

ripe for it, is the introduction of the system as a general Provincial measure, and self-government will soon be appreciated, even by those who are now opposed to it. Such has been its operation in Canada.

As to the *Initiation* question, that, I think, the honorable gentleman is right in asking the House to concede to the Government (although they may have no confidence in the present Executive). Without it, no government can be effective—and with it, if they have not the confidence of the country, they will be sooner removed from power. This measure should not, however, be passed alone, but should pass concurrently with the several other portions of the *Responsible and Departmental System*, as without those constitutional checks, the government would acquire an undue amount of influence.

The honorable Attorney General states to you, Gentlemen, (although he has not noticed the subject in his card,) that he is in favor of an *Elective Legislative Council*. I would ask the honorable gentleman what has effected so complete a change in his sentiments on this subject, and should like to hear his reasons, in order to test the sincerity of his professions. Within the last nine months the honorable gentleman used his utmost eloquence and talents (and these he possesses in no small degree) in opposing an address to Her Majesty, on the floor of the Assembly, in favor of these principles, and contended, that "we never could obtain such a concession, while we were a British Colony; and that its introduction would disorganize and prove fatal to that nicely-balanced constitution of which we boast." These were the arguments made use of by the honorable gentleman, and when we consider the spirit and determination with which they were urged, and in which the principle was opposed, I fear that a change so complete can scarcely have taken place in so short a period, or, if so, the reasons therefor must be cogent indeed, and I should like to hear them!

Retrenchment! This seems now to be one of the leading features in the politics of the honorable gentleman, but he adds by way of saving clause, "so far as is consistent with public faith." Gentlemen, this is rather too general and vague an expression to satisfy either you or I, and I would therefore ask the honorable gentleman, whether "it is consistent with public faith" to reduce the Governor's salary to £1000 per annum, Commissioner of Crown Lands to £500, Clerk of the Pleas to £200, and other salaries in proportion, and also to abolish the office of Receiver General, and all other such sinecures. These are questions to which the country requires an answer, and on their being answered in the affirmative, depend much whether you, gentlemen, may expect from the Attorney General, the introduction of retrenchment measures.

The question of Reciprocity in Trade with the Americans, is one which the country believes our government have utterly neglected, and as it is a measure intimately connected with our prosperity, I would ask the honorable Attorney General what measures (if any) our government have taken towards effecting an object so desirable. Were those restrictions to free intercourse with the Americans, which now exist, once removed, we would find at our own doors, if I may so speak, a market for our ships and our lumber, at prices much more satisfactory than are now obtained in Britain. Our Fisheries might then be prosecuted with advantage, as a ready market would be found in the American cities which cannot now be obtained, in consequence of their restrictive tariff. But in addition to these advantages, I believe that our shores would shortly be lined with shipyards, as American capitalists would prefer building in our Province, where the raw materials are cheap, rather than in their own country, where ship timbers can scarcely be obtained for three times the price at which they are supplied here. Should this important subject be neglected by Government, its leader may rest assured the country will not be satisfied.

Gentlemen—as the mother country has conceded to us the privilege of self government, I can see no good reason why we should not have it in its fullest extent. I am aware that the Liberals of this country are averse to partial legislation, or half way measures, and that they contend for as their privilege, and demand as a right, that the Governor be selected, either by election or otherwise, from among the residents of the Province. Were such a principle introduced, the Colonial Secretary would not object to our reducing the salary; it might not so nearly affect his own friends, and a Provincialist would be quite satisfied with £1000, while an English Baronet would scarcely be satisfied with four times the sum. A resident is also much more likely to know our wants, and to take an interest in our prosperity, than a stranger, who is anxious only for the pay. Habits of economy are much more likely to be practised in the proposed changes, than under the present system, and the influence of example in so high a quarter may have a good effect amongst the subordinate officials. But in addition to these reasons, the highest office in the Province should be the reward of local merit; and a means of gratifying laudable ambition would thus be opened up to us as Colonists, which nothing but our incapacity should prevent us from enjoying. Will any say that the honorable Attorney General (although he may be on the wrong side of politics) would not do honor to the situation? In this meeting my eye may rest on at least 20 persons, quite capable, if not more so, of filling the office of Provincial Governor, than many gentlemen who have occupied that situation. I would then ask the honorable Attorney General, to what extent he is prepared to go in securing for the citizens of this colony this privilege?

