

QUEBEC MERCURY EXTRAORDINARY.

THURSDAY, MARCH 21, 1811.

This day, at three o'clock. His Excellency the Governor in chief went down, in State, to the Council Chamber, where, being seated on the throne he sent, by the Gentleman Usher of the black rod, to require the attendance of the members of the House of Assembly, when His Excellency was pleased to give the Royal Assent to all the Bills passed by the Legislative Council and House of Assembly, except—The Bill for making provision for the trials of women charged with the murder of bastard children—and

An Act for erecting a Common Gaol in the District of Three Rivers, and to provide the means for defraying the expence thereof.

The latter was reserved for the royal assent.

His Excellency was then pleased to make the following SPEECH :

*Gentlemen of the Legislative Council, and
Gentlemen of the House of Assembly :*

AFTER so long and so laborious a Session, I feel great pleasure in being able to release you from any further attendance, and, that you can return to your constituents, with the satisfactory consciousness of not having neglected their service or overlooked their interests, in the various acts that you have presented to me, for His Majesty's assent.

Upon the state of our public affairs, the difficulty of communication with Europe has, this winter, appeared to be greater than usual; probably, owing to the impediments thrown in the way of the American commerce, by the acts of their government. I have, therefore, little to communicate. The feelings which would otherwise have attended the much lamented death of an amiable Princess, were almost lost in the contemplation of the afflicting calamity, by which that event was followed, in the alarming indisposition of our revered Sovereign. Let us place our confidence in the mercy of God, and trust, that he will, in his gracious dispensation, realize those hopes that are held out to us by the last accounts that we have received, of his being speedily restored in health, to his grateful people.

It is scarcely necessary, that I should observe upon a new Act of Non-intercourse or Non-impotation with respect to Great Britain, which has passed in the American Congress. By what I can understand, the best of their lawyers are divided in their opinion as to its operation. With us, however, I fear there can be no difference of sentiment, as to its being a branch of that system of practical and irritating policy, which has so long marked their public proceedings towards us. The Bill which you have so wisely passed for preventing the nefarious traffic that has been but too long carried on, in the forgery of their Bank Notes, will, at least, prove that you have not suffered any sentiments of resentment to weigh against those principles of liberal Justice, with which you are at all times animated towards them.

I have, Gentlemen, to thank you, for the provision that has been made for the payment of the expenditure that has been incurred in the providing a habitation for your Governor, beyond the sum originally voted for the purpose. In having taken this step upon myself, in the confidence I placed in the liberality of Parliament, I feel, however, some anxiety that the good people of the Province should know, that the expenditure has been conducted, by the Gentlemen appointed to act as Commissioners, with an economy that has saved some thousands of pounds; and with respect to myself,

under the knowledge that there existed funds, by which it could be answered, without laying any additional burthen upon them.

Among the Acts to which I have just declared His Majesty's Assent, there is one which I have seen with peculiar satisfaction. I mean, the Act for disqualifying the Judges from holding a seat in the House of Assembly—it is not only, that I think the measure right in itself, but, that I consider the passing an Act for the purpose, as a compleat renunciation of the erroneous principle, the acting upon which, put me under the necessity of dissolving the last Parliament.

Gentlemen, you are now about to return to your homes, and to mix again in the common mass of your fellow citizens. Let me entreat you to reflect upon the good that may arise from your efforts to inculcate those true principles of regularity and submission to the laws, that can alone give stability to that degree of happiness which is attainable in the present state of society. Your Province is in an unexampled progress of prosperity. Riches are pouring in upon the people; but their attendant evils, luxury and dissipation, will inevitably accompany them. The danger of them is too well known to require that I should detain you, by enlarging upon it. It will demand all the efforts of religion and of the magistracy, with the scarcely less powerful influence of example and advice in the well disposed and better informed, to counteract their efforts, to preserve the public morals from sudden relaxation and finally to bar the entry of crime and depravity.

A large tract of country, hitherto little known, has been opened to you—its inhabitants are industrious and intelligent, and they cultivate their lands with a productive energy, well calculated to increase the resources of the colony. Let them not, on these grounds, be objects of envy or of jealousy—rather let them be examples to be carefully watched and imitated, 'till in the whole province no other difference of fertility shall appear, but what may arise from variety of soil and difference of climate.

And now, gentlemen, I have only further to recommend, that, as in an early part of the session, you yourselves took occasion to observe on the difficulty of the task, you will proportionally exert your best endeavors to do away all mistrust and animosity from among yourselves—while these are suffered to remain, all exertions for the public good must be palsied. No bar can exist to a cordial union—religious differences present none. Intolerance is not the disposition of the present times: and, living under one government, enjoying equally its protection and its fostering care, in the mutual intercourse of kindness and benevolence, all others will be found to be ideal. I am earnest on this subject, gentlemen—it is probably the last legacy of a very sincere well-wisher, who, if he lives to reach the presence of his Sovereign, would indeed present himself with the proud certainty of obtaining his approbation, if he could conclude his report of his administration, with saying, I found, sire, the portion of your subjects that you committed to my charge, divided among themselves, viewing each other with mistrust and jealousy, and animated, as they supposed, by separate interests. I left them, sire, cordially united in the bonds of reciprocal esteem and confidence, and rivaling each other only, in affectionate attachment to your Majesty's government, and in generous exertions for the public good.

