

way the commissioner would be paid for his trouble in laying out, inspecting, and certifying the work, and in cases where a Bridge had to be built, it could be let at such a sum as, in the judgment of the commissioners, would be a fair compensation for the work, and certified to the parties building it as so many rods of road. Another difficulty which presented itself, was to limit the maximum to which the commissioner should be allowed to go for making these roads. After a good deal of care, he had fixed this at five shillings per rod, as that was considerably higher than the average price of making a road thro' the green woods in the counties of York and Carleton for the last few years. The only other remark which he thought it necessary to make, was, that he had confined the expenditure of these sums to roads regularly laid out and recorded, or reserved, and not to be less than sixteen feet turnpike.

Mr. BARBERIE thought the Bill a very important one, and said that the Government had his thanks for bringing it in. The hon. member supported the first Bill, and made some strong remarks on the present system of mileage, and the auction system, by which timber births were disposed of, contending that parties going into the woods, on finding out their births, were taken advantage of by those who sat in their offices and watched the Gazette.

Mr. CONNELL warmly supported the principle of the Bill, stating that it would be hailed with satisfaction by the country. The hon. member concluded by proposing some alterations in matters of detail which he thought might benefit the country.

Mr. BORN thought this was a Government measure of which they could all approve, and which would be received by the country generally with feelings of gratitude. It was a poor man's Bill, and he was glad of the opportunity of giving it his warmest support. The hon. member then concluded with some objections to the details.

Mr. J. S. EARLE, Mr. SMITH, Mr. WARK, Mr. END, and others, spoke warmly in support of the Bill, when it was read, section by section, and agreed to with an amendment substituting £12 as the maximum debt to which the provisions of the Bill shall extend, and an additional section providing that no road should be laid out under the provisions of that Act, unless it was of the legal width.

The House then proceeded to the order of the day, which was to go into a committee of the whole, in further consideration of the Ways and Means of raising a Revenue.

The debate was then resumed, and continued from 12 until after 4 o'clock, when the committee rose, having passed two Resolutions, one binding the House not to impose discriminating duties, and the other for a specific duty on such articles as may be deemed expedient.

THURSDAY, 22d February.

A Bill altering the name by which certain Presbyterian Churches are incorporated was committed and agreed to.

The House then went into Committee of the whole, on a Bill introduced by Mr. RITCHIE, to enable those obtaining a judgment in the Supreme Court to seize on debts and money, and to reach property which had been placed in the hands of third parties, to avoid its being levied on for an honest debt. On this Bill a lengthy discussion arose, which ended in progress being reported.

FRIDAY, 23d February.

After some routine business, on motion of Hon. Mr. PARTELOW, the House went into Committee of the whole on a Bill relating to the trade between the British North American possessions. [We were not in the gallery when this Bill came up, but understood it passed without opposition.]

On motion of the Hon. L. A. WILMOT, the House went into Committee of the whole, on a Bill to facilitate the sale and settlement of Crown Lands, in certain cases.—On this Bill a long discussion arose, during which no opposition was made to the Bill, the provisions of which were fully explained by the Hon. the Attorney General. It authorises the Government to dispose of lands to actual settlers, in quantities not exceeding one hundred acres, and to take payment for the same in work upon the roads, in a manner similar to that prescribed in the Bill which passed the House on the day previous, leaving it discretionary with the Government how much of the purchase money will be demanded in cash and how much will be taken in work on the roads. A great number of hon. members took part in the discussion which turned chiefly on the manner of surveying Crown Lands.

Mr. BAILLIE exhibited a plan of the Kingsclear grants, which were shaped something like a fan, running back upwards of seven miles, and terminating almost at a point. The Surveyor General also exhibited a plan of laying out Crown Lands, in square blocks of 1-4 miles, making six lots of 100 acres each, which he thought better than the plan spoken of by the Attorney General as originating with Mr. J. A. Beckwith, of laying out Crown Lands in blocks of a mile square, making the lots only 80 acres each.

A strong opinion was also very generally expressed against the policy of allowing the Larch of the country to be carried off for Railway Sleepers, thus withdrawing from the soil the wood best adapted for ship building, and sacrificing it for a mere trifle. The Bill was then reported as agreed to without any amendment.

On motion of Mr. R. D. WILMOT, it was resolved that an humble address be presented to His Excellency the Lieut. Governor, praying that His Excellency will be pleased to cause to be laid before the House copies of any correspondence that may have taken place between the Canadian Government and the Government of this Province, on the subject of Inter-Colonial Trade.

On motion of Hon. Mr. PARTELOW, the House went into Committee of the whole, on the Bill to repeal "An Act to grant a bounty on the destruction of Bears and Wolves in this Province."

Mr. END led off the opposition to this Bill in a humorous speech, in which he intimated that a refractory Chamberlain, a Radical Mayor, and the Editor of a newspaper

were the only bears the hon. mover was acquainted with.

A number of hon. members followed, almost all of whom opposed the Bill, and the debate finally terminated by the question of postponement for three months being carried without a division. The Bill is consequently lost.

