

The Gleaner

AND NORTHUMBERLAND SCHEDIASMA.

Vol. VIII. No. 25. *Nec aranearum sane texus ideo melior, quia ex se fila gignunt, nec noster vilior quia ex alienis libamus ut apes.* [No. 25.]

MIRAMICHI, TUESDAY MORNING, FEBRUARY 25, 1854.

THE GLEANER.

PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE.

NEW-BRUNSWICK. February 4.

REPORT OF THE DELEGATES.

According to the order of the day, the Hon. Members lately composing the Deputation from the House of Assembly to the Government at home, this day proceeded to lay before the House an account of their proceedings, as follows:

Mr. SIMONDS, after alluding to the appointment of himself and Mr. Chandler, by the House, last Session, to proceed to London, to lay the Petition of the House before His Majesty's Government, stated, that they had at first proposed to leave St. John about the 1st of June last; but upon considering that they might then arrive in London about the close of the Session of Parliament, and that it might be difficult to obtain the attention of the Colonial Ministers after the termination of a long and arduous session, they agreed to proceed early in May, and accordingly sailed on the 10th of that month. They arrived in London on Saturday, the 15th of June, and took the earliest opportunity of obtaining an audience at the Colonial Office, when they immediately stated the object of their mission fully and explicitly. The hon. Member observed, that he believed that former Dispatches from this Province had been sent home with such a colouring attached to them, as to prevent Ministers from ever arriving at the truth. The Deputation had therefore been sent home to tell the truth, and the whole truth; and he trusted it would be found that they had done so.—On being admitted to an interview with the Under Secretary for the Colonies, a day was appointed for the Deputation to hand in a list of the heads of the particular objects of their mission, which, if agreed to, would prevent the necessity of negotiating on various minor points. They accordingly addressed a letter to this effect to the Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies, the Right Honorable Mr. Stanley, dated 19th June, 1853. This was their first communication, and the most prominent causes of evils detailed in this letter were, the *Crown Land Department*, the *Quit Rents*, and the composition of the *Executive Council*, together with the proposals of the House of Assembly relative to the control of the Crown Revenues and payment of the civil list. After the delivery of this letter, a day was appointed for an interview with the Right Hon. Mr. Stanley, at which interview the Deputation opened to him in detail the subjects entrusted to their care. Mr. Stanley himself commenced the conference, by observing, that he had carefully perused the Petition of the House of Assembly and all the documents accompanying it, and that, in his opinion, the language of the Petition was fully borne out by the evidence appended to it. This opinion, the Right Hon. Secretary stated unequivocally. The Deputation then stated, without reserve, or respect of persons, the real condition of the Province; and in doing so, they adverted to the several points contained in the petition itself. The first thing they alluded to was the subject of the collection of the *Quit Rents*. On this point, Mr. Stanley at once observed, that he had already sent out an order to suspend their collection: and so far, therefore, that matter was satisfactorily answered; but the Deputation still took occasion to explain fully to the Right Hon. Secretary, the nature and the hardship of that measure, and all the evils attendant upon its enforcement. These facts they earnestly pressed upon his attention, and believed that he was fully convinced that the *Quit Rents* were not worthy the consideration of His Majesty, when put in competition with the evils produced by their collection. The second point alluded to was the subject of *Timber and Mill Reserves*. With respect to *Timber Reserves*, the Deputation stated at great length the evils and dissatisfaction caused by them; but the effect of them was so plainly apparent, that they did not feel it necessary to insist so strongly on this point as on some others, as they would have considered it an insult to the understanding of the Right Hon. Secretary, to have urged on so plain a matter. The third subject canvassed was, the attempted sale of *Water Privileges*. The Deputation explained the points in this matter at large, and gave their opinion, that the attempt to sell those privileges was in direct violation of the common law of the land. They also stated, how the attempt bore particularly on the poor people of this country; because the rich both knew how to defend their own rights, and possessed the means of doing so, while the poor were ignorant and unable to go to law for such a purpose. On this account, therefore, the Deputation insisted particularly on this matter; and on this part of the subject Mr. Stanley admitted its great importance, but said that he could not give any opinion on the subject, till he had first consulted the proper officers of the Crown respecting it. The fourth point brought under notice was, the *misapplication of the proceeds of the sale of the Town Plot in Fredericton*. It was not found necessary to enlarge much on this subject, but the Deputation stated generally the impropriety of the Commissioner's laying

