

THE
PARLIAMENTARY REPORTER.
SESSION 1868.

Meeting of the Legislature.

WEDNESDAY, March 4, 1868.

At 8 o'clock His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor was pleased to open the Second Session of the Twenty-third General Assembly of this Island with the following

SPEECH :

Mr. President and Honorable Gentlemen of the Legislative Council :

Mr. Speaker and Gentlemen of the House of Assembly.

I am glad to meet you at the commencement of another Session, and to have recourse again to your assistance and advice.

During last Session you passed an Act to authorize the raising of a Loan : It was deemed advisable that, during the recess, a Delegate should proceed to England to carry out your intentions in this matter ; and, also to apply to the various Proprietors of Township Lands resident in England, with the view of ascertaining from them the terms upon which they would be willing to dispose of their estates.

I regret that the negotiations with these Proprietors have not, thus far, been productive of any results : Nevertheless, the efforts of the Government continue to be directed to a full and final settlement of all questions connected with the Land Tenures.

As one of your principal objects in passing the Loan Act was to enable the Government to make extensive purchases of Land, it has not as yet been deemed advisable to proceed with that Loan.

Papers on these subjects will be laid before you.

I have recently received a petition from certain persons who have purchased their holdings on the Selkirk Estate. The Petitioners allege that the amount paid by them, as instalments, has already been more than sufficient to pay for this Estate, and that it was not the intention of the Legislature, in passing the Act under which this property was purchased, that a larger sum should be exacted from the Tenants than would render the purchase self-sustaining.

I deemed it necessary to refer this Petition for the consideration of the Law Officers ; and I have directed that their opinion should be laid before you, in full confidence that you will mature such measures as may be deemed equitable and convenient on this subject.

A Bill will be submitted to you for relaxing the provisions enacted by the Land Purchase Act for the sale of wilderness lands on public estates, with the view of encouraging their speedy settlement and disposition.

Mr. Speaker and Gentlemen of the House of Assembly :

The Public Accounts for the past year will be laid before you.

I am glad to observe that notwithstanding the commercial depression of the past year, the Revenue was larger than could have been anticipated, and including that derived from the sale of Public Lands, was in excess of the expenditure.

I have directed that estimates for the current year be submitted to you, and I ask with confidence such supplies as may be required for the public service.

Mr. President and Honorable Gentlemen of the Legislative Council :

Mr. Speaker and Gentlemen of the House of Assembly :

When I released you from the Legislative duties of last Session, I expressed the hope that you would, at your next meeting, take into consideration a measure calculated to impart to your system of Education a degree of efficiency and practical benefit more commensurate with your liberal provision for that service.

A measure for consolidating the present Laws on this subject, and for amending them in certain particulars, will be submitted for your consideration.

The Committee which you appointed last Session, to report the best method of improving the Highways throughout this Island has concluded its labors, and its report will be laid before you.

I would direct your special attention to a subject of such manifest importance to the people whom you represent.