

Editor's Department.

MIRAMICHI:

CRATHAM, SATURDAY, JUNE 17, 1854.

TERMS.—New subscribers Twelve Shillings and Six Pence, per annum, in all cases in advance. Old subscribers 12s. 6d. in advance, or 17s. 6d. at the end of the year. We prefer the advance price, and it effects a large saving, we hope soon to see all our subscribers avail themselves of it.

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OUR ELECTION.

THE High Sheriff opened his Court at Newcastle on Wednesday last, for the nomination of Candidates to serve as Members to represent the Constituency of this County in the Assembly of the Province. After the usual formalities, the following gentlemen were put in nomination.

Hon. John A. Street, proposed by Roderick McLeod, and seconded by Thomas W. Unterhill, Esqrs.

George Kerr, Esq., proposed by John McDougall, and seconded, by Alexander Davidson, junr. Esqrs.

John M. Johnson, Esq. proposed by Mr. Michael Searle, and seconded by Mr. John Bagnell.

John T. Williston, Esq. proposed by Dudley Perley Esq., and seconded by Mr. Peter Grey.

Martin Cranney, Esq. proposed by Mr. Daniel Steel, and seconded by Mr. John Fallon.

Richard Sutton, Esq. proposed by Mr. Rowland Crocker, and seconded by Mr. B. Stapleton.

Mr. Cornelius McCarthy, proposed by Mr. Henry Sargeant, and seconded by Mr. John Sullivan.

James Fraser Esq., proposed by Mr. John Murphy, and seconded by Mr. Robert Blake.

We never saw so few persons assembled on a similar occasion, or witnessed so little enthusiasm, as was manifested by the Freeholders, affording a most striking contrast to the general election four years ago, when there was scarce a Freeholder in the County but took a warm and lively interest in the contest, and attended at the hustings to hear for himself, the opinions propounded by the Candidates. On Wednesday, the case was very different. The Freeholders appeared not at all pleased with the materials from which they had to make their choice, and seemed dissatisfied with themselves that they had not used more exertion to call out other parties, in whom they had greater confidence.

On Tuesday the matter will be decided, but it is impossible at present to form an opinion who will be returned. There is no principle involved in the contest, and it is owing to this cause we attribute the present listlessness manifested.

As far as we are able, we give a report of the Speeches of the Candidates.

The Hon. THE ATTORNEY GENERAL spoke first, and addressed the Freeholders at much length, entering fully into his conduct during the time he had accepted office, and become Leader of the Government. We regret that we are unable to furnish our readers with his remarks. We have always hitherto been handed a report of his speeches on similar occasions, and we left a message with his partner, that we expected to be furnished with a copy of his speech. Owing to this we took no notes, not wishing to rely on them, for fear some errors might creep in, a circumstance we should much regret under present circumstances. We thus allude to the matter, to exonerate ourselves from any blame that might attach itself to us from apparent neglect.

Mr WILLISTON addressed the Freeholders as follows:

Mr Sheriff and Gentlemen Freeholders.

The law having terminated our political connection, it now becomes your duty as well as privilege, to elect four members to serve you in the Assembly of the Province. It may be necessary for me to touch on the leading subjects that have engrossed the attention of the Legislature for the last four years, but before doing so, permit me to say, that I now return the trust you reposed in me, as I received it. I hope my conduct has been such, as to leave no stain on the character of Northumberland.

The first matter for consideration that has occupied my attention, was the Roads, and more particularly in the new and remote settlements, where the poor settler has to encounter many difficulties, and particularly the want of Roads. This I know from personal observation, having travelled at least three hundred miles during the time I was in the House, for

the purpose of ascertaining the wants of the settlers. The subject of Schools has also had due consideration, but I fear the law does not work as well as it could be wished. I think the old system was the best, that of a local board being established in each county, to examine Teachers, and on whose certificate the Government should be required to grant Licenses. The qualification is such as is not required; the idea of compelling a man to go to St. John to attend a training school, before he can teach under a first or second class license, is what is not necessary for a thinly populated country like this; those that may require the higher branches of Education to be taught, can send their sons to the other schools. I now wish to offer a suggestion, whether it would not be better for the Government to pay the schoolmaster in full, than the present mode.—The whole amount has to be raised from the people, and I think could be raised by an indirect tax, better than by either subscription or assessment. It would save the expense of collection, and ensure payment to the teachers, who are worse paid than any other persons in the country.

The salaries of public officers have been reduced as low as the public service would warrant. Men of integrity cannot be found to fill responsible offices unless reasonably well paid.

The provincial statutes have been codified in a manner that will prove satisfactory to the country, and in a few days will become law. The court of chancery is abolished and it is incorporated with the supreme court, which I believe is a great improvement.

