

## POLITICAL NOTES.

A Glance at the Leading Measures Carried in the House of Assembly of New Brunswick, from the Year 1854.

By G. E. FENETY, Fredericton, N. B.

No. 21.

Discussion on the Removal of the Seat of Government Continued—The Intercolonial Railroad—Quite a Breeze, Almost a Gale—End of the Session.

Mr. C. Perley thought it was in the interest of the country to build up towns in the centre of the Province, and for that reason he differed from the Provincial Secretary. In Maine the Legislature had been moved to Augusta to avoid popular pressure. He believed those who voted for this resolution did not deserve the confidence of the country.

The Postmaster General said he should give his vote without regard to his position in the Government, and whether it was well or ill for the Government. As to influence brought to bear, he thought it would be less in a large city than a small one; at all events Fredericton had the advantage of it in this discussion. As a financial question he made up his mind that to move to St. John would effect a saving equal at least to £2,000 a year. He repudiated the idea that the existence of Fredericton depended on the Legislature. Why, it was wilderness all round Fredericton, whereas higher up the river, where they were not dependent on the Legislature, the country was flourishing. Another reason why he wished the Seat of Government removed was that the Courts would be moved to where nine-tenths of the business was done, and the tax upon the people paid for attendance at the Courts would be saved. If members could satisfy him it would cause additional expense he would vote against the resolution if not, he should vote for it.

Mr. Hanington, (the late Hon. Daniel) said this question had not been mooted since 1848, when he voted in favor of the



HON. DANIEL HANINGTON.

removal. He thought the Province would be benefited by the removal. Even if it cost a considerable sum of money he should still vote for it on economical grounds.

Mr. Wilmot took a broader view of the question than other members; he believed the days of this Legislature were numbered that the Colonies would be united, and he did not care how soon he ceased to be a member of this Legislature, with which he had become disgusted.

The Attorney General could not support this question free from embarrassment. He was personally interested in the matter, and those who would follow him were interested. If this were a matter of great public concern and a locality were to be injured reparation should be made to the inhabitants of that locality. The position of the Seat of Government had been wisely chosen for the convenience of the Province. He referred to the cases of the United States and Canada as examples of the central situation of their Legislatures. The population of the Counties around Fredericton had increased in a greater ratio than any of the other Counties except St. John. If they were called upon to-morrow they would fix the Seat of Government here or a little further North. In Halifax members had been stoned in the excitement of the mob, and when the tariff was under discussion here, deputations arrived every day and controlled in different directions every item of the tariff. The state of the country around Fredericton was advancing as rapidly as any other part, and he could show the Postmaster General many finer settlements. He thought this a strange time to moot this question as communication was getting easier, and there came a telegraph as it were to every man's door.

Mr. Gilmor of Charlotte moved in amendment that a Commission be appointed to take the whole subject into consideration during the recess, ascertain cost, obtain plans, &c., &c., and report at the next Session, which was carried 50 to 19.

On the 31st a strong breeze sprang up in the House on the subject of the Intercolonial Railway. The Attorney General moved a resolution for an Address to Her Majesty on the subject of an Intercolonial Railway. This was the result of a consultation with delegates from Nova Scotia

and Canada, and it was believed that the time had arrived when something could be done. Mr. Wilmot said if his Government had been allowed to stand, some arrangement would have been entered into on this subject, and a subsidy would have been granted. He held in his hand papers to which he had referred on the hustings, but he could then only refer to them because they were communicated to him in confidence. Circumstances had changed since the Crimean war. He then went into a consideration of the merits of the present administration, calling them a Government of false pretenses. The Postmaster General defended the position of the present Government. Mr. Gray said the Government had certainly performed their promises, they promised nothing and they had done nothing. Mr. Mitchell cautioned the Attorney General to do justice to the North, giving to the different sections of the Province fair representation in the location of the line. The British Commissioner should select the site. The Provincial Secretary hoped they would decide on some line. If, as his predecessor thought, he could have got an Intercolonial Railway last winter, he supposed there could be no doubt there was a probability of getting it now. Mr. Steadman said that when Great Britain wanted to connect the Atlantic and Pacific, she would assist this Railway and not till then. However, this application would cost nothing, and he would support it. Mr. M'Phelim, Mr. Hanington, Mr. Gilmor, Mr. McIntosh, Mr. M'Pherson and the Surveyor General said a few words. The Attorney General said the manner in which the late Government got into office was a blot on the history of the country. (Hear, hear.) They had trampled on the constitutional liberty of the country. (Hear, hear.) Mr. M'Phelim rose to make some observations, but he was obliged to sit down by the cries of order.