On motion of Mr. CARMAN, the House went into a committee of the whole, on a Bill relating to the appointment of Town and Parish Officers.

Mr. CARMAN briefly explained the nature of the Bill, stating the inconveniences which had arisen from Parish Officers refusing to qualify after being appointed, and the impossibility of reaching them under the present law for neglect of duty.

This Bill led to a short debate, in which nothing was elicited which would be of much public interest. The Bill was generally admitted to have good things in it, but on the question for postponement for three months it was carried, yeas 14, nays 12.

On motion of Mr. END, the House went into Committee of the whole, on a Bill to amend the act incorporating the New Brunswick Electric Telegraph Company. The hon. mover explained that the Bill now before the Committee was in exact conformity with the Resolution which had passed the House on a previous day, when the committee on the Petition of Mr. Gasbome reported; he, therefore, supposed there could be no objection to its passing.

His Honor the SPEAKER suggested some verbal amendment in the phraseology of the Bill, allowing the Company to take what route they pleased with their line from Miramichi to the Nova Scotia line, which was adopted by the hon. mover, and the Bill passed the committee and was reported as agreed to.

On motion of Mr. END, the House went into a Committee of the whole, on a Bill to establish a Table of Fees, to be paid to Justices of the Peace, in certain cases.

Mr. END explained that he had introduced this Bill for the purpose of fixing by law charges which were now made without any law on the subject, and the amount of which appeared to be governed solely by the cupidity of the party imposing the charge. The hon. member then went through the different items of the fees proposed by the Bill, explaining each, and hoped they would remove this discretionary power from the Justices of the Peace, and fix it by statute. The fees in this case were for trials of a criminal nature, such as common assaults, which could be tried by two Magistrates, and cases of sailors, &c.

A short debate followed, which ended in the Bill being postponed for three months, yeas 13, nays 8. The House soon after adjourned.

SATURDAY, 24th February.

The House met at the usual hour, but a large majority of the members being absent on select committees, nothing further than the routine business was transacted, and the House adjourned about one o'clock.

COLONIAL NEWS.

From the St. John Observer.

CALAMITOUS FIRE.

It is our painful duty to record the occurrence of the most extensive and disastrous conflagration, with which our City has been visited for several years past. Between 11 and 12 o'clock last night, a fire broke out in a building on the north side of King Street, owned by J. & G. Lawrence, next but one below the Commercial Hotel, occupied by them, B. O'Brien, and others. It is supposed that the disaster was occasioned by a defective chimney; but whatever the cause, the devouring element so rapidly and extensively extended its ravages, as to sweep away the whole range of buildings from the Commercial Hotel (including that large and valuable establishment) northwardly along King's Square, to Mr. John Ansley's Store, adjoining the Country Market, where its progress was fortunately arrested; Mr. Ansley's Store being saved; while on the north side of King Street, every building from the Commercial Hotel corner down to Mr. Vernon's brick building at the corner of Germain Street, was also entirely destroyed. So complete was the devastation, that nothing remains on the site of the conflagration, but the lower portions of some of the chimneys. — During the fire, a brisk north-easterly breeze was blowing, which drove the flames and burning materials across the street, and placed the south side of King Street in imminent danger. The various Fire Engines were early at the scene of destruction, aided also by those belonging to the Military and Portland; the last named being under the direction of John Pollok, Esquire, who was indefatigable in his exertions throughout the night. The high wind carried the burning embers to a great distance some of which unfortunately set fire to the Cupola and roof of Trinity Church, which was for some time in danger of entire destruction. The Military Engine and another Engine were immediately placed for the protection of the Church, and the most complete arrangements made for effecting the purpose; but although the supply of water from the Water Company's plugs was abundant, yet the hose were so frozen, that the water could not be forced through them with sufficient force to reach the roof of the edifice. A number of resolute young men mounted to the top of the tower, under the burning Cupola, and cut away the pillars, to allow the blazing mass to fall over; and we regret to say that in performing this hazardous and important service, several of the hardy operators were severely injured. We are informed that a young man named Johnston, and another named Wetmore fell from the top of the Tower to the ground; and though both escaped with life, yet both are severely and dangerously injured. Johnston broke his fall in some degree by catching a rope which hung over the Tower, but his body struck on the western porch before coming to the ground; and one of the pillars struck Wetmore while ascending a ladder, and knocked him to the ground. We understand, also, that Mr. C. Huyghue, son of Lieut. Huyghue of the Ordnance Office, was very much injured by a piece of burning timber striking him on the

head; but we are happy to learn that it is confidently expected all three will recover. The loss of property occasioned by this calamity is very great; but we learn that there were insurance for the amount of about £5000 on various portions of it. Some of the sufferers, however, were wholly uninsured.