The merging of the courts of law, the simplifying the mode of proceedings, the regulation of choosing jurors and their payment, the law of evidence, and the reduction of the expenses in law proceedings, are matters that could not be completed the past session, but will be found of great benefit when finished.

As regards Agriculture, the best way to encourage it is by opening up communication to every settlement. I am ready to admit that the Agriculturists have been oppressed by a high protective duty on the articles he requires for his use, but I think the time has arrived when a more enlightened policy will be taken in lieu of the protective system; for by protecting one branch of industry you injure another, and benefit none.

The Fisheries have also every encouragement the Legislature could devise for their protection and bounties have been offered to a limited extent.—Trade has been legislated for, but I am convinced that it has suffered from having protective duties; from what I have thought on the subject I have become a Free Trader. I believe the true principle is to buy in the cheapest and sell in the dearest markets.

Ship-building has been as far as possible encouraged, by being nearly relieved from duty on the articles used in the construction of ships. I have arrived at the conclusion that Departmental Government will not answer. How can the Government have a strict supervision over the officers sitting with them in council. I think the Heads of Department should be outside of the Government except the Attorney General, who should be in the House to give legal advice, and the Solicitor General in the Legislative Council for the same purpose.

Responsible Government is introduced and works well, but the responsibility should be increased by the surrender of the Initiative of Money Grants into the hands of the Government. The present system is unsound. It cannot be concealed that the Members of the Assembly support each other in obtaining favourable grants, in some cases highly improper ones; one wants a favourite grant for a wharf, another for a bridge, and so on, and to enable them to succeed they consent to give a helping hand; but from the Railroad liability which the Province is under, it will become necessary to use more economy, and if the grants should originate with the Government, they would be responsible, and would only recommend useful ones. The Country having railroads must expect to pay for them.—I expect that there will be by the end of this year £300,000 of Provincial paper in the London Market, the interest on which must be met in London, or New York, regularly half yearly, and must be paid. The Province has engaged to issue debentures for the construction of Railroads to nearly one million sterling, on which the interest must be paid, and in time the debt itself. The appropriations for roads and schools must be met, and therefore the most rigid economy will be required.

The act authorizing any county to be incorporated has been altered. The poll is to be taken in the different parishes, and I voted for a majority to govern, but the Assembly would not agree.

I have always voted for the Ballot, some say it is not English, but any one can show his ballot if he likes. I saw one election under the ballot system and it went off quiet and worked well.

Railroads have had our best attention, and a contract has been made to have a line to Miramichi, and the law passed contracting it; and from the respectability of the contractors, I hope the work will be done.

These are the subjects that have engaged the attention of the Legislature for the past four years, to all of which I have given my best and earnest attention. I have considered every vote I have given, and voted as I thought right. I do not suppose I have always been right, it is more than can be expected of any one.

Many matters of importance will engage the attention of the legislature, such as a new Revenue bill, bills to amend the Railroad law, and such like.

There was a bill introduced into the legislature to exclude persons holding offices of emolument, but from the many amendments made, the bill was lost; had it passed, it would exclude nearly all the members of the house. I was for excluding revenue officers, the same as in England.

The government and legislature will have to keep a good look out, or we may still be left without the railroad being made to Miramichi, for we know the bill was altered after it was passed, which I discovered in time, would have defeated our line; therefore, I say, all at the north will have to be on their guard.

The constituency should insist on the business of the country being done in the legislature in two months, at furthest; six weeks is quite sufficient in ordinary sessions: the time taken up, say three months, is quite too long, when in England, with all her dependencies, and her vast empire, only takes five months.

Gentlemen, I have no professions to make, I have done the best I could, and should you return me, I shall apply my local knowledge to the best advantage I can, for your varied interests. In local matters I shall be governed by the majority of my constituents, as may be expressed by their petition; in matters of public policy, I must be governed by what I consider right for the general good. I thank you for your indulgence, and have once more to say, that if you should honor me with your confidence, I shall try and do what I think will conduce to your best interests.

Mr KERR spoke next, and we are extremely sorry that we have not been furnished with a report of his speech, for it was a most admirable one, and must have afforded such of his liberal friends as were led to believe, from the opinions circulated abroad, that he was no Reformer, and was content to let matters remain in their present unsatisfactory state, much heartfelt satisfaction, by the bold and resolute manner in which he attacked the present anomalous system by which we are at present governed, and the lax manner in which the financial affairs of the Province are conducted.

