

THE GLEANER:

AND NORTHUMBERLAND, KENT, GLOUCESTER AND RESTIGOUCHE

COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURAL JOURNAL.

171

OLD SERIES] *Nec araneasum, sane textus ideo melior, quia ex se fila gignunt, nec noster vilior quia ex alienis libamus ut apes.* [COMPRISED 13 VOLUMES.

NEW SERIES, VOL. IV.] MIRAMICHI, TUESDAY EVENING, MARCH 16, 1847. [NUMBER 23.

The Politician.

The Colonial Press.

From the Loyalist.

HINTS FOR ECONOMISTS.

The constant palaver going on in the House of Assembly about economy and the discussions by the hour upon petty grants of ten pounds each, is really sickening; the tenacity with which honourable members cling to their own pay, perquisites, and contingencies, is but little in accordance with their professions, and as they are constantly lamenting that claims are brought up year after year until carried by dint of perseverance, and petitions upon petitions received upon subjects, many of them of the most ludicrous and unparliamentary nature; —as the house complain of this, and very justly too, and express a desire to economize, we shall test their sincerity by proposing a scheme of an extensive nature (for it is not by small means that great ends can be effected) and place them in such a position that their constituents will hold them responsible if they refuse to adopt it.

Under the present system it is well known that the house of Assembly receives bills and petitions for five weeks after the opening of the session, and that during these five weeks scarcely one measure of importance is passed. When the limited period has expired (not so strictly limited but that it may be broken in upon by the suspension of the rule) those petitions are referred to the various select committees to report thereon. These committees have to investigate the matter contained in the allegations of the said petitions, which is the work of time and labour; besides, a member may be on eight or ten committees at once, and scarcely one of them but is on three or four, consequently they cannot all sit at once, but must wait one for another. This being the case, it is near the close of the session before some of the committees report, and thus measures of the utmost importance are left to be hurriedly disposed of in a thin house, or (which frequently happens) be postponed indefinitely, or until the next session! Instead of this practice we would recommend that a paid executive should make all necessary investigations, avail themselves of the vast resources of information in their possession, prepare general measures during the recess, bring down their budget at the opening of the session, and at once put the Representatives — by a simple statement of facts, and bills and theories founded thereon — in possession of the best mode of carrying on government for the benefit of the people, in a day or two, than they can possibly obtain under the present practice up to the close of the session. — Let this system be adopted and it must be evident that the labours of the House of Assembly will be diminished nearly one half, and also the duration of the session, for instead of waiting for committees to report, the house would immediately commence business.

The next change we would propose, is to sweep from the Hall of Assembly every vestige of parochial legislation, with its huge piles of petitions, its committees, and the pressure from without. Let this business be transferred to the respective county sessions, by a general law, and not only would about one third of the labour and time of the house be saved thereby, but business would be much better done, every county being much better qualified to attend to their own affairs than are the members of the Assembly, where upon those matters the majority of them being strangers to the parties petitioning, and ignorant of the merits of the case, are generally led by the Representatives of the county, who perhaps are interested.

The first of these changes having been adopted (viz: the initiation of money grants being placed in the hands of the Executive) would necessarily involve the consolidation of the Revenue Department.

ment. Upon this subject we shall not be prepared to enter minutely until after the close of the session, but by reference to the Journals of last year we find that the collection of the Provincial Revenue cost the sum of £3,315 16s 6d., the appropriations being as follows:

For protecting the Revenue,	£1800 0 0
Salary of Province Treasurer,	600 0 0
Salary of Mr Whiteside, Ty. Clerk,	200 0 0
Salary of sub-collector and Deputy Treasurer at Woodstock,	160 0 0
Messenger or Tide Waiter in the Treasurer's Office,	91 5 0
John Abrams, T. Waiter, St. John,	91 5 0
Rent, &c., of the Treasury Office,	200 0 0
Treasurer's Contingencies, including stationary,	101 18 0
Tide Waiter at Miramichi,	60 0 0
Tide Waiter at Dalhousie,	30 0 0
T. Moses, Deputy Treasurer at West Isles,	25 0 0
Dino for gauging and weighing,	1 6 0
Tide Surveyor, Shippigan & Carleton Place,	22 10 0
Tide Surveyor, Bathurst,	22 10 0
Sub-Collector, Shediac,	50 0 0
B. C. Chaloner, for gauging and weighing,	100 0 0
W. Carman, do. Northumberland,	10 0 0
D. W. Jack, do. St. Andrews,	6 8 0
S. Napier, do. Bathurst,	3 14 6
Total	£3,315 16 6

As the officers of the customs are well paid, and as the consolidation of the Revenue Departments, by an act predicated upon the British Possession Bill, would altogether supersede the appointment of these officers by the imperial government we take it for granted (without going into details) that the revenue could be collected for the amount paid the said officers of customs, and therefore the above sum of £3,315 16s 6d., would be saved.

