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*Nec araneorum sane textus ideo melior, quia ex se fila gignunt, nec noster vilior quia ex alienis libamus ut apes.*

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## LEGISLATIVE NEWS.

### NEW BRUNSWICK.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY, Feb. 25.

#### MR. STREET'S SPEECH.

Mr STREET rose and said, that he felt it due to the House and to the country to take the first opportunity which presented itself, of giving an exposition of his own views and those of the Government of which he was the leader, on such measures as he and his colleagues thought it necessary to introduce for the well being of the people of this Province. He also thought it due to the House and to the country at once to explain the reasons which had induced him (Mr Street) to join the present administration, and accept the office of her Majesty's Attorney General. In the first place he would say that he had been appointed to the high office which he then held without any solicitation on his part. Three days before he had been appointed to the office of Attorney General, he had not had the remotest idea of being called upon to accept a seat at the Executive Council Board, and he would briefly state the circumstances under which he had been called upon to take office, and the principles upon which he consented to take that office, and become the leader of the present administration.—Early in January he was unexpectedly sent for by His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor and apprized of a vacancy having occurred in the office of Attorney General, by the election of his predecessor (now Judge Wilnot) to the Bench, and at this interview His Excellency tendered him the vacant office with a seat at the Executive Council Board. Before he accepted this offer, he thought it due to His Excellency and to his colleagues in the Government, to the country and to himself, to explain the views which he (Mr Street) entertained; for if he was to accept office at the sacrifice of principle, he would say at once let the office go, and he (Mr Street) would hold on to the principle. He had given expression to certain opinions on the floor of that House, and to his constituents in Northumberland, and before he could take office and join his colleagues in the Government it was necessary for him carefully to consider how far those opinions conflicted with the policy of the administration of which he was about to become a member. He was not one of those who were incapable of changing his opinion, but he would say this, that having once deliberately formed an opinion on any subject it was not to be shaken unless by such arguments as would convince him that the opinion so formed was erroneous. Guided by this principle, he felt himself called upon to bring the subject of the reduction of salaries under the notice of His Excellency the Lieut. Governor, as that measure had been brought down with the sanction of some of his present colleagues in the Government, and he (Mr Street) felt that to take office with opinions differing so widely from those expressed by his predecessor in office, would leave him open to the charge of sacrificing principle for the love of power, and the emoluments of office. He frankly told the Lieutenant Governor that on this point he differed from some of his former advisers.—He was then for the first time shewn a Despatch from Earl Grey on the subject of the reduction of Judicial salaries, which confirmed the views which he (Mr Street) had formerly expressed, and removed any embarrassment which he might otherwise have felt in joining those who were now advisers of the Queen's Representative. That despatch confirmed every point which he (Mr Street) had last year urged on the attention of the House, and although he was then in the minority, he felt satisfied that the views which he then expressed were correct, and that whatever might be done prospectively, neither the House nor the country would sanction what could be considered both on this side of the Atlantic, and on the other, a breach of public faith. As that matter had been set at rest, he felt it further due to the Lieutenant Governor to explain the leading principles by which he (Mr Street) would be guided in his advice for the administration of the affairs of this country. These principles were the same as those which he had put forth to his constituents in Northumberland previous to the last election, an election by which he had but the other day been returned, he might say, by the unanimous consent of the people of Northumberland. In that card he said to the Electors what he had previously stated to His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor, and he would read a portion of the printed address, that there might be no misunderstanding on this point. The hon member then read as follows:

In presenting myself to your notice, in my present capacity, I think it due to you and to myself to state the leading principles upon

which I have taken office, especially as efforts have been made by some of the periodicals of the day to impress upon the public mind that I am an obstructive, opposed to the improvement of the Province and to advancement with the times, than which nothing can be more incorrect, and for a refutation of such aspersions, for I can call them nothing short of that, I have only to appeal to your own knowledge of my public career.

"Gentlemen, I am, and have always been, in favor of encouraging, by every means in my power, Agriculture, Domestic Manufactures, and the internal improvement of the country; interest, inclination, and duty combine in leading me to this.

"I am in favor of Reciprocal Trade with the United States and other foreign countries."

