

lars, to our Magistrates for the purpose of procuring seeds to be distributed among the really poor farmers next spring; it would be an object worthy their attention; and be doing a real general service to the poor. In this County, the horses are using men's food and seeds that should, yet can not, be kept for sowing, and I believe it requires a right understanding of this whole question by the Executive and Legislature, to ensure an immediate grant such as I have suggested. And now is the time to make it.

Yours &c.,
JOHN SMITH.

Grand Falls, February 10th 1855.

(To the Editor of the Carleton Sentinel.)

SIR,—I have seen published "a Bill to regulate the Election of Members to serve in the General Assembly," brought in by the Hon. Attorney General. To use a hackneyed phrase; this Bill is a step in the right direction; it is a great improvement of the Law Elective. The extension of the franchise and the Ballot, are loudly called for; and the proposed provisions for correcting Lists, and testing voters, are admirable for their simplicity. But it was to point out what I deemed the imperfections, rather than the perfections of this Bill, that I sat down about. In sect. 20, the qualification, *inter alia*, of a member is made to be:—"and for six months previous to the teste of the Writ of Election, have been seized as of Freehold for his own use of Land in the Province of the value of Three hundred pounds over &c." Why is it, that in this day a property qualification is thought so essential to make it a statutory requisite? Is the acquisition, or the Inheritance of property, evidence of Legislative ability in the man? Or is it a "material guarantee" of senatorial integrity and common honesty? Has it ever been—will it ever be, a security to the Public against the possibility of corrupting a constituency? I thought these were times when the MAN himself, should be weighed without his acres being taken as an integral part of him, or an adjunct necessary to be thrown into the scale. Heretofore wealthy men have controlled the several constituencies in the Province: the Election Law was favourable to that result; and have their Legislative acts proved that *wealth and brains, money and honesty* were convertible terms? Try this question by the present Assembly of Provincial Legislators, and what is the answer? Verily this venerable relic of a very dark age should be now laid up in Lavender. I do not think that the Aristocracy of Wealth need such a protection, and such a privilege as this provision secures to them; and, evidently, it operates in favour of nobody else. Let the man's intrinsic worth—not his lands, and the people's estimation thereof, determine his political position. If residence within the County were made a statutory qualification, and the Law silent as to property; a greater security would be obtained against Bribery and Corruption, than all the penalties afford which are inserted in this Bill. The qualification as it stands in the Bill is an invitation to corrupt a Constituency, stronger than its penalties: penalties never yet made a virtuous constituency, and never will.

The idea evolved by the qualification of Electors stated in the 1st Section seems to be a struggle to get rid of the old lumbering notion that the property—not the man—voted. This is made quite definite by the form of list given in the 2nd section; and, short of universal suffrage, is the modern idea of Electoral right. By what correct process of induction this Electoral right is conferred upon a class of persons called, "non residents," consistently with this modern idea, I confess myself unable to comprehend. Having a voice in the election for the County he resides in is quite enough, and fills the idea of giving the vote to the man; while his not being allowed to vote in another county where he may have property is no restraint of the due exercise of a proper Franchise—indeed, upon the principle of the Bill in this respect, I do not see why he should be restrained from voting in every parish in which he may possess the property qualification. But the great objection to non residents voting is, the direct incentive it gives to corruption and perjury in the Elector, and subordination of perjury in the Candidate. How many "non residents," were ever known to vote without contravening some or one of the provisions contained in the 38th and 55th sections of this Bill? while his voting is always looked upon as a piece of impertinence, by the resident voters, which ought to be, and sometimes is chastized on the spot. When a Law attaches penalties to certain specified acts, it should not at the same time by its allowances or requirements, invite persons to commit those acts. "Non resident" voting has heretofore drawn to it, bribery,

corruption, perjury, a row and a licking. With these attendants, is it a right to be legalized?

By section 44, a ballot is to be destroyed if it contains the names of more persons than should be returned. This is very proper, though it is a casualty not very likely to happen; but one of grave importance and of very possible and probable occurrence, is not provided against;—what if on counting the ballots in any box, more are found than there are names on the check List? The Bill is silent! The only thing like a provision against the happening of this event is found in the 35th section,—"the presiding officer—must—be satisfied that the vote is single, and deposit the same in the ballot box, without reading." With every man's experience of the ingenious devices practised by voters, can this provision be deemed so hopeful a security against double ballots, that the event named is not necessary to be provided for? Can no greater security be enacted for the purity of the ballot box, than what is contained in this section, and the Oath prescribed in section 32? It seems to me that if the additional name is held to destroy the ballot; then the excessive ballots over the check list, should destroy the ballots, box and all. Surely some statutory direction should be given in this case; the interests involved are too large not to be provided for. If to the penalty I have hinted at (and which would make the voters in every box careful of its purity) it were also provided that the ballot before being deposited in the box, should pass through the hands of two sworn Inspectors acting under a severe penalty in case of an excessive ballot:—and that every person detected in an attempt to deposit double ballots, or convicted of the act, should be disfranchised forever in that particular County: a greater security than the Bill now contains would be had for the purity of the Box. I have not yet done with the Bill; but this letter is long enough. My object is not to create, nor strengthen an opposition, but if possible to improve the measure submitted to our Parliament. I hate half measures, and detest compromises.