We now come to another important change, involving a serious reduction. There are now thirty nine Representatives in the house, each of whom receives fifteen shillings per diem. The last session sat eleven weeks, and there is no probability that this session will be shorter, add three days on the average to cover travelling expenses, each member will receive eighty days' pay, — sixty pounds. This sum multiplied by 35 gives us \$2340! The whole of this sum we would save to the province by abolishing the anti-British principle of paying legislators. Surely thirty nine men could be found in this province, able and willing to represent the people in the Assembly five weeks in the year (for the measures we have already pointed out would shorten the session to that period) for the sake of the honor and power. Under the paying system we see candidates quarrelling who shall be returned, and the people also quarrelling in their behalf, large sums of money expended for the purpose, scrutinies held, &c. If obliged to work without pay there would, perhaps be less of this strife, and indirect bribery, and at the same time we should have a class of men offering as candidates who are now deterred for fear of having both coats and characters torn off their backs in the general scramble.

If it should be urged that this would throw the representation into the hands of an "aristocracy of wealth," we might retort by stating that a large proportion of the present house are but mere adventurers, who have been returned by the money and influence of a few powerful mercantile firms. But if thirty nine men cannot be found in this province rich enough to spend five weeks in the year without remuneration, let the representation be reduced one half; surely twenty such men can be found. — This measure if carried, would also lead to the abolition of pay to the members of the Legislative Council. Each member of that house receives one pound per diem, by law. The act we believe expires in 1850, and it should not be renewed. There are sixteen members in the legislative council, therefore the sum paid them at eighty pounds each, amounts to £1280; making an aggregate for both houses of three thousand six hundred and

Having made but a hurried research, it is possible that we have omitted a few important items.

twenty pounds, which by this measure would be saved to the province.

Another important reduction we would make is in the public printing. By reference to last year's Journals we find the following sums granted to the Queen's printer, viz:

Towards printing Daily Journals,	£275 0 0
Ditto Ditto	150 0 0
Printing the Province Laws,	150 0 0
To balance on printing Journals, publishing the Royal Gazette, and advertising in Royal Gazette,	1258 8 2
Total	£1,833 8 2

How the amount under the last entry was proportioned we have no means of ascertaining, as there are no details set forth on the Journals; we shall therefore assume (for the purpose of arriving at a conclusion) that one half the amount was for printing Journals, and the other half was for publishing the Royal Gazette, and for advertising. If we assume this, the total amount for printing the Journals will be £1054 5s 1d. At present five hundred copies of the Journals are struck off; put this large number only affords the members an opportunity of practicing *Javouiteism*; 200 copies would be quite sufficient to print for the legislature, and if the people want them let them subscribe for them. By thus reducing the number of copies probably one-fourth of the expenses would be saved, and then by taking five weeks as the length of the session instead of eleven, and paying accordingly, the cost of printing the Journals would be reduced from £1054 5s 1d. to £359 7s 9 1-2d! All the parish acts being swept off, as before stated, the bulk of the annual statute book would be reduced fully one third, and thus instead of a hundred and fifty pounds, one hundred only would be required for that service. As to the publication of the Royal Gazette the government should insist upon every magistrate and public officer in the province taking a copy and paying for it; this would give a circulation of from four to five hundred copies, which at the high price of twenty shillings and no bad debts, would prove ample remuneration without legislative aid. As many advertisements must by law be published in the Royal Gazette, and are of course paid for; one hundred pounds per annum to cover the expense of government advertisements would be quite sufficient. Thus would the expense of public printing be reduced to £559 7s 9 1-2d, and a saving of £1274 0 1-2 be effected. If it should be urged that we have set it down at too low a figure, we reply that if the present incumbent should decline entering into the arrangements it would not be difficult to find others ready to undertake it.