This breeze is indicative of the political feelings of the times when Responsible Government was yet in a transition state. The "Gray and Wilmot Government" as it was called, was composed of honorable, upright men, in whom the interests of any country might be confided, but politically speaking they did not keep pace or act up to what was then considered to be the requirements of the times, by those especially who saw nothing in Responsible Government but political health, wealth and prosperity. But history like this has been repeated over and over again, by successive parties in and out of office—nor had all the misdeeds on the one side, or all the virtues on the other, ceased until about twenty years ago, to be dallied about as terms of reproach or of admiration by contending Politicians. So long as the leading offices are open, as they should be, for the emulation and laudable ambition of the talents of the country, so long will one set of men keep watch over the actions of others, and strike at their misdeeds whether real or imaginary, whether founded upon justice, or in their conceptions of justice.

On the 6th of April the Legislature was prorogued after a two months' Session, said to be unusually short—the average time being three months. It had not been fruitful of important measures—nor was it a Session famous for undue excitement. Parties by this time understood pretty well their relative strength. The one in power was well consolidated; and the new system, by which real authority was recognized and the duties as well as the responsibilities of Ministers defined, divested individual members of much of their influence. If money grants were wanted the government were the parties to apply to, and could not be brought as of yore, upon the floors of the House for lengthy discussion and disposal. Much time was saved, and much more work done in a given period. In short, the Government were now supposed to lead in all important matters—and the country thenceforward would hold them answerable for sound legislation and economical management of the finances. And, yet, on the whole, the system was far from being complete, for want of all the machinery requisite to carry it on, but which was gradually coming in—and for want of precedents and opportunities under certain contingencies, for putting it into practice where experience had not as yet pointed the way. Members, however, were disposed to learn, and willing to be guided by the light they had, in the ways of the Constitution. The opening of the next Session will exhibit one of the Constitutional lessons of which the Government had still something to learn—and that was in the election of a Speaker.

#### Dying on His Feet.

"That man is just dying on his feet." How often the phrase is used with regard to persons brought to death's door by overwork and consequent nervous prostration and debility. They cannot afford time to rest (so they will tell you) and gradually they will reach the stage where their friends speak of them in the words above quoted. For all who have reached the stage or are in broken health from any cause, there is a sure specific in Hawker's Nerve and Stomach Tonic, the great nerve and brain invigorator, blood and flesh builder, and a perfect stomach tonic and aid to digestion.

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#### CURIOUS KINDS OF MONEY.

All Kinds of Commodities Have Been Used by Nations of the Earth.

Probably the earliest money, properly so called, was made of the skins of animals killed in the chase: hunting was one of the earliest occupations of man, and the skins of animals thus formed one of the earliest possessions that were at all permanent in character. Among the oriental and northern nations skins were used to define value, and traces of this still linger where the words for money are derived from names for skin or fur. Leather money circulated in Russia so recently as the time of Peter the Great, and classic tradition tells that the earliest currency of Rome and Carthage was formed of leather; the change was, doubtless, gradual, from an entire skin to something—a skin coin—representing a skin. While in quite modern times the traffic of the Hudson's Bay company with the North Americans was carried on in skins; a gun, for instance, of the value of forty shillings being described as worth twenty "skins," and there was a sort of table, one skin equals two martins, one martin equals one shilling, and so on, mixing up in the queerest way the earliest and latest notions of currency.

