

[From Mr. Taylor's Reports.]

Provincial Parliament.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

WEDNESDAY, March 23.

In Committee on a Bill introduced by the Hon. Mr. Harrison, to amend an Act intitled an Act for the better establishment and maintenance of the Parish Schools.

Hon. Mr. Harrison thought that if Schools were to be supported by direct taxation, it ought to be general throughout the County; to allow a few persons to assemble together who have not even a vote at the elections, and tax persons as they may think proper, was a doctrine that he could not subscribe to.

Hon. Mr. Brown thought direct taxation for Schools was as important a measure as had ever been brought before the Legislature, and as difficult a subject to deal with. The Government and Legislature had taken a great deal of pains and expended a great deal of money for the purposes of education, but still the system was very imperfect; he would agree with his hon. friend, the mover of the Bill, that the mode of assessment ought to be general, or a great difficulty would be likely to arise by introducing it into some places, and not in others; he believed that if direct taxation was adopted in a district at all, it ought to be throughout the County, then the sum assessed would go to support Schools in poor districts as well as in the rich. He thought that as the law required to be amended in so many places, they had better not touch it at all at present, but let it have a fair trial and then it could be ascertained better afterward how to deal with it.

Hon. Mr. Harrison said, they had not adopted the principle in his County as yet; an attempt was made to do so, but it was defeated. He considered the mode pursued by the Government was a very improper one, as they had thrown the responsibility off their own shoulders on that of the people, by making it optional and giving the power to a few to levy the assessment.

Hon. Mr. Steves observed that the difficulties marked out by the two last speakers were of a different kind—one had introduced a Bill (Hon. Mr. Brown) to provide for an evil in his County already in existence, and the other (Hon. Mr. Harrison) for an imaginary difficulty, as the law as regards taxation had never been put in practice in his County; his opinion was that as the law only had two more years to run, they had better not make any alterations in it until it had a fair trial. He was aware that it required a considerable sum of money to carry out the principles of the present law, but it was an improvement in the right quarter, and all its principles were being carried out. Having a Training School for the purpose of training teachers, and Local Inspectors in each County, was in his opinion an improvement. His opinion had long been, that direct Taxation for the support of Schools was after all the proper system, as soon as the minds of the people were prepared to receive it.

Hon. Mr. Gilbert could not see objections to the Bill. He thought it a very hard case that those who had large properties should be taxed by those who had nothing; he did not think the School Law would work well at all; as to having Inspectors in each County, they were worse than useless. He knew of an instance of one of them visiting a school, afterward he asked one of the scholars what he done, he said nothing but that the schoolmaster examined the school, and the Inspector only told one of the scholars that he pronounced the word peninsula wrong, and then went away. As to educating the poor children, in many instances they would not attend school, after everything was provided, house, master, wood and every thing else. He would go for educating the poor children as far as any one, whenever they could adopt a proper mode of doing it.

Hon. Mr. Connell had scarcely made up his mind what was the best course to pursue in reference to the present Bill, but did not think it would make the matter much better or worse. As to having County Inspectors it was the best part of the law, for under the old system there were instances where the public money had been paid to Teachers who had not taught as required by law, but now such could not be the case under the management of the so excellent a superintendent, and having a proper person appointed in each County to see that every teacher performs his duty. In the County of Carleton the principle of direct taxation had

been adopted, and it was found to work well though at first many were afraid of it. In the United States the principle was carried out and the people generally quiet and in good circumstances; compare them with some of those on the Continent where education was not attended to, they were in a state of confusion and anarchy prevailed, and no doubt want of education was one of the reasons. He believed that where schools were supported by direct taxation, it would lead to a great increase of population; and where such was the case, property increased in value.

Hon. Mr. Kinnear thought the hon. gentleman who had introduced the Bill was mistaken in the course he had adopted, and considered the debate altogether out of place, as the Bill ought to have originated in the other Branch of the Legislature, being a Bill to tax the people. One of the principles of Magna Charter was that the people cannot be taxed except by themselves, that is by their representatives; therefore such bill could not constitutionally originate with this Branch, it being a branch of the Legislature appointed by the Government.

Hon. Mr. Hill was in favor of the principles of the Bill, but was of the same opinion as the hon. Solicitor General; that the Bill being one to tax the people ought to have originated in the Lower House, but was willing to take his share of the responsibility by voting for it. He believed that the proper principle to adopt in support of Schools was by direct taxation, but proper measures should be adopted to carry out such principles.