As the Executive would take the initiative into their own hands, under the system proposed, the accounts would be brought down to the house so thoroughly audited that a committee to audit them again would be unnecessary, and this would the office of a chairman of the committee on public accounts be abolished, and a hundred pounds a year saved. — The contingencies last year amounted to £2,222 1s 9d. Now surely one pound per week for each member should be sufficient to cover their contingent expenses. At this rate the aggregate for fifty five members (including both houses) for the session of five weeks would be £275, to this add £37 19s, each for two extra clerks for the lower house, £75, making altogether £387. Here again, then we should effect a saving of £1,872 1s 9d. The amount paid for postage last session was £342 16s 9d. For this service we would allow to each of the fifty five members ten shillings per week, this in the aggregate would amount to £137 10s, effecting a saving of £205 6s 9d. There are at present two sleighs employed in attendance, at twenty shillings a day each, amounting for the session to £154. We should confer a boon upon honourable members by abolishing this item of expense altogether, and make them walk for the benefit of their health. — There are now a

doorkeeper to each house at ten shillings a day each, and three messengers for each house at seven shillings and six pence a day each. We would not reduce their daily wages, but the session being reduced from eleven to five weeks in duration, that would of course, very much reduce the amount; moreover these messengers being chiefly employed in sealing and directing journals, we would leave hon. members to discharge that service themselves, and then one messenger for each house would be quite sufficient. As the duration of the session would be reduced more than one half, of course the salaries of the clerks, and the Speaker of the Assembly, the Chaplain and the Master in Chancery, would bear reducing one half. We would make no reduction in the salary of the Librarian, whose services are required the year round; and in consequence of the age and past services of the president of the legislative council, we would make no reduction in the salary attached to his office until his retirement. — We would still allow the sergeant at arms, respectively, 15s. per day; their salaries would be reduced in proportion to the shortness of the session.

We proposed at the outset a paid Executive. We would not hamper the governor by any rule, but he should be permitted to select his council wherever he chose; as might be found convenient, however, to have the aid of some of the heads of Departments, we will presume that — as an average — two of them would be constantly in the government. To these we would give no additional salary, but the other six (presuming eight to be the full number) should receive a salary respectively, of £250 per annum. We fix upon this amount, presuming that government affairs will occupy their attention about half of their time, for which we consider £250 each a fair remuneration.

Having thus laid down our proposition, let us see the result. The following is the annual cost of legislation under the present system, exclusive of the salary of the President of the Council, in which we propose no reduction; and including the charge for publishing the Royal Gazette, which we are unable to separate from the charges for printing the Journals: —

Queen's Printer,	£1833 8 2
Members' Pay, (Assembly),	2340 0 0
Members' Pay, (L. Council),	1280 0 0
Contingencies,	2222 1 9
Two Clerks, at £200 each,	400 0 0
Two assistant do. at £100 each,	200 0 0
Postage,	342 16 9
Six Messengers, at 7s 6d per day,	173 5 0
Two Doorkeepers at 10s per day,	77 0 0
Two Stages at 20s per day,	154 0 0
Speaker,	150 0 0
Chairman of the committee on Public Accounts,	100 0 0
Two Sergeants at Arms, at 15s per day,	115 10 0
Librarian,	75 0 0
Master in Chancery,	40 0 0
Two Chaplains, at £20 each,	40 0 0
Total	£9,513 1 8

<i>Cost of Legislation under the proposed plan.</i>	
Queen's Printer,	£559 7 1-2
Contingencies,	350 0 0
Two Clerks at £100 each,	200 0 0
Two Assistant do. at £50 each,	100 0 0
Postage,	137 10 0
Two Messengers, five weeks, at 7s 6d per day,	26 5 0
Two Doorkeepers, do. at 10s do.	35 0 0
Speaker,	75 0 0
Two Sergeants at Arms, 15s do.	52 10 0
Librarian,	75 0 0
Master in Chancery,	20 0 0
Two Chaplains at £10	20 0 0
Six Ex. Councillors at £250,	1500 0 0
Total	£3,150 12 9 1-2
Less than present expense,	£6,362 8 10 1-2
Saving effected by consolidation of Revenue,	3,315 16 6
Total saving by the proposed change,	£9,708 5 4 1-2

Thus then — although in the midst of the Legislative session, and our time occupied in reporting the proceedings — we are enabled to shew, in a manner which we hope will prove satisfactory to the country, that it rests with the House of