his hands on moneys which belonged to the Town of Fredericton; and the Right Hon. Secretary was at once convinced it was a very improper transaction, and that the money must be refunded by the Crown Land Office.—The fifth subject was the *Expenses of the Crown Land Department and the Salary of the Commissioner*. Much conversation passed on this subject, and the Right Hon. Secretary at length acknowledged that the Commissioner's salary was far too high; but he thought as the salary had been so long given, and the Commissioner was now exercising his duties under the pledge of Government to pay him that salary, there would be some hardship in reducing it while he continued to hold the office. The Deputation, however, to ascertain positively the views of Mr. Stanley on this subject, put a direct question to him, in such a way, as to give him to understand, that if the surrender of the *Casual Revenues and Civil List* were proposed, with a continuance of the Commissioner's present salary, there would at once be an end to the negotiation; they therefore plainly asked Mr. Stanley, if he thought such a condition would be insisted on; to which he replied, "By no means; he certainly would not by any means say that it would." That was his reply; and the Deputation therefore entertained no doubt, that the proposal for the payment of the *Civil List* by the Province will include the Commissioner's salary, at a much less rate than he now receives; and that there would be no great difficulty to get over on that ground. The sixth point considered was, that paragraph in the Petition of the House relative to the composition of the *Executive Council*. On this head also the Deputation found it necessary to tell the truth and the whole truth; and they did so. They stated that the measure was exceedingly unpopular throughout the Province; and not so much on account of the principle, as on account of the persons appointed to that Council. They stated to Mr. Stanley that those persons did not possess the confidence of the country; they pointed out the serious evils likely to result from such a state of things, because, of the Members of the Executive Council did not possess the confidence of the country, even a good measure, emanating from them, would always be looked upon with suspicion.—They also stated, (and he, [Mr. S.] believed, with truth,) that one consequence of this change in the constitution of the country was, that it had had the effect of making his Excellency the Lieut. Governor unpopular in the Province, and he (Mr. S.) believed that it had had the effect. The Deputation stated it as their perfectly decided opinion, that his Excellency came out to this country with no other motive, than to do for it all the good in his power; they were satisfied that was his intention; but if he acted under the advice of a Council, having different views and motives, although his own intentions might be good, his measures could not be beneficial. His Excellency's administration had not, for this reason, so far, been satisfactory to the country. The Deputation had stated their views in an unreserved and faithful manner; if they had gone too far, it was in the desire to state the whole truth; but he (Mr. S.) did not think they had gone too far, but, on the contrary, that their statements would be corroborated by the whole Province. They had asserted that it was unfortunate that such a state of things existed, because where any doubt or suspicion rested on the minds of the people, it could not be expected that the proceedings of the Legislature would be conducted with that harmony between the various branches which was requisite, and the interests of the Province must therefore suffer by the collision. These observations seemed to strike Mr. Stanley as entitled to much consideration; but he felt a difficulty in interfering with a regulation so very recently established, without some further proof of practical inconvenience arising from it.—The seventh point discussed was the *Collection and Expenditure of the Crown Revenues*.—On this head they enlarged greatly on the great and improper expenditure in the collection of those Revenues, and particularly on the constant refusal of the Executive Government to furnish the House with detailed accounts. The refusal, they maintained, was of itself enough to create suspicion; and it was therefore natural to infer that all was not right, because, if otherwise, there could have been no possible motive for refusing or concealing those accounts; on the contrary, if all had been fair and proper, it would have been the first wish of the Executive to lay the accounts in detail before the House. This refusal, they insisted, was in direct violation of the former dispatch of Lord Goderich on the subject; and at length Mr. Stanley replied, that he should give directions to his Excellency, to lay those accounts, in detail, before the House, which would remove the chief grievance in that respect. The Right Hon. Secretary seemed to consider that there were various grievances, but that the withholding those accounts was the chief; and so the Deputation also considered. Mr. Stanley also promised to give his early attention to this subject. These were the principal points alluded to in the Petition of the House; and entrusted to the Deputation for negotiation; but many other observations were made by them to the Right Hon. Secretary, as to the general condition of the Province, particularly by stating, in an unreserved manner, the opinions expressed by the House last Session,