My own opinion is, that we only require to ask it, and urge it, as our right, and we will obtain it.

Gentlemen—the honorable Attorney General tells you that he is in favor of a system of Education, in which the people will more immediately possess control than they do at present, and that steps will be taken to introduce such a measure. I am glad to hear such sentiments from the hon. gentleman, and would like to know to what particular system he refers; whether he approves of the system of local taxation for Schools, under the direction of Municipal Corporations, or of a government system of Free Schools, on the principle adopted in New York, and many of the New England States? When that system was first introduced into those States, their condition was as nearly similar to our own as may be. Since that time their people have become enlightened and prosperous; their country has advanced in population and wealth, and has risen to an elevated rank in the scale of nations; and this has been greatly promoted by their system of Education, which we might adopt with much advantage to our Province.

Our College Charter requires such alterations as will place all denominations of Christians upon an equal footing—a preference at present existing in favor of the Church of England! This preference is also exhibited in favor of that Church in other matters; such as obtaining the grant of some thousands of acres of land, as Glebes, in the county, and I believe the same grievances complained of in other counties. That Church has also obtained the grant of two parishes, from which the public suffer. These several grants, it is said, were given without consideration, and a preference has hitherto been made by government in favor of that Church, which should now cease to exist, and the restrictions on the Parishes be at least removed. These are grievances, the existence of which are felt, and on which his honor has hitherto been silent, and I would ask, of course he would deem it advisable to adopt to have the evils complained of removed?

The present system of appointing Commissioners for the expenditure of *Bye Road Grants* is highly improper, and calculated to create great disaffection in the county. In too many instances, the appointments are made not so much from the individual's knowledge of Road-making, as they are for the talents he may possess for electioneering purposes. Many instances exist in this county, in which parties are taken from one Parish, and appointed to expend money in another, in which men of much more experience and practical knowledge may reside. The Commissioners thus appointed take little or no interest in the expenditure, beyond securing their commission, and perhaps getting some of their debtors to take contracts, and by these means securing themselves, while the public roads are neglected. Some very glaring instances of this nature exist in this county. It is quite time that the system was put an end to, and the county expects from its representative, the honorable Attorney General, now that he is Leader of the Government, and has the power to remedy the evils complained of, that he would do so. If money is to be expended on Bye Roads, let the principle be established, that the Road Commissioners (who, under the Parish Act, are appointed by the people), or one of them, be named in the several parishes. As they are supposed to be practical men, they will be capable; being residents, they will be more interested; and the proper expenditure of the money will be secured by the power which the people possess in their annual appointments. I would ask the Attorney General whether he will remedy the evil here complained of? This he has power to do.

The present Bench of Magistrates requires some alteration. Petitions have been got up, and numerous signed by the freeholders of the county, asking our Government for investigation and inquiry into the present state of that Body, as they look upon many persons now in the Commission, as quite unfit for such a situation. I would ask the honorable Attorney General whether he is prepared to order a commission of inquiry, or else at once to issue a new Commission of the Peace, omitting the names of all these in the present Commission, who from *drunkenness, imbecility, or other good cause*, may be rendered unfit for the situation? In this the county expects some immediate action.

His Honor tells you, Gentlemen, that he is in favor of Railways, but is opposed to the government taking them up. This is, however, rather too general a proposition; and I have no doubt, in such an important question, you would like a little more particularity. I would therefore ask that gentleman whether he is in favor of the *Portland and Halifax Road*, and to what extent he is prepared to go in its erection? In a measure of so much importance, which the people of Nova Scotia, as well as the State of Maine, are laying hold of with spirit, it certainly is the duty of our government, as well as their interest, not to lag behind. I, in common with many others, conceive that the scheme should be made a government measure. Its character would stand higher; among the officials there would be less prospect of abuses, or, should they happen to exist, they would be more easily remedied, than if the scheme was in private hands, as the Directors or monied capitalists might be directly interested in keeping an obnoxious individual in office. But a greater advantage still would accrue from the facilities with which, as a government measure, we could obtain capital, compared with that of a private company. Means can, I believe, be readily obtained in England, at from 2½ to