The land and buildings from Lawrence's cabinet Ware-rooms in King Street, round to Ansley's store in King Square, were, we believe, the property of the Corporation of Trinity Church, who have £1400 insured on the buildings. It is probable, however, that the land will henceforth yield a better ground rent than it did before the fire. There is now an unequalled opportunity for erecting on this site the most complete Hotel and apartments in this Province, which our enterprising citizens may perhaps improve. It is earnestly to be hoped, however, that effectual measures will be taken to secure the erection of a uniform line of first rate brick buildings in place of the wooden tenements destroyed, and thus to advance the beauty and security of this important district of the City. Not one particle of a wooden structure should ever again be suffered to disgrace the site now laid bare. We give below, a list of the sufferers, and of the buildings destroyed.

We cannot close our remarks without observing, that throughout the conflagration, the Water Company's plugs afforded an abundant and continuous supply of water; without the aid of which, we fear, the destruction would have been vastly more extensive. The fire was not completely subdued till about 5 o'clock this morning. Great praise is also due to the Military, and to the various Companies belonging to the different public and private Engines, and the Fire Department, and Fire Clubs, for their active and efficient services.

King Street.—Commercial Hotel, owned by Trinity Church, and occupied by Mr. Wetmore, as Hotel, by J. Sweeney, another, and Harvey Perkins, as Shops; two three story buildings owned by J. & G. Lawrence, occupied by them as Cabinet Warerooms and Dwelling, by Sons of Temperance as Division Room, and by John Christy, Grocer, and B. O'Brien, as Shop—a vacant shop in these buildings; two three story buildings owned by Stephen Wiggins, Esq., Shops occupied by R. D. M'Arthur, Druggist, R. Summers, Grocer, and Fellows & Co. Druggist—dwelling apartments occupied by I. Fellows, as a Boarding House; three story building belonging to W. Wright, Esq., Shop occupied by T. Clerke & Co., as a Crockery Store—dwelling apartments by Miss Trounce, and by Mr. Smith, as a Boarding House; two two story houses owned by W. Wright, Esq., Shops occupied by D. Paterson, as a Shoe Store, by W. M'Rae, Leather Cutter, and by James Christie, as a Leather and Finding Store—dwelling apartments by Mrs. Dougan, Milliner, Mr. Welsh, Tailor, and Mr. Slaven; two story building owned by John Brundage, and occupied by R. Stubs & Co.; three story building owned by John Brundage, occupied by him as a Boarding House—and Mr. Keohan as a Shoemaker's Shop; three story building owned by Miss Adams, occupied by her, and others, as dwelling apartments, by G. Peacock, as a Leather Cutting Shop, and D. O'L. Warlock, as a Washmaker's Shop.

King's Square.—Shops in Commercial Hotel occupied by S. M'Leod, Tailor, J. Hennesy, Hugh McPherson, and another; two story building owned by Trinity Church, Shop occupied by Mr. Nelson, Grocer, and up-stairs by W. Ellison, as Daguerotype Rooms; two story building belonging to the Estate of the late Thomas Millidge, Esq., occupied by James Davidson, Grocer, and J. D. Robertson, Flour Store; Messrs. Lawrence's Workshop, Hotel and J. Davidson's Stables, in rear of above buildings.

A SINGULAR OCCURRENCE.—In the Parish of Upham, on the 24th February, a young man was travelling through a piece of woods, when suddenly his beaver hat was taken from his head, and on looking up he beheld it carried off by an Owl. The bird carried it a small distance, when it alighted on the snow, and sat upon the hat; the young man approached the owl in order to get his hat, when the bird arose to the top of a high tree carrying the hat with it; he was then obliged to pursue his journey bareheaded, stopping at the nearest house on his way and related the circumstance. A young man offered to go back with him in order to shoot the owl and get the hat, but when they came near the spot where the hat had been taken, the latter young man received a blow on the head which knocked him out of the road in the snow, and on recovering his feet, beheld the same bird, as they supposed, carrying his heavy fur cap. Next day "Mr. Owl" pounced upon the head of a lad, who having his cap tied under his chin, was obliged to break the tie to get rid of his opponent.—In the afternoon the "luckless whites" brought his owl-ship to book, but could not discover where he had deposited the plunder.—St. John Chronicle.

HEADING THE HURRICANE.—The Cincinnati Chronicle mentions a very valuable practical result of the establishment of lines of the magnetic telegraph along the seaboard and lakes. The telegraph now gives notice of the storms that commence on any portion of the northern lakes. If a north-west storm begins at Chicago or Toledo, notice of the fact is immediately forwarded to shipmasters at Buffalo and Cleveland, or, if a storm begins at either of the last named places, notice of it is sent to shipmasters at the western ports. Vessels are thereby informed of the approach of storms, and may delay their departure until it is safe to leave. It has been ascertained that winds travel at certain rates—a hurricane at the rate of sixty miles an hour, and less furious winds at slower rates. A north-west storm of great violence, commencing at Chicago, may be looked for at Buffalo at a certain hour. A vessel about to depart westward, apprised of this fact, will remain in port until the storm arrives and expends its fury. Life and property will thus frequently be saved, which would otherwise be exposed to peril and shipwreck. So also, when a violent south-west wind is sweeping along the southern coast of the United States information of it may be immediately forwarded to the northern seaports, that vessels on the eve of starting, may be detained in port until the storm is over.