

Editor's Department.

MIRAMICHI:

CHATHAM, MONDAY, APRIL 22, 1856.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE LEGISLATURE.—The proceedings of this body, as is usual with them, when drawing to the close of their official existence, are growing more interesting, and members are beginning to exhibit some signs of vitality. Conceiving that our readers in this quarter are desirous of ascertaining the opinions of their Representatives on several matters of vital importance to this Colony, we have published their remarks on the Fishery Bill; and shall next week collect their speeches on the debates which have occurred from time to time, on the state of the Province.

We are apprehensive that on this subject there has been a good deal said and done for effect, only. We cannot believe that Mr Partelow seriously entertains an opinion that the British Government will be induced to embark in the Railway project; and we are fearful that his Resolutions were merely introduced to exhibit a feeling in favor of this great national undertaking, knowing it was popular, while he entertains not the slightest hope or prospect that it would have any effect on the Government, or forward the undertaking.

The subject of a reduction of the salaries of our officials, has been again brought under the consideration of the House, and two or three scales introduced. We shall patiently wait their decision on this momentous question, and sincerely hope it will end in something more beneficial than previous resolutions of a similar character.

The petition from this quarter, praying for an Act of Incorporation for the Canada, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia Railroad Company, was presented on the 15th instant, by Mr Rankin. After some discussion, the Bill was passed.

The Editor of the Morning News asks the following pertinent question:—“By the way, has Mr Ritchie ever had an insight of the way the £13,500, remuneration by the British Government, for sick and disabled Emigrants cast upon our shores, have been disposed of?”

QUEBEC AND HALIFAX RAILWAY.—The Halifax Colonist reports that a meeting was held at Truro on the 1st inst., to take into consideration this important matter, at which a Committee was appointed to mature and recommend some scheme for the promotion of the interests of the Railway. At a subsequent meeting, a long statement was submitted for consideration, when the following resolutions were unanimously adopted:—

Resolved—1st That it is incumbent on the counties more immediately to be benefited by the railway, to make the most strenuous efforts to promote the enterprise; and with that view they ought to assume a responsibility commensurate with the advantages they would receive from the success of the undertaking.

2dly. This Committee think that the Counties in this Province traversed by or bordering on, the railway, ought to assume a responsibility equal to that assigned them in the above sketch; and they feel satisfied that if this were done, and the sincerity of their wish to promote the enterprise thus evinced, the necessary capital to complete the road would immediately be raised.

3dly. That this committee are of opinion that much good might be done by bringing their views before the various counties, and think it would be well to make them public by a communication in the public press.

The statement alluded to above, we shall publish next week. It is satisfactory to perceive that the people of the Colonies are beginning to see the necessity of taking this important matter into their own hands. We feel satisfied from what has recently transpired, that there is no prospect of the Home Government embarking in the enterprise; but we think if the Colonies would take the matter up with spirit, organise Companies, and obtain from the respective Legislatures the

same guarantees respecting the interest of monies invested, and Grants of Lands, which were promised to the parent government, that means could be procured in Britain and elsewhere, to build the railroad. The House of Assembly of this Province it will be seen, has passed the Bill for the incorporation of the Canada, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick Railroad Company. We trust, however, they will not rest here, but that they will by Resolution, or in some other way, shew themselves as willing to encourage this company to embark in the enterprise, as they did the British Government. If they do, we have sanguine hopes of the ultimate success of the measure.

THE SEASON.—The weather with us continues very unseasonable. We have not had any rain, and the snow is consequently but slowly disappearing, while no apprehension is yet entertained respecting the safety of travelling on the river. The Novascotia and United States papers also speak of the backwardness of the season. On Friday and Saturday week, a snow storm visited New York, which was the heaviest that has been experienced there for twenty years in the month of April. The average fall was from six to eight inches.

WEBSTER'S TRIAL.—We copy to-day the Charge of the Chief Justice Shaw to the Jury. On this exciting subject, the Morning News of Wednesday furnishes the following paragraphs:

A FLAW IN THE WEBSTER TRIAL.—We understand that an able Massachusetts Lawyer is about to publish an argument to show that Dr Webster was not allowed his legal rights in regard to the constitution of the jury which tried him; and the court proceeded illegally in rejecting three jurors from the panel on account of their sentiments on capital punishment; and that any prisoner has a right to a choice by lot of impartial men, irrespective of their opinions on punishment. From the arguments that have heretofore proceeded from this gentleman's pen, we are sure he will make a shaking among the dry bones of the law.

We presume that the able lawyer alluded to is Daniel Webster. If true, then well may it be said, “a second Daniel Webster came to judgment.”