3 per cent., and the introduction of such an amount of foreign capital, to be put in circulation in our Province—the amount of employment it would give to our people—the impetus which would be added to our languishing trade—the market which would thus be created for our farm productions, together with the tide of emigration which would pour in upon our vacant lands, and the advantages which always accrue from easy and rapid modes of internal communication, stamp this scheme with an importance of character unrivalled, as far as prospects and advantages go, by any other measure now before the public, and which, through the action of Nova Scotia, and the energy and talent of the Hon. Joseph Howe, one of her patriot sons, is now under the notice and favorable consideration of the British people. I would ask the hon. Attorney General why our government has acted with less energy than the Executive of Nova Scotia? and why a Delegate has not been despatched to co-operate with the Delegate of Nova Scotia?

In conclusion, gentlemen, I beg to inform his honor that in asking these questions, and stating these views of the various subjects, I have done so, as I before stated, not from my own desire alone, but at the instance of many gentlemen in this county, *Liberals in politics*, who conceive that they have equally the right to make the request, as his honor is bound as their representative to reply thereto, and give to a body of so much respectability and influence, that confidence in his future acts, which should ever exist. They feel desirous that the Attorney General should abandon that unconstitutional practice which has hitherto prevailed in this county—that of considering the views of two or three antiquated or obnoxious individuals, as representing the sentiments and wishes of the people; and men, too, who scarce ever pass the threshold of their own doors, and can therefore know as little of the wants, as they as little appreciate the prosperity of the mass of the people.

Let the honorable gentleman at least once in each year meet his constituents in a county meeting, and there obtain their views and sentiments. Let him seek to keep pace with the public demands for Progress, and evince a desire to represent their views and wishes, and he will obtain a hold on the affections of this community which he has never yet enjoyed.

Editor's Department.

MIRAMICHI,

KATHAM, MONDAY, MARCH 3, 1851.

EUROPEAN NEWS.—The steamer Europa has arrived at Halifax—but as the papers of Wednesday make no mention of it, we presume it was after they went to press. The paper thus received are to the 15th February, and we have taken such extracts therefrom as will put our readers in possession of what has transpired in the old world.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE LEGISLATURE.

The news from the Legislature is not important. The Attorney General has, in accordance with his promise, stated to the Assembly the views of himself and colleagues, on various matters effecting the interests of the Province; and by which they will be guided while in office. They are the same as his Honor enunciated on the hustings. His speech is reported at some length in the Head Quarters, and as we wish to act fairly towards all men, we shall publish it next week, so that his constituents may peruse it at leisure, and if necessary, file it away for future reference.

We give below a letter from a Correspondent—from this our readers will be able to form a pretty correct idea of what has been done in the Assembly:—

FREDERICTON, February 22, 1851.

Dear Sir,—I cannot recollect precisely to what extent I have forwarded you information on Legislative proceedings, but I shall now name such as occur to me. Of course you know that the first fourteen days would be taken up chiefly with private petitions, and these have neither been few in number, nor modest in prayer. The present House have manifested a desire to retrench in public expenditure, though on the subject of Reporting the Debates there has been the usual vacillating conduct, and the usual result, i.e. ended where it began, and the Reporters left for the future consideration of the House. This course is, to say the least, undignified, and arises from the desire of a few not to pay them at all, and from that of a greater number to leave the question open in order (as I think) to keep the Reporters and Press in *terror*. This, however, it is hoped, will not be the result. Those gentlemen should speak out and spare not. 'Tis true that in some cases they will and must be wrong, and wound the feelings of some members who are really striving for the public good. But the evil in such cases must be trifling, when compared with the good which ensues from the Censorship of the Press. The St. John Morning News, it must be admitted by the friends of Reform, is an ultra paper, and goes to extremes; but this, if not excusable in the Edi-