Hon. Col. Hatch said although he would be one of the first to uphold the rights and privileges of the Council, still he would be one of the last to infringe upon the rights of the other branch of the Legislature. He concurred fully with the remarks made by the Honorable Solicitor General that the bill now in Committee ought to have passed the other branch before being introduced here, and if passed and sent down to the Assembly they would consider it an infringement on their rights and privileges.

Hon. Mr. Harrison would ask again why the Government would clothe people, who had not even a voice in the Elections, with power to tax others who had property, against their consent. He for one was willing to take the responsibility and pass the bill, if it done no other good it would let the Assembly and the people know what the Council wanted, or at least a majority of them, as to the bill last year it was out of the power of their Honors to alter it, but thought they had a right to pass the one now before their Honors.

Hon. Mr. Kinnear said the argument of the hon. member who had introduced the bill was conclusive. If they had not the power to alter the bill last year how much less had they the right to originate one now, that so materially affected it. On the question being taken the bill passed by a small majority.

[From the St. John Morning Times]

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Thursday, March 17.

On motion of the honorable Attorney General the House went into Committee of the whole on a bill to amend the law in reference to Municipal Corporations. The bill having been read through.

Hon. Attorney General said the bill was not his own, but was merely placed in his hands, it having been prepared by a professional gentleman residing in Carleton County. As he was not prepared to go on with it at present, he moved that the Committee rise and report progress, and when that was done he would follow it up by moving that the bill be referred to a select Committee.

Mr. Johnson hoped the Committee would reject it at once. It would never do to pass it, as it would take away from the people some of the very powers granted to them under the Municipal Corporation Act. It was to fix the salaries of the Sheriffs and County Clerks by law.

Hon. Attorney General said no harm could arise by referring it to a Select Committee.—Let it be examined, and then if it was not approved of it would be thrown out.

Mr. Smith had no objection to reporting progress, although he did not think the bill could pass. As to the Sheriffs, he would go for giving them the usual amount of fees, and a fixed salary over and above the fees, as part of their duties were in connection with criminal causes for which at present they are not paid at all.

Hon. Provincial Secretary did not think he could support a bill for giving the Sheriffs fixed salaries, but he hoped the bill would be referred to a Select Committee when something might possibly grow out of it which might guide them in future legislation. It was unus-

ual to dispose of a bill in the summary manner proposed by the hon. and learned member for Northumberland, when the benches were not half occupied.

Mr. Needham said it was a strange proceeding to allow the Municipal Corporation to fix the salary of the Clerk of the County, when he was not their servant at all, but appointed by the Court of Sessions, whose servant he was. The body by whom he was appointed, and whom he served, should regulate his salary.

Mr. Hannington had no objection to reporting progress, but he was against the bill in all its provisions. The County of Carleton had petitioned for power to elect their own Sheriff, and that system would be established by and bye—it could not be staved off; and more, it was the English practice. As to the salaries of county officers, it was a matter which, if left to the people, must soon regulate itself. If a County possessed a good Clerk, and did not offer him a fair remuneration for his services, they would soon find that they must increase his salary or lose his services altogether; and the same argument would apply to other officers.

Hon. Provincial Secretary would ask the hon. member upon what authority he had asserted that the election of Sheriffs by the people was an English practice? It only existed in London, and that was established under a charter four hundred years old.

Hon. Mr. Gray—"And in London it is merely an honorary situation, as the officer elected does not perform the ordinary services of a Sheriff; it is expensive too, and the person elected must serve or pay a fine of five hundred pounds.

Hon. Attorney General said that by referring the bill to a Select Committee, it was possible they might agree upon some amendments to the existing law. There was a good deal deserving of notice in what the hon. and learned member for Westmoreland (Mr. Smith) had stated. There was no doubt but the Sheriffs in some Counties were badly paid, and last year they had met in Fredericton as a body, and petitioned the House to increase their pay. They had duties to perform for which they got no pay whatever. Other matters might also be considered by the Select Committee. By the Municipal Act provision was made for county meetings to be held where the question should be decided whether the County should be incorporated or not. These meetings were to be called at the shire towns, and a vote of two thirds of the rate payers was necessary to decide in the affirmative. The County of Carleton was the only county that had adopted the measure. Meetings had been held in other Counties, and majorities had been found in favor of being incorporated, but less than two-thirds. Now he had heard complaints upon this subject, and it had been stated that the people had not generally attended these meetings, in consequence of the state of the roads and the distance they would be required to travel, and that if a meeting was held in every parish, instead of a county meeting, the result would have been different. He hoped the Committee would report, and allow the bill to be examined by a Select Committee.