The family of Professor Webster have petitioned Governor Briggs for a commutation of punishment. Littlefield has received the \$3000 reward, by the Parkman family, for discovering the remains of the doctor.

NOVASCOTIA.—A public meeting was held in Halifax on the 12th instant, to consider the best means of forwarding the Halifax and Windsor Railroad. The large hall in the new temperance building, it is reported, was crowded, and the greatest harmony prevailed. The High Sheriff presided, and L. Shannon, Esq., acted as Secretary. The following Resolutions were put and adopted:—

The hon Provincial Secretary after addressing the chair at some length, moved the following resolutions, viz:

Whereas the following Resolution has been adopted by both branches of the Legislature of this Province, viz.—Whereas the construction of a Railroad between Halifax and Windsor would stimulate the industry, develop the resources, and elevate the character of the Province:—therefore,

Resolved, That whenever a company shall be formed for the construction of such Railroad, the Executive Government shall be, and is authorised, to subscribe for one half the necessary stock, under such guards as may appear to the Governor in Council judicious, or as may be hereafter prescribed by the Legislature. Now, therefore Resolved, that it is expedient that a company be formed for the purpose of raising one half of the stock necessary for the construction of such Railroad.

Which having been seconded by the hon. Attorney General, in a short address, was put by the Chairman to the Meeting, and passed unanimously.

The hon. J. W. Johnston then proceeded to address the Chair, and moved the following Resolution:—

Resolved, That a Provisional Committee be appointed to open subscription lists for the stock in the Railway—that the shares be five pounds each—and that subscribers shall not be required to make any payment on account of their subscriptions until all necessary arrangements for such Company are made agreeably to the Resolution of the Legislature.

Which, having been seconded by Jonathan C. Allison, Esq., was put to the meeting and passed unanimously.

A Resolution then passed appointing

forty six gentlemen as a provisional committee to carry out the object of the meeting.

The Sun of the 17th instant reports that a requisition to his Worship the Mayor, to call a public meeting of the citizens to consider to what amount of stock in the Halifax and Windsor Railroad the corporate body should pledge itself, was forwarded yesterday by the Chairman of the Provisional Committee.

In speaking of the weather, the Halifax Sun of the 15th inst. says:—

On Thursday night, ice to the thickness of more than an inch, made over nearly the entire surface of Bedford Basin. The Thermometer from one o'clock until after sunrise, stood but a little above 0. On Friday there were indications of a change, and on Saturday, after a hoar frost, the wind veered to the south, prognosticating rain.

GASPE.—The Gazette furnishes the following paragraphs on a subject to which the editor has devoted considerable space—a steam communication between that district and Quebec:

This subject still excites considerable attention, and we are happy to hear from Gaspe Basin that the subscription lists are filling up, upwards of £700 having been taken in shares and more expected.

The inhabitants of this district are deeply interested in the success of this undertaking. It is likely that important political changes will be made in our foreign arrangements respecting Colonial productions. These changes it is hoped will be beneficial to the country, but without quick conveyance with the principal Canadian Markets, Gaspe will but in a small degree participate. Until, however, we are able to accomplish this enterprise ourselves, in justice we are bound to patronise the undertaking of Messrs Gooderham & Worts, of Toronto. We hope, therefore, our mercantile friends will give direction to their agents in Halifax to ship on board the Western Miller their spring supplies for the Bay.

The same paper of the 11th instant, contains the following paragraphs:—

We have received a letter from the owner of the steamer St George, intimating that if sufficient encouragement should be given, that vessel will run between Quebec and intermediate ports in Gaspe, during the next summer. In consequence of the correspondence above alluded to, having only reached our office on last Monday, we have not been able to answer it this mail, but have written on to Gaspe respecting what accommodation, &c.

We would recommend some of our readers to avail themselves of the steam communication now offered to the head of the lake, by sending up a few barrels of our Bay Herrings, in good order. It would be much better to try the Toronto and Kingston markets, than use the fish as manure, which, shameful to say, is very frequently the case.

CAUTION.—We are informed that there is a good deal of spurious coin in circulation, particularly pistereens and smooth shillings. The public had better be on their guard.

The Fredericton Mail.

The only papers from Fredericton which came to hand by this mail, were the Head Quarters of Wednesday, and the Royal Gazette.

The first-named contains the report of a lengthy debate which took place on the motion of Dr. Wilson—that the House go into committee of the whole in further consideration of a Bill to incorporate the Canada, New Brunswick, and Novascotia Railway Company. The measure was warmly advocated by that gentleman, and Messrs. Rankin, Street and Carman. The three first named gentlemen spoke at considerable length on the subject. It was strenuously opposed by Messrs. Partelow and Ritchie, but passed with some amendments.