The agricultural interest was one of vital importance to the prosperity of this country, but upon the best means of encouraging agriculture, a variety of opinions exist. Something had been already done by the establishment of Agricultural Societies, but something more was required to be done which legislation could not reach. He was one of those who thought that the best way of encouraging agriculture was to create a different state of feeling in the rural districts of the country.—To make the farmer proud of his employment and teach him that tilling the fine soil of this noble Province was one of the most honorable as well as one of the most useful employments in which he could be engaged. He was sorry to be obliged to admit that in the rural district in many parts of the country, that high state of moral feeling which made the farmer proud to eat only that which grew on his own land, and wear that which was manufactured at home, was too much disregarded. A better system of rural economy must be introduced before the agricultural interests of this Province could be raised to that high standard which an interest of such vital importance to the well being and prosperity of the country ought to occupy. The cause of this apathy, on the part of many of those residing in the rural districts, to the importance of cultivating the soil, was easily explained. The lumber trade was at the bottom of the evil. It was well known that when the lumber trade was prosperous the farmer, tempted by the love of money, was, in many cases, apt to think that the cultivation of the soil was a slow method of getting rich, and consequently embarked in a business which, in the end, too often resulted in losing him his farm and unfitting him for ever again becoming a good agriculturist. Let hon. members look round in their respective counties and see if the picture which he had drawn was too highly colored. Those farmers who stuck to the soil and refused to be allured from their ordinary avocations by the hope of speedily growing rich, were almost invariably successful in securing a comfortable living, and often became independent in their circumstances, while those who followed the opposite course were, in nine cases out of ten, ruined, and many of them had to leave the country. The trade at best was hazardous, and for one that succeeded in successfully prosecuting the export of lumber from this country, ten failed, and when a sudden revolution took place, those depending on them failed also. Let them look for a moment at the effects of the depression of the lumber trade in 1847, '48, and '49. The distress and alarm which that depression created was fresh in the minds of hon. members. People left the country in shoals, disheartened and ruined, to seek a livelihood in some other land, and many, very many would be glad to return and cultivate the soil which they had left, were it not that the effects of those disastrous years is still hanging over their heads, in the shape of unpaid debts, which they have not the means to liquidate. With these views he was not prepared to say that the Government would bring in any specific measure for the advancement of agriculture during the present Session, but he could assure hon. members that he and his colleagues would most cheerfully aid, by every means in their power, in establishing a higher tone of feeling, with respect to agriculture, and assist the societies which are already in operation in carrying out any measure which would tend to advance the interests of the rural districts of this country. Domestic Manufactures was another point to which he had directed the attention of his constituents. He (Mr Street) had been always ready, and always would be ready to afford what assistance was in his power for the encouragement of domestic manufactures. Internal improvements had also been mentioned, and here he would explain what he (Mr Street) understood by internal improvements. He knew of no better way of improving the country than by making a road to the poor man's door, who had taken his axe on his shoulder and gone into the wilderness to hew himself out a farm.—

What greater benefit could they confer on such a man who was the pioneer of civilization, than by giving him a road by which he could reach the market town—by which he could send his children to school, and by which he and his family could go to a place of public worship on the Lord's day. Who would withhold from such a man the little bye road grant which enabled him to do this? This was internal improvement of the most valuable description; for whatever other public works might be deemed necessary, there could be no question that the road leading to the door of those who made the country was one kind of internal improvement which no prudent government would sacrifice to any other. Reciprocal Trade with the United States was another topic which he had brought before his constituents. He was in favor of reciprocal trade with that country; provided they could persuade the Americans to reciprocate with them on terms which, as British subjects, they could accept without humiliation; but he was afraid this would not be the case. He recollected travelling on board a steamer with a citizen of Maine, at the time when his predecessor—now Judge Wilnot—was on his way to Washington, on the subject of the proposed Reciprocity. The conversation turned on the probability of Congress acceding to the proposed arrangement, when the gentleman from Maine, to whom he alluded, said "Mr Street, we will never reciprocate with your country until you first cede the free navigation of the River Saint John, and pay us back every shilling of the export duty which you have collected on our lumber." He (Mr S.) believed that there did a hard feeling exist in Maine on both these points, and it was his opinion that until both these were conceded, the whole weight of the State of Maine would be thrown against the Reciprocity bill in Congress. It had been alleged that Mr Hincks, who had lately been at Washington on this subject, was negotiating for Canada and Canada alone. He (Mr S.) believed, however, that this was incorrect, and from some information which he had lately had on this subject, he had reason to believe that whatever was given to Canada, would also be given to the lower Colonies. He feared, however, that nothing would be done, but as the matter was still a subject of negotiation he would say nothing further on the point. Failing in this negotiation there was a kind of reciprocity to which he would be willing to give his assent. If the Americans will not reciprocate with these Provinces in one way they should be prepared to reciprocate with the Americans in another. He would meet them on the threshold of this Province with the thirty and forty per cent. duties, with which they met the people of this country. (cries of hear, hear, from all sides of the House). That was a kind of reciprocity which might create inconvenience and privation among the people of this country, but in the end good would come out of it. The people then would learn to eat the bread they grew, or grow the bread they wished to eat, and eventually the people would do that for themselves, which the people of the United States now do for them.—The inhabitants of this country were not deficient in talent, in energy, nor in industry. They had a good country which produced all that was necessary for the comfort of its inhabitants, which could be produced in the neighboring States, and he saw no reason whatever, why they should be dependent on their neighbors for bread. At a time when misfortunes seemed to be gathering fastest round a country, an all-wise Providence frequently turned the evils of which the people complained into the greatest blessing. Even the misfortunes in the lumber trade, to which he had alluded, had been the means of producing permanent good, by forcing the people to turn their attention to the cultivation of the soil of the Province, and last year the country has been blessed with an abundant harvest. True, money was scarce, but if the people generally had not much money they had what was money's worth, they had abundance of the necessities of life. Pending however the negotiations with the United States Government, the Government of this country would not be prepared to bring down measures on the subject of trade, such as he had already alluded to. Retrenchment was the next subject which he brought under the notice of his constituents, and he would read what he said on that subject, (here the hon. member read as follows):