Still more prevalent when men reached the pastoral life was the use of cattle as money: if a man who had some weapons or rude agricultural implements wanted to buy a house, he would not barter one for another, but sell his weapons for cattle, and in turn pay cattle for the house. The arms of Diomed are said by Homer to be worth nine oxen, and those of Glaucus worth 100. The tripod—a prize for wrestlers—was valued at twelve oxen, and a captive woman skilled in industry at four. The figure of an ox was the first sign impressed upon coins, and little do most of us think when we are "impecunious" that the word means literally "without cattle," from the Latin "pecus," cattle. Fee is from an Anglo-Saxon word meaning alike "money" and "cattle," and though a consulting physician would doubtless be much surprised at being offered an ox as his remuneration, yet in the "Zend Avesta," one of the sacred books of the East, the fees of physicians are defined in terms of cattle; and "scot," meaning tribute, as in "scot free," has a similar origin.

"Capital," which plays so important a part in modern enterprise, was originally that which was counted "by the head," namely a herd of cattle.

Articles of ornament have frequently been used as currency. There has always been a passion for finery, and the wampumpeag of the North American Indians was nearly as readily converted into food as our own shilling or sovereign. It consisted of beads made of the ends of black and white shells rubbed down and polished, and then strung into belts and necklaces, which were valued according to length, colour and lustre. This was such a well-established currency that the Court of Massachusetts ordered in 1649 that it should be received in payment by settlers to the amount of forty shillings. Cowry shells have also been extensively used for small change; in India the rate used to be 5,000 shells for one rupee, and 200 for a penny. The Fijians used whales' teeth in the same way, exchanging twenty white teeth for one red, as we change shillings for a sovereign.

Corn has served for currency in the remote parts of Europe from the time of the ancient Greeks to the present day, and in Norway it is (or was till quite recently) deposited in banks and lent and borrowed. Olive oil, cocoa-nuts, and almonds have also been extensively used as money and not merely for barter.

The same may be said of eggs in Switzerland, and dried codfish in Newfoundland. In Virginia, in the seventeenth century, people who refused to take payment in tobacco at the rate of three shillings a pound were liable to three years' imprisonment; while the wives of settlers were valued in terms of tobacco, usually 100lb to 150lb. Straw mats, salt, cubes of beeswax, red feathers, and cubes of sugar are amongst the other forefathers of our coins; while there may be some who can remember hand-made nails passing as currency in the villages of Scotland and the coalfields of France—not, it is true, so very far removed from the little silver bars of definite size that have a recognized position in the coinage of the east.

Precious stones have in all ages been used as money, though more often for the purpose of storing a great deal of value in a small compass than for purposes of exchange, and the modern villain who converts his ill-gotten gains into diamonds only follows a custom of immemorial antiquity. Metals of almost every kind have, of course, long been used as money: originally in rough lumps, gradually tending to get more regular in shape and size; but payment in iron, for instance, is scarcely so convenient as by cattle; for a penny would weigh three or four pounds, and a man who had £20 to collect would, if he got it all, have to carry home some six or seven tons.

Copper was actually used in Sweden during the last century as the chief medium of exchange, and merchants had to take a wheelbarrow with them when they went to receive payment in copper dalers.

Oxen and sheep would at least walk off on their own legs. Coins, strictly so called, have not always been made of metal, for porcelain coins were long used in Siam, and leather has sometimes been used as a means of holding a small piece of metal that by itself would have been inconveniently small.

The French at the time of the revolution made coins out of church bells, and an excellent metal it proved to be for the purpose.

Money has frequently been made in other shapes than what we understand by coins; the Goths and Celts frequently formed gold into thick wires rolled into spiral rings, which they wore on their fingers and kept so till they were wanted for trading purposes, much as a good deal of property at the present day is by the aid of the pawnbroker alternately ornament and currency.

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