On motion of Mr. Partelow it was unanimously Resolved, that the Members of the Assembly “go into Mourning for the Hon. Hugh Johnston during the remainder of the session.”

While the House was in Committee of Supply on Monday, Mr. Carman moved that the sum of £139 be granted to the Justices of this County, to reimburse a Committee of Sessions for losses sustained in the performance of their duty, “connected with diseased Emigrants which arrived at Miramichi in the ship Loosh-tauk, in 1847.” The grant was strongly supported by Messrs. Carman, Street and End. The opponents all freely admitted that the case was an extreme hard one, and without assigning any good reason, refused the grant.

Messrs. Williston and Letson, the par-

ties alluded to above, laid their case before the Grand Jury of this County, at the January term of the Inferior Court, and that body seeing the hardship of the case, and being unanimous in their opinion that they were unfairly dealt by, strongly recommended the Sessions to make some provision to relieve them from the heavy responsibilities they had subjected themselves to, while acting under instructions received from that body. The Sessions, we believe, took no action on that recommendation, as well as of several others brought forward for their consideration by the Grand Inquest of the County. They then appealed to the Legislature, but their efforts have been unavailing.

We believe this Province has a surplus of the money voted by the Imperial Parliament, for defraying the expenses incurred in providing for destitute Emigrants landed on our shores during the year 1847. If Messrs. Williston and Letson follow our advice, they will at once lay their case before the British Government, who, we feel satisfied, will listen to their complaint, and order their just demands to be liquidated out of this fund.

We understand that the Master of the Rolls has been heard at the bar of the house, respecting the contemplated reduction in his salary.

The Head Quarters contains the following Legislative summary.

On Saturday morning the hon. Mr Rankin moved for leave to place on the Supply Book a grant of sixty pounds for a Temperance Hall, with a school underneath, in the town of Chatham, which grant had been rejected by the casting vote of the chairman on a previous day. After some discussion leave was refused—yeas 12, nays 14.

The same hon. member made a like motion for leave to enter a grant of £100, for the Mechanics' Institute, of Newcastle, which was refused by the same majority.

The House went into committee of the whole in further consideration of a bill to prevent the destruction of Moose within this Province. After a good deal of discussion the Bill was agreed to as amended. By this bill all persons are prohibited from killing moose between the 1st of February, and the 1st of May, under severe penalties.

The House went into committee of the whole on a Bill regulating the manner of disposing of the different kinds of grain, by adopting weight as the standard, instead of measure, as formerly. The Bill was introduced by the Hon. Mr Rankin and passed the committee without much opposition.

The House went into Committee of Supply, and passed a number of grants without much debate, until the grant to the Adjutant General of Militia came up, when the committee resisted every motion for every sum mentioned, and finally rose without agreeing upon anything. The committee divided nine times, and twice refused to negative the resolution.

The Bill amending the acts for incorporating the city of Fredericton was thrown out in the Legislative Council yesterday.

FREE PORTS.—The Gazette contains the following Proclamation:—

By virtue of the power and authority in me vested, I hereby make Proclamation to all whom it may concern, that I have, by and with the advice and consent of the Executive Council, opened and declared the following Ports to be Free Ports, viz:

- Dorchester, Dalhousie,
- Richibucto, Bathurst,
- Campo Bello, Caraquette,
- Saint Stephen, Shediac,
- Saint George—Magaguadavic,

and the same are hereby constituted and appointed Free Ports for the admission of Foreign as well as British and Colonial Shipping and Goods, under the Act or Acts of Parliament in such case made or to be made and provided, and subject to the Regulations established by the Imperial Customs in that behalf.

PROVINCIAL APPOINTMENT.

Robert Douglas, to be Local Deputy for the sale of Crown Lands, in the Parishes of Dundas and Wellington, in the County of Kent.

CANADA.—The papers from this quarter speak of heavy freshets, and great loss of property in consequence. We make a few selections from the papers.

Sir George Simpson has addressed a letter to the Montreal Pilot, contradicting the report relative to the safety of Sir John Franklin.

The Canada Gazette contains the Governor-General's proclamation, summoning the Legislature to meet for the despatch of business on the 14th May.

The Toronto Globe says—that it is impossible to estimate the amount of damage which has likely been done over the country by the great freshets, but it will no doubt prove to be very large, including in the ruins, mills, houses, factories, &c.

Deaths.

At his residence in the Upper Village, on the 15th inst. after a protracted illness, which he bore with christian fortitude, AMBROSE S. CARMAN, Esq. leaving a wife and four children to lament their loss.—Woodstock pa.