and the absolute necessity of some change, without which, they alleged, there could not be any harmony between the various branches of the Provincial Legislature; and they urged that an early attention might be given to the subject, by His Majesty's Government, in order that the views of the Government at Home might be ascertained before the next meeting of the Legislature. On the whole, the Deputation considered the interview with Mr. Stanley very satisfactory indeed. He seemed much inclined to listen to all they had to say, and to ascertain the real facts of the case. They assured him that they came there, not appointed by any party, but by the unanimous voice of the whole country; that the whole country complained of the conduct of a few individuals in office, and had deputed them to represent the facts; and that circumstance gave their representations great weight in the mind of the Right Hon. Secretary. So far, then, with regard to the Petition to His Majesty; but there were several other matters which the Deputation had in charge, to bring before the notice of His Majesty's Government. These subjects were not included among those, to which they were instructed to require immediate answers; but they were merely to bring them under the notice of His Majesty's Ministers, and leave them for their consideration. The hon. member then enumerated them in the following order, and read the various letters addressed by the Deputation to Mr. Stanley on those subjects: 1. *The Post Office Department*;—2. *The collision between the Officers of the Custom House and the Provincial Treasury*;—3. *The Tea Trade*;—4. *The Parliamentary duties on Wine, Molasses, Coffee, and Pimento*;—5. *The Duty on British Manufactures*;—6. *The alteration of the Charter of King's College*. On each of these subjects, the Deputation addressed a letter to the Right Hon. Secretary.—With respect to the last mentioned subject, they had thought it best to prepare a written statement to hand to the Colonial Secretary, of which statement they had sent a copy to his Excellency, the Chancellor of the College, before sailing from this Province, so as to convince the College Council that they should propose nothing of which they had not first given them notice. There only remained to notice the subject of the *Imperial Duties on Wheat Flour imported, and the Militia System*. With regard to the former of these, the Deputation ascertained, through the Agents of the Province, that the whole of the Flour duties were under the consideration of the Board of Trade, with reference to all the North American Colonies; but that the Board would never consent to make any alteration in favour only of any one Colony; therefore the Deputation had not thought it necessary to address any representation on that subject to the Colonial Secretary, because, if any alteration should be made in those duties, this Province would have the benefit of it in common with the other Colonies. As to the *Militia System*, they had a long conversation on that subject with the Under Secretary, Mr. Hay, and had stated fully the evil effects of the present system, and urged the inexpediency of continuing it. The Under Secretary, however, seemed to think it very important to keep up the Militia System, because, he said, it might be probable, that at some future day the Province would have to depend entirely on its own Militia for defence. The Deputation replied that if such were to be the case, the Provincial Government could easily call out the whole Militia force and encamp them, and with fourteen days constant drill would make them far better soldiers than they ever could be made under the present system. The Secretary seemed convinced that such would be the better plan; and he was then asked, whether, if soldiers of the regular army were to lie by a greater part of the year, and to be called out for Drill only three days in each year, they would be found good soldiers when required? He admitted at once that they would not; and at last observed, that it was principally a matter of importance to the Colonies themselves, and as they had the regulation of it in their own hands, it should be left entirely with the Legislature of the Province, so that, if they thought the present system useless or unnecessary, they might reject it; although, in his own opinion he thought it should be kept up.—The subject was then dropped. From the 25th June to the 10th August, the Deputation called frequently at the Colonial Office, and urged the consideration of the business referred to them, stating the great importance of terminating it before the next meeting of the Legislature, in order to allay the great excitement caused in the Province and House of Assembly by the subjects under consideration. About the 29th July, the Deputation were informed, that Mr. Stanley, previous to the sailing of the August packet, would communicate with them, and the Under Secretary stated, that he hoped the communication would be satisfactory. Accordingly, on Saturday, the 10th August they received a document containing the substance of a dispatch from the Right Hon. Secretary, to his Excellency the Lieut. Governor of this Province, touching on all the subjects alluded to by the Deputation. [The hon. member here read the document which was a very long one.] With respect to *Reserves* complained of, the Deputation stated fully to the Colonial Secretary the nature and evil consequences of the *Timber reserves*; but as to the *Mill reserves*, they were not so fully