He set out by stating, that he had attended but three sessions of the Legislature and during that time had done his best to advance the general interest of the Province; and in confirmation of this, he referred the Freeholders to the printed journals of the House. When he was returned, the country was laboring under severe commercial depression, and the people in the County were struggling to free themselves from heavy responsibilities they had incurred. But times are now greatly changed, we were at the pinnacle of prosperity, the staple commodity of the country was selling at a high price in the home market; the wages of the operatives were higher than they were ever known before; the revenues of the Province had greatly increased, and it was expected this year they would exceed any previous one. He complained of the wasteful expenditure of public money, and said, that a portion of our large revenue should be applied to permanent internal improvements, and another portion harnessed to meet the liabilities incurred for the building of our railroads. The present tariff was too high and ought to be reduced. He said, we are told by members of the government that we have Responsible government, this he denied. In his Legislative capacity he had considerable to do with the public officers, and his experience showed him that in no department did he find responsibility—the governor was not responsible for the acts of his council, nor the council responsible for his; the council was not responsible for the acts of the heads of the departments, and the heads of the departments not responsible for the doings of their clerks. The fact was, he could not find responsibility existing anywhere. This was pretty well proved by the Finance Committee in their investigation of how matters were conducted in the Audit office. Until we have a Receiver General and Financial Secretary properly responsible, the management of our revenues will not be satisfactory to the country.—The Government, as the Legislature is at present constituted, possess an undue influence over the votes of the house, and while the freeholders returned thirteen members holding offices under the government to the Assembly, which is composed of forty-one, there was but slight chance of a change being effected. The continuance of such a state of things was dangerous to the liberties of the people.

He complained of the present system of canvassing, which compelled the candidate to travel thro' the county, soliciting or begging the freeholders for their support. They should choose the men they desire to represent them, and not the one who can beg the hardest for their votes, and promise the most if returned. It was a bad practice, and should be abandoned.

He said the time had arrived when the export duty should be removed. He was favourable to the institution of Municipal Corporations. They worked well in Lower Canada, in some parts of which the population was more scattered and less enlightened than in this Province, and he thought the time had arrived when they should be introduced; the sooner we adopt them the sooner will our children be educated to manage their own local matters. Their adoption would relieve the legislature of much irksome business, which would be attended to by parties better qualified to perform the work. The county, he was glad to say, was not now controlled by three or four individuals, as formerly; mortgages were fast disappearing, and he questioned if there was a more independent county in the province. The election law was defective; he was favourable to the system of election by Ballot, with a registration of voters.

He had always supported Education—but it was a difficult question to legislate upon; some of the greatest minds in Great Britain and the United States, had devoted much time to this important question, and all acknowledged that it was surrounded with difficulties. He did not think more could be done by the legislature of the Province than they had already done, to encourage schools. By the returns it appears that from 20,000 to 25,000 children attended the parish schools, and the province expended annually for their support from £12,000 to £14,000; last session they added 25 per cent, which amounted to £3,000. Much aid had been given by the Legislature for educating the youth of the country, but the people themselves must take a deeper interest in the education of their children before the evils complained of can be fully remedied.

On the Fisheries he had little to say; it only required vessels to be fitted out and manned, and the people had done but little towards making use of this great source of wealth.

He spoke at some length in reference to the action he had taken in the assembly to encourage Emigration. The want of population is now severely felt, and it behooves us, if we wish to carry on the trade of the county successfully, to use some exertion to introduce into the province a portion of the redundant population of the mother country.

This is a short but imperfect sketch of Mr. K's speech, but from what we have been enabled to glean, the constituency will perceive it is sufficient to entitle this gentleman to be placed in the ranks of a reformer and a man of progress.

Mr JOHNSON spoke as follows:

Having been again nominated as one of the Candidates, it behoved him to address them in reference to the Election, and to claim their support, if upon examination of his past conduct, they should approve, and if upon comparing his capabilities with those of the other candidates, they should consider him fit again to serve them.

At the last general Election they had returned him second on the poll, with a clear majority of 370 of all the freeholders who voted. That this majority was obtained for the principles he advocated, and not from motives of personal friendship; that it was the triumph of opinions, not of power, was matter of congratulation and hope. Of congratulation, because to test the strength of those principles, and the extent of those opinions, was the main object of himself and friends; and of hope, that having once decided, this County would stand firm until the Province obtained the reality of Responsible Government—or in other words, the British Constitution in practice as in name.

He would briefly refer to the matters brought before them by the Candidates who had already spoken. The Attorney General had said that Responsible Government had been conceded to the Province, but the Initiative of Money votes should be in the Executive—but the question was whether Responsible Government had been accepted and acted

upon? Had the Government held themselves responsible for the acts of the Governor and of each member of their own body, or had they released themselves from that responsibility by resignation? Had they made it their business during each recess, to prepare such measures as they deemed necessary for the good government and general advancement of the country. Had they obtained the passage of those measures through the Assembly, or failing this, had they said to the Assembly which refused or materially altered these measures, "we cannot govern without the means, or according to your views as opposed to our own," and those who devise and perfect the plans of government must themselves govern. If all this had not been done, then Responsible Government had not been carried out.