Yours,

CAUSIDICUS.

Grande Sault, Feby. 16, 1855.

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

FROM MR. TAYLOR'S REPORTS.

(Continued from the 4th page.)

Saturday, 17th Feb., 1855.

Mr. English moved that the rule be suspended in order he might be able to present two Petitions, from James R. Tupper Esqr., Charles S. Appleby, and upwards of 100 others, inhabitants of the County of Carleton, Praying for a grant of money to improve the navigation of the River St. John. He (Mr. English) did not consider this a local matter, but for the benefit of the Province at large, as the River St. John passed through several Counties. He hoped that the House would indulge him, and allow the Petitions to come in.

Mr. Tibbits observed that he viewed the matter in the same light, as the Hon. Member from Carleton. It was not for local purposes, or of a private nature, and did not think that the rule of the House applied to such cases, neither did he think that any good objections could be made in this instance.—Not received.

Mr. Hatheway moved a resolution, that a select committee be appointed to whom shall be referred certain Bonds, held by the Crown against John Glazier, and others.

Mr. Cutler would like to hear from Honble Members, who were in the House at the time the bonds were given, as he considered this a matter of too much importance, to pass over lightly, as there were several thousand Pounds involved in it touching the revenue. He wished to do justice to all parties, but he required more light on the subject, in order that he might come to a just conclusion.

Mr. Wilmot thought that the same justice ought to be dealt out in this case, as in others. The money could not be paid until it passed the house, therefore he could see no objection to have a committee appointed to investigate the matter. He knew nothing about the nature of the case himself, and wanted information.

Mr. Partelow considered it a matter for the Government to take up first, and investigate it, and not the house.

Mr. Tibbits said that was what the parties aimed at, to have the Government take the matter up and investigate it. All that was wanted of Mr. Glazier, or Mr. anybody-else, who might be concerned, was to have justice done them. He did not think it right for the Government of New Brunswick to seize, and take stampage on Timber that was cut on Canadian territory, within the

sound of the Quebec gun, and paid for there. He had no hesitation in saying that Mr. Glazier, and others had been completely fleeced by the Government of that day. Now all they required was justice done, and if they could not make out a good case, why then they must abide by the consequences.

Mr. English thought it high time to have the matter settled. The case appeared to him to be a very plain one, for if the parties could make it appear that they had paid the stumpage in Canada, they certainly ought not to be compelled to pay it again in this Province.

Mr. McAdam thought this the proper course to pursue, and would support the motion for a committee.

Mr. Connell would like to have the matter settled as soon as possible, although he had no interest in it, no further than he wished to see justice done, and believed the longer it was put off the more it would cost in the end. If the money has been spent in the boundary survey, and if the parties make out a case and it is found that they are entitled to the money; only one half will be taken out of the funds of the Province, as Canada is bound to pay half of the expences. He did not think that a committee would be able to get all the information during the present Session, but thought that the Government would have to appoint a Commissioner, or let a committee of the House get the information during the recess, and report at the next session of the Legislature.

After further explanation from Mr. Hatheway, the following Committee was appointed: Messrs. Connell, Hatheway, Wilmot, Harding, McAdam, Kerr.

Honble Provincial Secretary laid before the House certain returns, relating to Supervisors, Deputy Treasurers, &c.

When the Bill to increase the capital stock of the Fredericton Boom Company was committed,—Mr. Harding said that two years ago, a petition was before the house to curtail the power of the company, and he did not think it right to give them more power at present, although he would have no objections to allow them to increase their capital stock.

Honble Attorney General did not think that the Bill ought to be objected to, for it was nearly the same as the old law, only that it gave them power to increase their capital stock, and raise the Boom age a little, as the Company had lost last year from £1,500 to £2,000. And they wanted to make it up in this way if they could.

Mr. McPherson withdrew his objections of yesterday, and gave some information, when the Bill passed.