"I am also in favor of retrenchment and the most rigid economy in the administration of the affairs of the Province, as far as it is consistent with good faith and a due regard to the public service."

He had always been an advocate for the strictest economy in the disposal of the public funds, but while he avowed himself in favor of retrenchment, where retrenchment could be effected without a breach of public faith, he was not one of those who would sul-

ly the character of the Province, and injure its credit by breaking faith with the Home Government, or with the servants of the public. A single act of this description would have the effect of lowering the Province not only in the estimation of the parent state, but in the eyes of foreign nations. It was well known that capitalists would not entrust their money in any country whose public faith had been once pledged and afterwards broken, and if ever any great public work was undertaken, it could only be accomplished by the introduction of capital from abroad, and such capital would only be lent on the assurance that it was in the hands of those who scrupulously fulfilled their public engagements. On this principle he had acted last year, and on this principle he was prepared to act again. He was not one of those who thought that under paid officers would serve the country best. Mr Ritchie—"nor over paid either."

He (Mr Street) agreed with the hon. and learned member, "nor over paid either," but in the language of that hon. member himself, he was for giving a fair day's wages for a fair day's work, and no more, and he believed that was the right principle to go upon. The next subject to which he would call the attention of the House, was that of Municipal Corporations, and on this subject he would read what he had said to his constituents.

"I am in favor of Municipal Corporations, in other words, of allowing the people of the respective counties, the privilege of managing their own affairs, whenever they wished so to do."

While he was perfectly willing to give these institutions to the country, he would warn hon. members to beware how they attempted to force them on the country, for however desirable such municipalities might be, if you force them on the country before the people are prepared for them, they would prove a curse instead of a blessing. He would therefore be prepared with a bill containing all the necessary machinery for working out the system, but leaving its adoption with the different counties to accept or reject them as they might see fit. He would now read what he had said to his constituents about the Initiatory system:—

"I am, and have always been, an advocate for the Initiatory system in the granting of money; by that alone in my opinion, can the principles of Responsible Government be properly carried out."

This was no new opinion of his (Mr Street's) for ever since the introduction of Responsible Government into this Province, he had been convinced that it could only be properly worked out by giving to the Executive authority the power of initiating money grants. He had, while addressing the chair on a former occasion, given his opinion on the course which must be adopted before they could be accomplished. His hon. the Speaker was then in the same honorable position which he then occupied, they were both then younger men, but what he said at that time he would then repeat, that if ever the Initiatory system be given to the Executive Government, it must be given up by the free action of the House itself and not by any action of any Government, which may be in power now or come into power hereafter. The right to initiate money grants was inherent in the House itself, and that right could not be wrested from them by the Government. He believed, he stated then that somewhere about the year 1783, he quoted from recollection, the House of Commons in England found it necessary for the public service, that the Initiation of money grants should be given up to the Executive. He might be incorrect in the date, but believed it was upwards of a century ago, and his hon. the Speaker would correct him if he was wrong.

His Hon. The Speaker.—"That was 140 years ago."

Mr Street.—He was obliged to his honor the Speaker, for the date had escaped him, but the House of Commons at that time by a simple resolution surrendered the initiatory right, and it was only by that simple resolution that the Imperial Government acquired and now exercised the right to initiate grants of money. The same means must be adopted in this country before the inherent right to grant money could be taken by the Executive Government of this Province. On this point he was prepared to say, that although the Government could not come down and ask for the surrender of the initiation of money grants, yet he and his colleagues were perfectly prepared to take the responsibility of exercising that right, if it were given to them although there could be no doubt that this additional responsibility would render the tenure of office less secure than it was while the power remained in the House itself.—They were, however, prepared to carry out the system of Responsible Government, and in his (Mr Street's) opinion, that system could not be properly carried out unless the