

The Gleaner

AND

NORTHUMBERLAND SCHEDIASMA.

VOLUME II.]

"Nec araneorum sane exus ideo melior, quia ex se fila gignunt nec noster vilior qui ex alienis libamus ut apes?"

No. 28.]

MIRAMICHI, TUESDAY MORNING, MARCH 22, 1831.

THE GLEANER.

AMERICA.

New-Bruswick.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY, FREDERICTON;

Wednesday, March 2.

The Tavern Bill was re-committed. After some few interesting observations, the maximum charge for licenses was fixed at £15, and the bill agreed to, with amendments.

Mr. Hill moved for leave to bring in a bill to extend the jurisdiction of Magistrates.

Thursday, March 3.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Mr. Simonds moved the re-consideration of the Resolution, declaring it expedient to lay a small ad valorem tax on British merchandise; which tax he feared might be made use of as a weapon, by those parties in the Mother Country who desire the alteration of the Timber duties. After considerable discussion, the motion was negatived.

Mr. S. Humbert moved a resolution, for laying a further duty on all manufactured iron ware, and on all hard-bread imported from the United States.

Mr. Cunard and Mr. S. Humbert briefly replied.—The resolution was carried.

Mr. Weldon moved a resolution, for imposing a small ad valorem duty on tea.

The resolution was negatived IN TOTO.

STATE OF THE PROVINCE.

On motion of Mr. Partelow, the House went into Committee of the whole, in consideration of the general state of the Province.—Mr. Ward in the Chair.

Mr. Partelow stated the object of the Committee, and particularly mentioned the civil list, the custom house system, the casual revenue, the crown land office, &c. as subjects for consideration, together with all other matters of general importance. He suggested that it might be better to make a joint discussion of all these matters, and stated that he had prepared a few resolutions, which he would submit to the consideration of the Committee. He would first notice, that it appeared from the speech from the throne at the opening of the Imperial Parliament, that His Majesty had munificently surrendered to his subjects all his casual revenues; consequently, it was most probable that the casual revenue of this province would come under the control of the provincial legislature. It would therefore be advisable, that some resolution should be passed, to regulate the payment of the civil list. He believed the civil list was paid out of the casual revenue. By His Majesty's donation, the casual revenue would become part of the public funds of the province, and the payment of the civil list would therefore be under the control of the House. If the House should obtain the control of the casual revenue, it would also obtain that of the amount raised by charges on lumber licences. He believed there was at present a discretionary power vested in the commissioner of crown lands, to make this charge what he thought proper. He (Mr. P.) believed that officer to be a conscientious and upright man, but he (Mr. P.) had been informed, that he had thought it expedient to raise the charge for licences; and if this unlimited power should ever be improperly exercised, the commissioner so acting might put a stop to the lumber trade altogether, by raising the licence charge to a prohibiting amount. The Hon. Member read a very long resolution, declaring it expedient to obtain full information as to the amount, sources, and application of the casual revenue, the amount of salaries and fees to custom house officers, &c. and various other matters, and resolving that an address be presented to His Honor the President, requesting him to order such information to be laid before the House. The Hon. Member observed, that if sentiments similar to his own should be ascertained by the House, he intended to move this resolution, and following it up by proposing an application to the throne or the Parliament, on the subject of the casual revenue and civil list; and also a separate address relative to the custom house, with view of obtaining the provincial control over that establishment. He (Mr. P.) would give those offices fair and equitable salaries, but not to the extravagant amount at present paid.

Mr. Simonds thought these subjects so very important, as to require very serious and deliberate attention. At present, therefore, it might only be necessary to pass some short resolution, declaring it necessary to consider them, which resolution the Chairman might report, and ask leave to sit again. Then, when the Committee should resume its sitting, the whole matter might be fully entered into. Member would thus be prepared, and much unnecessary discussion might be avoided. After various lengthy and general observations on the principal subjects mentioned in the resolution, (which, from its great extent, we are unable to transcribe in full,) from Messrs. Cunard, S. Humbert, Taylor, Chandler, Brown, Weldon, Partelow, Mr. Speaker, and Mr. Simonds.

Mr. Weldon moved, that that part of the proposed address to His Honor the President, relative to the returns from the custom house, be struck out.