tor, is at least beneficial to the public. The amount of lethargic apathy existing in the remote parts of the Province upon political subjects required extraordinary means to be adopted for its removal. "When desperate ills require a speedy cure, caution is cowardice and prudence folly." And though one extreme necessarily produces another, yet the political pendulum must vibrate in order that the machinery may be kept in regular motion. Much good has been done by even this penny paper, and where persons understand it a little they may make some discount on the statements in order to establish its sterling value as compared with its market price. On the other hand, "entre nous," your paper wants a little more *ginger* to suit the times and stir up the people to action. I know you are a man of peace; but that may be cruelly to the oppressed which is mercy to the oppressor. The battle for political freedom has begun, and the first charge in your country, if not altogether successful, has at least made a breach in the strongholds of the enemy, and accomplished more than was expected. Let your people not be content with holding their ground, but let the word be, "Forward Britons, strike home!" Let them think of former slavery only to contrast it with liberty, and "point to their wounds and cry aloud to battle." Stand still they cannot, but must either advance to freedom, or fall back to where they started. But to business.

The members have been limited to 20s. each for stationary. Some of their bills last session were £8 or £9. John T. Williston brought up the question of sleigh hire. Needham moved that the House would not entertain any money-vote to pay for their constant employment. Mr Williston voted against this, and the names were taken. It was moved on a subsequent day that 15s. instead of 25s be paid for the sleigh, which was only to be required during the business hours of the House. Against this he voted also (I think); but I do not believe he is opposed to retrenchment, and may have considered, as did others, that 25s. per day was not too much, as the sleighs were kept going at all hours. The members' pay will come up shortly, but it will not be reduced. There will not be over five members for reducing it, unless, indeed, members vote for it in order to increase their popularity by insincerity, knowing that it won't be carried. I do not think the country requires a reduction of the pay, if members perform their duty; but I am rather of the opinion that a reduction would be prejudicial to the liberal interests, inasmuch as it would deprive the country of the services of those men who not only think but feel with them, and throw the whole representation into the hands of those wealthy men who are perhaps the least calculated to advance those liberal measures which tend to establish equal rights, and destroy monopoly as well in government as in commerce. The reason why the question will come up is, that the pay-bill only extends to the House which passed it, and expired with the last Session.

A Bill to suspend the operations of the Militia Law has been agreed to in Committee of the whole House, leaving a power in the Government to revive it by proclamation on urgent occasions.

Mr Fitzgerald moved and carried a clause enabling the Governor to keep up the *Staff* in time of peace, by appointing officers as vacancies occur, and Mr Johnson moved and carried an amendment suspending and discontinuing the salaries of all militia officers, viz. Adjutant General £85 per annum, Quarter Master General £150, and the officers of each battalion about £21 10. It is hoped the Council will not burk this Bill, and revive the humbug which has cost the country so much time and money.

There are 14 or 15 petitions for Orange incorporation before the House; but though the party are strong they will not succeed.

The petition for investigation into the state of your Magistracy is laid on the table, to found an Address to His Excellency for an enquiry.

February 24.—To day the Bill for members' pay was taken up in Committee, and disposed of, the amount being fixed at fifteen shillings per day. As I stated in my letter of the 22d, only five voted for reducing, and none of those were from your county. Those five did not argue that the pay was too much, but went on the ground that it would produce a moral effect, while others contended that a much better effect would be produced by shewing the people of what the Contingent Bill was composed. But the speeches and division on this question will be published, and the people will judge for themselves.

February 25.—This morning the House was occupied with the routine business until about half past one o'clock, when the Attorney General, according to appointment, made an exposition of his political views, occupying about an hour and a half. The heads of his speech were:—Agriculture, Reciprocal Free Trade, Retrenchment, Municipal Corporations, Initiation of Money Votes, Education, Railways, and Elective Legislative Council. These you would say were interesting and important subjects, but the Speech itself was as complete a non-committal as you have ever heard. Agriculture, he said, was an important subject, but moral measures were more likely to advance it than legislative. He advocated a "rural economy," and instilling into the farmer a desire to use or wear nothing but their own productions, and that persons should be sent among them to teach them rural economy. "Reciprocal Free Trade,"—this he was in favor of but was sure we could never get it without giving more than it was worth. "Retrenchment,"—he fully concurred with the despatch