The Initiative should be in the Government, but until the money for roads, schools, and other purposes, should be granted in gross to the Counties, and apportioned by the County authorities, it would be dangerous to give up the Initiative, because members opposed to the Government might not be fairly dealt by and must make up their minds either to forsake opposition or forfeit all chance of being again returned.

The Railroad question had been referred to, as the Attorney General did not blame the Northern Members for the course they had pursued, he would say that he did not expect a member of the Government to oppose a Government measure in the house, but he would not say what course he might have taken were he in the Attorney General's place, he expected many years to elapse before he should be called upon to determine that question. He had prophesied the fate of the bill, and that the British Government would never consent to build along the American border.

When this measure had failed, and the Government had proposed to carry out the present scheme, the Northern members had acted in concert and required the line to Miramichi to be included, before they would support the measure, and by the aid of Mr Kerr, he had succeeded in having a renewal of that understanding in the reply to the speech at the opening of last Session.

As a general rule, he considered the representative bound to vote as the majority of his Constituency would do; he was only sent because they could not go; and if they voted contrary to their known opinions, the minority and not the majority would be represented.

In reference to Municipal Corporation, he agreed with those gentlemen who had spoken, that the vote for or against should be taken at the Parishes but he would go further—it should be taken by ballot, and he would say that instead of the present Bill, a simple act of Incorporation, providing for the general mode of Local Government, was all that could be required, leaving the minor details to be settled by local regulations, to suit the requirements of the various Counties.

Vote by Ballot was in his opinion, the only way in which a free, fair, and unbiased representation could be secured.

He never had faith in the present School Law, and did not believe it had effected the good predicted by its friends.

The Fisheries had been referred to by all who had yet spoken, but no reference had been made to the talk of Treaty with the United States. Much use was not made of the Fisheries by our own people, but that arose rather from want of people for all occupations and business in the country, than from ignorance of their value. If the Americans were not prepared to give the free navigation of their waters, and registry of our ships, he was not ready to concede the Fisheries; while we retained these, the advantage ground in treaty was ours, and we could demand that justice which might otherwise be denied to us.

He need hardly say what were his opinions on the other political questions now being agitated. He could not presume that they had been unwelcome of Legislative proceedings during the last four years, or that any departure from his former views in speech or vote; could have escaped their notice and while he had been slandered by the Tory Press, and the grave political charge of making long speeches against the Government, again and again urged as the head and font of his offending, his constancy had been proven out of the very mouths of his accusers. If the Press on the same side of politics lauded a representative, the people might doubt whether he was quite as good as represented, but when the opposing press abused him, then might they be sure he was all right in his political conduct, and true to his colours.

He regretted that the present Election would not be a general trial of political strength in the County, that like other parts of the Province we were giving the go-by to the main question, and dividing upon questions of minor import, but he wished them distinctly to understand, that upon none of those minor questions did he claim their support, though he felt that through them his numbers on the poll might be diminished. He could not consider himself as representing any party but that which sprung from, and was governed by plain political principles. He could not serve two masters.

He knew that much trouble had been taken to injure him in their opinion; that the grossest fabrications had been circulated to his prejudice. These falsehoods had been industriously flyblown into the rotten parts of the County, for in the heat of purification only, where they hatched, and amid corruption only could they exist.

That the County was in the main sufficiently sound in principle and pure in purpose to reject falsehood, and that these fabrications were too absurdly weak to support themselves, and too puerile to be upheld by any shreds of character which their originators might be possessed, he felt equally satisfied. There was more danger of their crushing those who carried them than of their injuring him.

There was however, another weapon more cunning in its invention, and more dangerous because more secret in its use. Some men did not possess even the honest courage to lie boldly; there was always a simulated friendship for their intended victim, a feigned regret for what they term his inconsistencies or imprudence, manifested by these political Bettlers; they did not deposit their odious larvae where they could take immediate action, the flanks and extremities of the body politic were first infected an itching irritation was in time produced, until they were bitten at and swallowed by the credulous and unthinking. He warned them against these vermin in the County, it was not to their representative alone the injury was intended, it was the Principles he advocated they chiefly sought to destroy. Let them attack those openly, and the people would instantly rally round and support the cause and its advocate, but if they could be deceived into opposition of the man by some insidious back door insinuation, the end was gained and the people's cause lost.

It had been well said, that the use of character was to be a shield against calumny. He had been educated among them as a Boy, lived among them