Mr. Weldon said, that the House already had custom house returns before it. He thought it improper that the custom house question and the casual revenue should be blended together in the address. The former was not a matter of doubt. As to the latter, there was a doubt, whether it would be under the control of the legislature or not. The House knew by the returns before it, what sums had been paid into the custom house, and the amount of salaries, compensation money, &c. It was, therefore, not necessary to ask for such accounts.

Mr. S. Humbert objected to Mr. Weldon's motion. It was true that the House knew what amount the Custom House Officers retained for services mentioned in the returns, but it did not know what the salaries actually were. The House wanted to know whence those sums were derived, and by what authority they were so appropriated.

Mr. Ward concurred. The House certainly knew what the custom house charge was, but there were certain revenues belonging to it, of which there was no account.—Large sums were paid by the public to the custom house; and he (Mr. Ward) believed, that out of the sums so received from the people, about 5 or 6 per cent. was put to other purposes than any of which the house had any account.

Mr. Weyer also concurred, and paid a testimony of thanks to Mr. Partelow for moving the resolution. He [Mr. W.] thought it full time to consider the matter. Large sums were collected in the Province, by persons over whom the Legislature had no control. It was not known how those sums were expended; and he hoped the house would not rise from the floor of the present session, without fully proceeding in the matter.

Mr. Clinch observed, that there was certainly a great many topics embodied in the resolution. He thought the casual revenue question quite enough for the house to enter upon at this time. It is true that by the Constitution, all those sums from which the Casual Revenue is derived, are immediately under the control of the King—but on the principle that power lodged in the hands of any ruler or government, should be exercised for the benefit of the party governed. He (Mr. C.) could never suppose that His Majesty ever intended to avail himself of his prerogative in this respect, in any other manner than what would comport with the interest of the people of this Province. This being as he conceived a just and equitable view of the case, it was worth while to observe how widely the practice differed from the present operation of the casual revenue was extremely burdensome and oppressive to the people of this Province; there were few but had felt the ill consequences of it.—A person was sent out here from home, with powers greater than any Roman Praetor or Proconsul was ever entrusted with, not indeed to levy contributions as the Republic used to do upon the conquered provinces, but what I consider far worse, to claim the fee simple of the whole country. Should any one think that he [Mr. C.] had taken too strong a view of the subject, let him examine and see whether he was not borne out by facts.—Were not the Lands and Timber of the country sold by that Officer, and disposed of as though they were his own private property?—Were not contributions levied upon the people of this Province in the shape of timber duties, and enforced by a set of agents the most effective for carrying arbitrary measures into execution that ever existed in any Country? If the Duke of Wellington's scheme of employing quarter master sergeants in the Treasury department had been perfected, it could not have been attended with more decisive results. He alluded to the seizing officers, (most aptly denominated as such) and too well known throughout the country; but as the House might not be as well acquainted with them, he would stop to give a description as well as he was able. The term HARRIES had been, on a late occasion, rather unsuccessfully applied to the law fraternity of this Province. He [Mr. C.] asserted he might apply it to those of whom he spoke, without dead of an ex officio, and, by combining the rapacity of that fabulous bird, together with the swiftness and avidity with which a hawk pounces on his prey, something like a correct idea might be formed of a seizing officer. These gentlemen were no charge upon the funds of the casual revenue—their emoluments were derived from an allowance for lying out timber births, and a share of all seizures of course made them more alert and eager. Mr. C. thought the Government at home must be ignorant of the extent and importance of this revenue—the very name conveyed a deceptive meaning—it was modestly stiled casual, a word synonymous with accidental, which it was very far from being. It was in fact better paid and more certain than the ordinary revenue of the country. The more bonds taken—there was no delay in collection—no losses from absconding or insolvent debtors—no commission to the Attorney General; it was the ready cash that was paid. Then with respect to the duration of it. If we look forward to the time when all the timber and all the lands in the country, now remaining, are to be sold by the same process now going on, and converted into money, it would seem more proper to stile it—the Permanent or Consolidated Revenue.—There was a delusive idea held out that this revenue was spent in the province. That, however, was in some measure recognizing the principle that it should be so spent. But such an expenditure was by no means the fact.—There had been a few thousands granted to the College for justice, and one to

