

their own, though they maintain great secrecy on the subject. From the few specimens he obtained, he thinks it similar to that spoken by the Turkish gypsies. It is altogether a curious circumstance in the history of the human race, that so many thousands of them should have overspread the leading nations of the world, and yet so much uncertainty as to their real origin prevail. No wonder, then, historians and philologists should be so much puzzled with what they suppose to be the first great migration westwards of the human family, when, so late as the fifteenth century, we find such difficulty in tracing the movement, over nearly the same ground, by a people so distinct in feature and habits as the tribes called Bohemians in France, Gitanos in Spain, Zingari in Italy, Heilders in Holland, Gypsies in Britain, &c. The boldness with which they have pushed themselves into every land is only equalled by their firmness in maintaining their ground, in defiance of all the edicts that have been from time issued against them. Strong edicts were issued in England during the reigns of Henry VIII. and Elizabeth, to accomplish their extirpation; the first of these being enacted in 1530. From France they were legally banished in 1559; and from Spain in 1591. Still they outlived all these fulminations, and in several European countries are this day more numerous than ever they were. Maria Theresa ordered those in her states to be instructed in agriculture, with a view of their permanent settlement; but her endeavors were not very successful. In Hungary and Transylvania, however, as well as in Britain, many of them follow some regular occupation. It is difficult to conceive how a people, naturally intellectual and clever, as the gypsies decidedly are, should have lost all traces of their origin or ancestry, unless there had been a studious silence maintained on the subject by the early migrants. If they were, as seems probable, one of the lowest castes of India, there might be some reason for concealing the fact, lest it should add to the rough treatment they were likely to receive at the hands of strangers.

The Politician.

The Colonial Press.

From the St. John Courier, February 2.
MEETING OF THE LEGISLATURE.

The Provincial Legislature will meet on Thursday next, for the despatch of business; and as many have been somewhat credulous as to any despatch that has been hitherto used in getting through with the public business by the House of Assembly, we trust that the coming session will prove an exception to the general rule, and that such practical measures will be brought forward by the Government as will tend to the public good, and with a view to stern retrenchment and prudent economy.

The Public Acts, as we stated some weeks ago, will be considerably revised, condensed, and improved—His Honor the Attorney General having been occupied during the recess in this part of the business. We are also happy to hear it reported that the Executive will submit a proposition to the House for the initiation of Money Grants. It is to be hoped that they will succeed in this, as it is of the greatest consequence that the Government should be enabled to come down to the House with their Budget prepared, shewing the revenue and the proposed method of expenditure. If their measures are not satisfactory to a majority of the Representative branch, they will then have to adopt the usual course on such occasions, viz: make room for others who will be able to carry out their propositions. The present desultory system of granting money at the instance of members, giving ground for the belief that these parties succeed in getting the most money who possess the greatest amount of influence in the House: the initiation of money grants by the Executive would, we conceive, remove the cause of complaint to a considerable extent.

The Road system is also much in want of improvement; for although the roads throughout the Province are good, when we take into consideration that they are of such recent formation, and might stand an advantageous comparison with those in many parts of the United States, which have been much longer settled; still the system of granting money to be expended by local commissioners, has given rise to numerous complaints throughout the country, and to the belief that a great portion of the money so granted never finds its way to the object for which it was intended; and that the power vested in the Members of the House of Assembly, of granting money for this purpose, has been turned to account by them for electioneering purposes in their respective districts. It is true that our roads could not have been in such an improved state as they are at present, neither could we have had so many small bye-roads leading into the interior, where the settlers are too poor to do much themselves towards making them, unless roads had been made and improved from the public funds; but we should like to see some better system introduced of expending the money, and examining and superintending the work, either by a Government Road Surveyor for the whole Province, or a Board of Works; when the estimates for this service would be made up by either of these parties, and laid before the House as a Government measure, without reference to the numerous petitions from the districts interested, and the craving applications of members, which take up so much time in the Assembly, and which, of course, in-

crease the expenses of legislation, that must be borne by the country.

Education, too, should receive more serious consideration than hitherto, as on it much of the future welfare and prosperity of the Province depends. The general arrangements connected with this subject are not open to much serious objection, with the exception of the manner in which the Schoolmasters are supported—the salaries paid them being altogether inadequate to secure the services of such men as are likely to benefit the rising generation to a great extent. It has been found that where the Schoolmaster has passed, after examination, from a lower to a higher class, and consequently received an additional allowance, the parents have very frequently paid so much less towards the support of the Schoolmaster, on account of his having got this increase of salary from the Government. The remedy for this would be to adopt the system in practice in many parts of the United States, and which has been found to work extremely well, viz: that each Parish should be taxed separately for the support of its Schools, and a liberal salary allowed to properly qualified teachers, without requiring them to board for a week at a time from house to house. The benefits attending this system are numerous—the principal one being that the tax payers find that they have to pay for the education of their children, would be determined to derive the advantage of it, and send their children to school, instead of keeping them away, as at present, for the most trifling purposes. The parties paying would also see that proper persons were appointed as teachers. We are happy to state that the Attorney General takes a deep interest in this subject, and has recently inspected some of the Schools in the United States supported on this principle, and which he found to be admirably conducted.

