On motion of the Hon. Attorney General, the House went into Committee on expiring laws.

Mr. P. Sinclair in the Chair.

The consideration of the Act relating to the Mutual Fire Insurance Company of Charlottetown was deferred on the ground that important changes were contemplated to be made in the constitution of that body.

A resolution to continue the law relating to the publishing of notices and advertisements relating to the public service, submitted by the Hon. Atty. General, was reported agreed to, and Hon. Atty. General, Hon. Mr. Haviland, and Mr. McMillan appointed a Committee to report thereon.

The Committee appointed to receive tenders for Printing the Journals, recommended that the tender of W. C. Grant be accepted.

On motion of Mr. Reilly, the House resolved itself into a Committee of the whole, to take into consideration the Draft Address in answer to the