

NEWFOUNDLAND :—ROYAL INSTRUCTIONS.

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RETURN to an Address of The Honourable The House of Commons,  
dated 28 July 1832 ;—for,

COPY of the ROYAL INSTRUCTIONS to the Governor of *Newfoundland*,  
and of the DESPATCHES from Lord *Goderich* to him, transmitting  
the Commission.

Colonial Department, Downing-street, }  
3 August 1832.

HOWICK.

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SIR,

Downing-street, 27 July 1832.

I HAVE the honour herewith to transmit to you His Majesty's Commission under the Great Seal, appointing you Governor of the Island of Newfoundland, together with your General Instructions under the Royal Sign Manual, referred to in that Commission.

As this is the first occasion on which provision has been made for convening a Legislative Assembly for the island of Newfoundland, the importance of that measure requires that I should not limit myself to the merely formal duty of placing you in possession of these instruments, but that I should shortly explain the grounds and the nature of the policy by which His Majesty's Councils on this subject have been directed.

It were superfluous at the present day to inquire into the wisdom of that system which was pursued for so many years towards the ancient colony under your government, the fundamental principle of which was to prevent the colonization of the island, and to render this kingdom the domicile of all persons engaged in the Newfoundland fisheries. The common interest or convenience of those persons virtually defeated the restrictions of the various statutes respecting them, long before Parliament admitted the necessity of repealing those laws. A colony gradually settled itself along the shores of the island, and has of late years assumed a rank of no inconsiderable importance amongst the foreign possessions of the British Crown ; but notwithstanding the growing population and the wealth of Newfoundland, no plan has hitherto been adopted for regulating such of the internal affairs of the colonists as demanded the enactment of laws specially adapted to their peculiar situation. Parliament, indeed, contemplated the erection of corporate towns, with the power of making bye-laws, for remedying this inconvenience ; but on attempting to carry this design into effect, unforeseen obstacles were encountered. It was found altogether impracticable to reconcile the contradictory wishes and recommendations of the parties who would have been more immediately affected by the measure ; and it became evident that the boon which it was proposed to confer would be received by a great body of the inhabitants, not as an act of grace, but as an infringement of their rights, into whatever form the intended charters might have been thrown. The consequence was, that His Majesty became practically unable to execute the trust which Parliament had confided to him.

The necessity of some provision for regulating the internal concerns of Newfoundland by enactments adapted to the peculiarities of their local position became however daily more and more evident. Carrying with them from this kingdom the law of England, as the only code by which the rights and duties of the people in their relations to each other, and in their relation to the State, could be ascertained, it was obvious, as soon as the colony began to assume a settled