In connection with the subject of Education, we may mention King's College, as not at all suited to the presents of the country, and which is supported at a heavy expense to the Province. Although the institution is well conducted, and is presided over by very able Professors, still it is evident, from the very limited number of students in attendance, that it is not taken advantage of by the people at large, and the benefits attending it are not any thing like commensurate with its heavy expense. We have heard it remarked by persons of veracity, that the expense attending the education of each of the students at the College has been at least £200 per annum. Such an outlay is altogether too high for a poor country like this. It will be argued by some that the college has a Royal Charter, and cannot therefore be altered; but it must be remembered that concessions have already been made; and we are inclined to the belief that the Home Government will acquiesce in any further modifications that may be asked for by the Assembly in this or any other matter connected with the local affairs of the Province.

Agriculture, also, should receive some attention at the hands of our law-makers, as it is a subject of the deepest importance to the permanent interests of the Province, it being evident that the lumbering trade cannot, to any great extent, be depended on for the future as a source of wealth. The engagement of Professor Johnston, to ascertain the agricultural capabilities of the country, was certainly a move in the right direction, and will no doubt tend to give an impetus to this branch of industry, which unfortunately has hitherto been too much neglected; but our Representatives must not rest satisfied with this—something ought to be done to carry out his views. The Science of Agriculture might be introduced into our Schools, more particularly in the country, with great advantage, and Model Farms might be established, as they have been found to be of great advantage in other parts of the world.

The Fisheries should likewise come in for their share of attention, as, if properly followed up, they would be the means of giving a great deal of employment to a large number of our population, and of bringing into the country foreign capital, which would help to pay for our imports.

The Revenue, increasing as it has done the last year by nearly £10 000 as compared with the present year, is considered far too large for the actual necessities of our government. Many complain that such heavy duties are levied on the necessities of life, without which the poor cannot exist; among such articles might be named the cheaper and coarser descriptions of dry goods, molasses, sugar, and even tea. On these, we trust, the duties will be very much reduced, as it is of great consequence that the laboring classes should be as lightly taxed as possible on such necessities as they cannot do without, and there is little doubt that one half the Revenue at present levied would be sufficient, were the Road and Educational systems revised, and some others substituted upon similar principles to those alluded to above.

A revision and reduction of the Civil List must shortly take place, which would greatly tend to lessen the amount of Revenue required to be raised.

As this will be the last session the present Representatives of the people will assemble together for the transaction of public business, we hope that they will be actuated solely by a desire to advance the interests of the country generally, and not allow such insinuations to be thrown out against them that we sometimes hear, viz: that the principal part of the duty performed by them when at Headquarters, is the division of the public money among their respective localities, and attending to their own interests in getting possession of the public offices for themselves or friends. I they intend appearing before their constituents on a

future occasion for their support, let them show by their acts this winter that they are legislating for the public welfare at large, and not for sectarian interests.

Communications.

AGRICULTURAL.

MR PIERCE,

As I have been reading your synopsis of the late adjourned meeting of the Northumberland Agricultural Society, wherein you mentioned that there had been some valuable suggestions thrown out for the guidance of the new Board; and being present at that meeting, and having heard these suggestions, I fully concur with you in thinking there were some valuable hints given, which, if adopted, would in all probability be productive of much good. But I am sorry to find that some of these have been rejected by the Board as unworthy of their notice; and particularly one which I consider of very great importance, namely, that one of the rules of competition should be that every successful competitor who received any amount exceeding 20s., should refund the one fourth of the same back to the Society. You may remember, Sir, when that suggestion was made, there was a gentleman present who made a few sarcastic remarks upon it, but I fancy he did not fully understand it, as I would be far from supposing he would wish to prevent any Rules being enacted for the good of the Society, as I know him to be a particular friend to it. But I was astonished to find that the Committee, which met afterwards, declared it would be a very clandestine way of raising the money. Now, Sir, I cannot understand why they should look upon it as a clandestine or sinister mode of acting, when it had been mentioned at a public meeting, and intended, if adopted, that it should be published along with the other rules of competition, when every person would be aware of it, and the competitors would know on what conditions they should receive premiums. And in my opinion—and not mine alone, but it is the opinion of a member of the Legislature—that it would be carrying out their intentions and desires quite as well as the present mode. And it is plain if that rule were adopted, there might safely be £200 offered in premiums, and the Society would lose nothing by it, for by deducting one fourth it would leave the amount of £150 in hand, by which they could get £150 from the Legislature. Therefore they could lose nothing, and this amount would all be raised by the practical farmer, and chiefly by the successful competitors which could best afford it. And if £200 were offered in premiums, this place would then become a second California, for the people would be flocking in from all parts of the country to the diggings; but before they could enter, they would have to pay five shillings for permission, which would make up a pretty round sum to meet incidental expenses.