Mr. Hannington would explain in answer to what had been said by the hon. Provincial Secretary. He knew very well that the city of London was the only place in England where the Sheriff is elected by the people, but that being the case he was quite correct in saying it is an English practice.

The Committee then rose and reported progress, and the bill was referred to a Select Committee.

EARTHQUAKE.—On Sunday morning last, at 5 o'clock this neighborhood was visited by the shock of an earthquake. The time of its duration may have occupied 30 seconds, we understand that the shock was also felt at Niagara.—*St. Catherine's Journal*, 17th.

Special Notice!

We are at all times happy to receive callers in our Sanctum whether on business or otherwise, but we can and will dispense with the presence of those who are in the habit of lounging about the Office, making pi and keeping the hands from their work. A Wink, &c.!

By Telegraph from Fredericton to News Room.

March 25.—The House resolved unanimously to go into mourning for one week on account of the death of H. H. Beardsley, Esq.

Mr. Earle presented a petition from Charles Keith and others to divide King's County. A warm debate on the suspending clause attached by the Council on the Militia Bill—to be taken up again on Monday morning. The House was engaged the remainder of the day in the Restook Corporation Bill. A difficulty between the Attorney General and Mr. Hatheway, standing order moved and settled in about half an hour. In Council, Law Commissioners report received and read by the Clerk. Progress made in Mr. Hill's Banking Bill.

March 26.—The Assembly agreed to continue the Act of Incorporation to the Restook Boom Company on Thursday.

To-day the Assembly was chiefly occupied in consideration of a Bill to continue an Act for commutating debts due the Crown by work on roads—much diversity of opinion prevailed as to the well working of the system. Progress reported.

Several Bills passed in the Council, but little discussion.

March 28.—An interesting debate arose on motion of Mr. Botsford that when the House go into committee of the whole, the President may name any member as chairman, it being the practice heretofore that the senior member present only act as chairman.

A Bill to authorize the Church wardens and vestry of St. Mark's Church, St. George, County Charlotte, to sell certain Glebe lands and vest the proceeds in other lands passed. Also a Bill to incorporate Diocesan Church Society. Also a Bill to incorporate the Nashwas and Fredericton Steam Ferry Boat Company.

The Assembly engaged during the day in supply.

March 29.—Committee appointed in the Council to report on the extension of the Restook Boom Company—recommended that the matter remain over until another year. Report accepted.

Hon. Mr. Harrison's Bill relating to Parish Schools passed 10 to 9.

A Bill passed the Assembly authorising road work to be done on the banks of the Mangerville by the inhabitants, in order to prevent their destruction by the Freshets. Also a Bill for the purpose of obtaining a loan to build a Court House in Fredericton.

The Assembly engaged in supply. Several grants passed. Several hon. members obtain leave to place several amounts on the supply Book. A lengthy discussion arose on motion of Mr. Botsford to re-consider a motion that had been lost to put an amount on supply book to aid in building a lock-up house in Shediac and another at the Bend of Peticodiac, motion lost by a large majority.

House adjourned.

March 30.—A Bill passed the Council to incorporate the St. Andrews Gas Light Company. Also a Bill to incorporate certain bodies of the Wesleyan Methodist Church in New Brunswick. Also a Bill to confirm conveyance of certain lands belonging to a lunatic in the city of St. John. Also a Bill to secure the navigation of the river St. Croix.

The Assembly have agreed to pass the Militia Bill with a suspending clause attached to it in Council.

Long discussion in the Assembly on a Bill to register births, baptisms, marriages, and deaths. After four hours debate motion made to report progress, carried 19 to 15.

English moved for a writ for a new election in Carleton.

March 31.—A Bill in the Assembly, granting Bounty on destruction of Bears and Wolves—Lost. Passed a Bill in amendment to an Act, to consolidate the law relating to Counties, Towns and Parishes; also a Bill authorizing Catholic Episcopal Incorporations to sell and mortgage certain lands in St. John.

A Grant of £700 passed towards building a Bridge in Miramichi—warm debate.

Council made progress in Bill to protect the Banks on the River St. John.

The Hon. Mr. Crane is said to be dying. April 1.—Hon. Mr. Crane died about twelve o'clock last night.