

*(A Message from His Excellency the Governor.)*

At Two o'clock, a Message from His Excellency the Governor was delivered by W. F. RENNIE, Esq., the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod, commanding the immediate attendance of Mr. Speaker and the House in the Council Chamber.

Accordingly, Mr. SPEAKER and the House attended His Excellency the Governor in the Council Chamber, and being returned,

Mr. SPEAKER informed the House, that when in attendance on His Excellency the Governor, His Excellency had been pleased to make a Speech to both Branches of the Legislature, of which Mr. Speaker said, for the sake of accuracy, he had obtained a copy, and which he read to the House, as follows :—

*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 our Fisheries our material prosperity has hitherto depended, and any continued falling off of the average catch cannot fail to create anxiety and alarm in all who take an interest in the prosperity of the Colony and the welfare of its people. It is just five years ago, this day, since I had the pleasure, for the first time, to address the Legislature of Newfoundland. On that occasion I made observations which I might with propriety this day repeat, as being equally applicable to the present time ; but I shall only refer you to the Journals of that day, and express a strong opinion that it is our duty, at this time, to