

You assemble now under an aspect of affairs differing essentially from the usual condition of things at the periodical sittings of the Legislature, when public men resort to Parliament impressed perhaps with the importance of a variety of state measures, which may happen to be under contemplation, but without, nevertheless, concentrating their forces or their energies on any one point, and possibly, without directing their attentions to any one subject in particular. You have been selected to fill your present posts, not in virtue of a common and ordinary election, had upon the expiration of a quartennial Parliament, but in consequence of a premature dissolution of the Parliament of your predecessors, and upon a solemn appeal to your constituents, by the Head of the Executive, to determine the merits and demerits of a quarrel between him and his constitutional advisers. You resemble in some measure the Grand Criminal Inquest of the Country, summoned to investigate certain charges preferred against your fellow beings and fellow subjects. You stand in the light of a special jury empannelled to try an important state prosecution, and to find a verdict either for the accuser,—a high dignitary and the Representative of Royalty, or for the accused—the humble functionaries of the people. You are about to perform the important functions of a tribunal in the last resort, and to stand in judgment upon the appeal to you by the contending parties, from the sentence pronounced by your predecessors, in the cause of the fautors of irresponsible executive power on the one hand, arrayed against the people's mandatories,—the advocates of the British Constitution, and British Constitutional freedom, on the other.

The great question of the day is the propriety of the resignation of the late ministry, or in other words, their dismissal from office in the month of November last, and the course to be adopted by you, the new Legislative Assembly, specially summoned to decide this political controversy.