Mr. Wilmot would like to call Hon. Members attention, to an article in the Head Quarters, taken from the St. John Courier. The article was evidently written for the purpose of elevating the present Government, to the injury of the late one, by endeavoring to make false impressions, by misstating the Financial condition of the Country. He did not believe that the finances of the country were ever in a better state than when the old Government went out of office. The article in question stated that the Provincial Secretary laid on the table a statement of the financial condition of the Province, and also the estimates for the coming year. "The former document fully confirms the intention we gave a few weeks since, respecting the unsatisfactory state of our public finances. The gross liabilities of the Province are £242,227, and the gross amount of the assets of all kinds are but £201,826, leaving a balance, in figures, £40,391 against the Province. But a large amount of these assets were stated to be altogether valueless, and the real debt therefore exceeds £400,000. This is a startling fact, and one for which the people of this province were in no respect prepared, after the statement made last year by the Government that the Province was virtually out of debt."

Hon. Attorney General did not know whether he read the article in the Courier or not, if he had, he had forgotten it, however, he paid but little attention to what appeared in Newspapers, these Gentlemen gentlemen generally wrote what they pleased, he was willing that they should do so, as they lived by it, and he would give himself very little trouble about it. If he did do so he felt that he would have a sorry road before him.

Mr. End thought that it would not do to allow such gross misstatements to pass unnoticed, as it would have a tendency to injure the Province abroad, for if the people in other places found by the public prints that the Province, was head over ears in debt, they would not come near it.

He could not agree with the late Surveyor General, that all the credit was due the late Government for paying off the Public debt, for the state

of the Finances of the county, forced it upon them, as the trade of the country at the time was in a most prosperous state, although they deserved credit for the course they pursued in the matter.

Hon. Provincial Secretary, said that the mistake, occurred in the Head Quarters office, for in copying from the Courier they had put down £400,000 instead of £100,000, therefore he did not think that the Courier should be blamed for errors, that occurred in other places.

The Hon. Gentleman reiterated his statements made on a former day, when he laid the financial statements, of the Province before the House. The £100,000, due by the Province included the £95,000 due the Savings Banks, and which if the Province, were not called upon to pay, there would be a balance of only £5,000. When the House went into a committee of ways and means, for raising a revenue he would be prepared to show the real statement of the financial condition of the Country.

Hon. Solicitor General did not think that the Government ought to be blamed for misstatements that might appear in a newspaper. It was evident in this instance, that the Head Quarters, had committed a great mistake in copying from the Courier in inserting a figure 4 for a 1.

Mr. Partelow was glad that his Hon. Colleague had brought the matter up for, said he, read the article as you will, it was evident to his mind, that the whole piece was written for the purpose of deluding the people. Whatever people wrote or said about him, as an individual, he cared nothing about it, for he had been abused for the last twenty-eight years, and had got used to it, and no doubt was the best abused man in the country, but when misstatements were made about a Government, as a body, of which he had been a member, he felt bound to take notice of it. He would say that the financial statements brought in by the Provincial Secretary a few days ago, were predicated upon the basis of similar returns brought in by the Government in 1853 and 1854.

Mr. Cutler was also of opinion that the whole statement was made for the purpose of exalting the present Government, at the expence of the former one. As to the Courier he believed the proprietors of that paper were prepared to support any Administration who would pay them well for it, no matter who was in power. It was all the same to them, providing they were well paid for their services.

Hon. Surveyor General when he first saw the article, was forcibly struck, as to its incorrectness, and of the improper view that was taken of the Financial state of the country; and if allowed to pass uncontradicted it would have a tendency to injure the country, as wrong impressions would go abroad as to the real condition of the Province.—The statements that had been made by the late Government, was that the Province was virtually out of debt, was not so far out of the way after all, as most of the debt was due the Savings Banks, which could not be paid according to the Act, until the parties to whom it was due called for it, but was to be kept in readiness for that purpose; so Hon. Members will see that the Government cannot pay it when they please unless the parties choose to draw it out.

Mr. McPhelim thought it was a mistake only on the part of the person who set up the type in the Head Quarters office, and did not believe that it would do much injury after all.

Mr. Gilmour was glad that the discussion had arisen, for he had himself got a great deal of information; and if the discussion went abroad, it would give the country that information on the subject that was required.

Hon. Provincial Secretary, if the Financial state of the Province be published in the appendix to the Journals it will show at one view the Financial state of the Province. The Government were preparing a statement for that purpose, including the debts due the crown Land office, and were determined to make all parties pay who were able to do so.

Mr. Steadman considered the article incorrect throughout. He did not think the Government ought to be held responsible for the debt due by the Province, until they took the initiatory principle into their hands; for the House had the power at any time to run the country in debt, under the present system, and the Government could not help themselves. But if the initiation of money grants was given up they could do so.

Mr. Hatheway thought that the article would have a tendency to mislead the country if not contradicted.

Mr. Boyd moved a resolution to the following effect, that for the future no grants of money will be made by that House, for the support of any Academy, or school of a sectional character, to be taken up at a future day. Progress made in several Bills, when the House adjourned.