Then you would see what a spirit of competition would be stirred up among the farmers, and there would soon be a material change in all kinds of Stock; and the Society would have no occasion for expending money on the importation of Stock, for enterprising speculators would perceive it to be their interest to procure the best breeds that could be obtained, as also Farming Implements of all kinds, and Carding Mills, Felling Mills, &c., would soon be erected, without any occasion for the Society's offering a bounty for their erection; for I will venture to say, that insignificant as the premiums have hitherto been, the money expended in that way has done more good than all the money that has been otherwise circulated by the Society.

I could say much more in favor of that suggestion, but I fear I should be trying your patience too much. Besides, I think what has been said will suffice to show you and the discerning public where the censure should rest, whether on the proposers or the rejectors of that suggestion.

A MEMBER.

February 8, 1850.

OPERATION OF THE NAVIGATION ACT.—The steamer Niagara just arrived here from Liverpool is filled with French German and British goods. This is the first arrival in the United States under the new 'Navigation Act.' The steamer has 2760 packages, the largest cargo ever received at this port and a very valuable one, worth probably half a million of dollars. About one quarter part of the cargo is French and German goods.—*Boston Transcript*, Jan. 28.

Editor's Department.

MIRAMICHI:

CHATHAM, MONDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 1850.

The Subscriber having been compelled to consume a large amount of time, and incur considerable expense, in his too often fruitless endeavours to collect his far-spread Outstanding Debts, hereby notifies all persons to whom he is indebted, and with whom he has not a running account, that orders for advertising in the Gleaner, and for Printing in future, must be accompanied with the CASH otherwise they will not meet with attention.

JAMES A. PIERCE.

POSTAL ARRANGEMENTS.—The Wesleyan, a very excellent and cleverly conducted religious journal, published at Halifax, in its number of January 26, has an article headed as above, in which the Editor congratulates the people of Nova Scotia on the prospect of a speedy establishment of a low and uniform rate of postage throughout British America. He concludes with the following sensible and just remarks relative to the Postage on Newspapers:—

Whilst on this subject we would suggest the propriety of removing the present tax on newspaper transmission—a measure which would meet with universal approbation, and prove highly serviceable to all classes. These messengers are a kind of Schoolmaster, imparting at a small expense, valuable information on a vast variety of subjects. If the Legislature contributes money out of the general Treasury of the Province for the purposes of education, we can see no valid reason why the present impost on newspaper circulation through the mails should not be withdrawn, connected as that circulation is with the instruction of persons of all ages, but especially of the young and rising generation. The additional charge of two shillings and two pence yearly for postage, prevents, we have no doubt many a poor man from subscribing for a weekly paper, which, otherwise, he would gladly take, to the great benefit of himself and family. If, then, the control of the 'Posts' in Nova Scotia is to be placed in the hands of the Provincial Legislature, we hope the men of the people will endeavor to relieve the entire population from the tax at present pressing on newspapers, the great instructors of the people, and pass an act, making their circulation as free as the air we breathe.

As the Post Office Department is to be placed under the control of the Provincial Government, we hope they will not lose sight of this subject. It is one deserving their consideration. Under the present arrangement, the settlers living on the post roads cannot be served, as formerly, with their papers, as the couriers are forbid to drop them on the routes. They must be mailed, and as the way offices are frequently situated at many miles distance, and the papers subject to a tax for transmission, which, though small, they find it inconvenient to pay, they are reluctantly compelled to give up taking them; thus cutting off the only communication they had with the outdoor world, and depriving them of a great source of instruction and amusement, not to themselves only, but their families. In whatever arrangements the Legislature or Government may make, we sincerely trust the interest of the hardy settler will not be overlooked.

Since the above was in type, we have obtained the Head Quarters of Wednesday last, in which we find a long article on the subject. The editor condemns the system of taxing papers passing through the Post Office, and calls on his contemporaries throughout the Province to lend their aid in bringing the subject before the Legislature. We shall publish the article next week.

UNITED STATES AND CANADA.—On the 25th January, Mr Wheeler, of Franklin County, moved the following Resolutions in the Legislature of New York. They were ordered to lie on the table:—

Whereas, by the original articles of the confederation adopted by the States of this Union, it was provided that Canada, acceded to this confederation, and joining the measures of the United States, shall be admitted into and entitled to all the advantages of this Union.

And, whereas, recent occurrences in the Province of Canada indicate a strong and growing desire on the part of the people thereof, to avail themselves of the advantages of