

His Excellency's speech

*Mr. President, and Honorable Gentlemen of the Council,
Mr. Speaker, and Gentlemen of the House of Assembly,*

When I closed the late Session in the month of October, it was not my intention so soon to have re-assembled the Legislature, but the pressing necessities of the utterly helpless poor, have compelled me to resort to this measure; and as there are other subjects to be considered, and experience does not seem to have proved the superior advantage of our meeting in the summer, I shall bring under your observation all the public business, both regular and incidental, trusting that the whole may be completed before the commencement of the Seal Fishery.

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

The most urgent matter for your consideration is the present condition of the Sick and impotent Poor, of Orphans and Idiots, combined with the just claims of those benevolent and industrious individuals who have long watched over and protected the two last-named classes of sufferers. Since April nothing has been paid on this account, and I shall place before you afflicting statements of consequent want and wretchedness.

I am well aware that in no part of the world should eleemosynary aid be given with more caution than in Newfoundland, but the infirmities of nature and the misfortunes occasioned by the character of our occupations, are surely entitled to public commiseration and relief.

I have transmitted on all occasions to the respective Legislative Bodies, copies of such Despatches as regard my conduct in conjunction with their proceedings.

By regulations prescribed by her Majesty's Government, the House must be sensible that it is my duty rigidly to abide—and it will consequently be perceived, that had the Poor Bill, as sent up towards the conclusion of the late Session, been fully adopted by the Council, it could not possibly have received my assent.

I mention this to prevent misconception, and to obviate any future misunderstanding.

In an Address from the House of Assembly to her Majesty, passed at the close of that Session, the subject of the last Contingency Bill is discussed at some length.—As considerable time must elapse before any answer can be received, I would venture to suggest, without at all anticipating what the answer may be, that Bill embracing such items as were originally undisputed might, in consideration of the painful position of various claimants, be at once advantageously prepared.

I have formerly laid before you statements of the defective condition of the Building in which we are now assembled. I shall transmit to you the report of a Survey thereupon, just made by my direction, to which I beg to call your particular attention.

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

I shall have the pleasure of transmitting to you as soon as printed, a report from the Geological Surveyor containing much interesting information. He will be prepared to pursue his arduous and important labour at the earliest practicable period.

I have received a Despatch from Lord John Russell, announcing that it is no longer desired that measures for the alienation of the Crown Territory should be delayed.