the Miramichi sufferers, which at the time was cried up as a very generous donation. He (Mr. C.) thought otherwise, considering the urgency of the case, and how much Miramichi had contributed to that revenue.—Some small grants had likewise been made for churches, and schools, and roads, very useful objects, he admitted, but the whole together bearing no kind of proportion to the gross amount, of which every one must be sensible, who knew any thing of the immense quantity of lumber of different descriptions, manufactured in the province the whole of which paid duties. The question, then, naturally arises, where does the money go? He (Mr. C.) could not for a moment suppose, that his Gracious Majesty availed himself of his Royal prerogative, by putting any part of it in his own pocket; it must then go to swell the fortunes of individuals, or as hinted out of doors, it may be in the vaults of St John Bank, (this, however, he doubted). But in either case, it was so much money withdrawn from circulation, the effects of which must of course be greatly injurious to the country.—Any one who was in the habit of reading the debates in Parliament, if possessed of any pride of country, any national feeling whatever, must be hurt at the insinuations so often thrown out, with regard to this country, whenever the civil list is moved for. Some members never fail to oppose it, on the ground that this Province is a burden to the Mother Country—that we are too poor to pay our own expenses, and, therefore, ought to be shook off.—Thus, Sir, while our revenues are squandered in the way they have been, without our own consent, we are insulted at the same time with the insinuation that we are too poor to pay our way. But, Sir, the Petition we are about to send home, asking for a surrender of all the resources of the country into our own hands, on condition of paying all the charges of the government of the Province, will at once be a triumphant answer to all the injurious reflections of Mr. Hume, and the partisans of the opposition. It will be at once coming to the point, and reduce the British Government to this dilemma—either to do us that justice which we require, or to openly avow, that for purposes best known to themselves, either a desire to make the fortunes of some of the friends and relations of men in office, or to help up a majority in Parliament, to which we were to contribute our mite, they still choose to retain the casual revenue in their own hands, if the fact should be their determination, we as the weaker body must of course submit. But from the care and attention of the Government, so often shown towards this Province, better things were to be expected.

During the delivery of the above speech, we heard frequent expressions of corroboration from several Hon. Members; such as—*TRUE, TRUE.*—*YES.*—*VERY TRUE.*—&c.

Mr. Partelow's original motion was carried, and the Committee thereupon reported progress, and obtained leave to sit again.

EXTRACTS FROM THE JOURNALS.

Wednesday, March 2.

Mr. End, the Member for Gloucester, being called to order by Mr. Simonds, Member for St. John.

Mr. Harrison moved the Standing Order of the House, whereupon, the Gallery and Lobbies were cleared.

The question being then put, whether the Member for Gloucester was out of order, it was decided to the affirmative.—

Whereupon, Mr. End apologized to the House; upon which the House were satisfied, and proceeded no further.

Thursday, March 3.

On motion of Mr. Partelow.
WHEREAS appropriations have annually been made by the Imperial Parliament, towards the support of the Civil Government of this country, and large sums have also been paid towards the same object, from the King's Casual Revenue received or collected in the Province; and whereas, it is deemed advisable by this House, in consequence of the magnificent surrender by His Most Gracious Majesty, as communicated in his speech to the Imperial Parliament, of all his Revenues in his foreign possessions, to provide for the whole Civil List and the Custom House Establishment, in the event of all the revenues, of whatever description, raised in the country, being placed under the control of the Provincial Legislature. And whereas, it is considered necessary that some information should be obtained by this House, as to the amount of the Casual Revenue raised in this Province for some years back, and its application; and also the Rates of Salaries paid to the various officers in the Government of the country, and their fees of office, together with the amount of Salaries retained by the Officers of Customs, as a compensation for their services, in order that the necessary means may be taken by the House to carry their objects into execution.—
Therefore,

RESOLVED—That an humble Address be presented to His Honor the President, praying that he will cause to be laid before this House, at as early a day as possible, a detailed account, showing the amount paid into the Casual Revenue from 1st January, 1824, to 1st January, 1831, particularly the sums in each year respectively, and from what source or sources the same are derived; the said account also to contain