



SPEECH

OF HIS HONOR

Sir ROBERT HODGSON, Knight,

Administrator of Government, &c.,

AT THE OPENING OF THE LEGISLATIVE SESSION,
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 3, 1869.

*Mr. President and Honorable Gentlemen of the
Legislative Council:*

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

In the absence of the Lieutenant Governor, the duty of Administering the Government having, by Her Majesty's appointment, devolved upon me, it affords me great satisfaction to meet you on this occasion.

Your Address to Her Majesty, adopted in the last Session, on the subject of the payment, by the Colony, of the Lieutenant Governor's Salary, was duly forwarded, but as yet, no answer has been received to it.

The money appropriated by you, in your last Session, to assist destitute Settlers in the purchase of seed grain, under the grave apprehension that without some such assistance, much land would remain untilled, was judiciously expended, and, no doubt, under God's blessing, has been the means of averting much destitution.

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

The Accounts of the past year and the Estimates for the present year will be laid before you. The Estimates have been prepared with the view of combining a due regard to economy with the efficiency of the several branches of the Public Service.

* The Revenue for 1868 evidences a steady increase in the trade of the Colony, although the expenditure is in excess of the Receipts, caused, in a great measure, by the purchase of Lands and the advances for seed grain, which have as yet been only partially repaid.

*Mr. President and Honorable Gentlemen of the
Legislative Council:*

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

A period of Eight years having elapsed since the last census was taken, I now call your attention to the necessity of adopting measures to renew it.

A measure will be laid before you providing for the appointment of a Board of Works, to take the charge and supervision of the Roads, Bridges, Wharves and Public Buildings of the Colony. By means of such a Board it is believed that the efficiency of the Public Works Service will be much increased and economy greatly promoted. The present system has been found inadequate to the public wants, and unsatisfactory in its results.

In connection with this subject, your attention will be called to the propriety of appropriating a sum of money, to be expended under the direction of the Board of Works, for the purpose of making permanent improvements in the Highways.

Intersected as this Colony is in so many parts by navigable waters, the want of Railroad Communications may, to a certain extent, be remedied by a judicious encouragement of Steam Navigation. I invite your attention to this subject, and feel confident it will receive from you that consideration which its importance demands.

The rapid increase of business in every department of the Public Service demands increased accommodation. The present General Post Office is quite inadequate to the requirements of the service.

The Supreme Court Room, in the Colonial Building, is not sufficient for the purpose, and serious inconvenience has been felt from this.

Additional space is required for the Customs and other Public Departments. The Records and Public Securities in the Office of the Registrar of Deeds, and those in the Prothonotary's, Treasurer's and Probate Offices, are not sufficiently protected from accidents by fire.

Impressed with the Conviction that no time should be lost in a matter of so much public importance, a measure will be submitted to you to provide for the erection of a Building in Charlottetown, which shall be adapted to meet the different exigencies alluded to, and I recommend this matter to your serious Consideration.

Representations have been made to me on the necessity of appointing an additional Judge in the Supreme Court. Papers on this subject will be laid before you, to which I invite your attention.

Telegraphic Communication between this Colony and the Continent has been suspended since August last, in consequence of the breaking of the submarine Cable. Steps have been taken to secure the laying down of a new one; and also the extension of inland Telegraphic Communication, the particulars of which will be laid before you.

Since the Close of your last Session, a visit was paid to the Colony by a Committee of the Congress of the United States. The object of their mission was to obtain information in connection with the subject of reciprocal Free Trade between this Island and the United States. A Report of Members of the Executive Council in relation to this matter, addressed to His Honor the Lieutenant Governor, will be laid before you, together with Communications on the same subject, which have passed between the local Government and Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies.

You will be gratified to learn that the Bill for the settlement of Wilderness Lands, passed by you during the last Session, has resulted satisfactorily. Under its provisions 13,368 acres of Land have been taken up, in most instances by substantial Settlers.

Three Estates, comprising in the aggregate 17,352 acres, have been acquired by the Government, under the Land Purchase Act, since you