

of earthly wisdom (unaided from on high) must ever fail to discover to teach to the rising youth entrusted to your care, the sublime science of our holy faith. This and this alone can conduct the soul to immortality and endless life; and yours it is to place it before the youthful mind and press it on the reception of the youthful heart. And remember, that upon the manner in which these duties are discharged depend the immortal interests of those who constitute the objects of your charge! Who then can trifle with such fearful issues? Dear fellow labourers be faithful, and to be faithful you must seek to realize your position and the great results of your labours.

R. J. LANGRIDGE.

Pictou, February, 1866.

For the Christian Messenger.

A Few words about the School Law.

MR. EDITOR,—

Our Legislature have met for the despatch of business, and the country is looking on with deep interest as their policy is being developed. The friends of the Government are anxious that the Acts of 1866 may be held in grateful remembrance. They have many subjects of grave import to meet and provide for. The refusal of the American Government to renew the Reciprocity Treaty will cause embarrassment for a time, but our Yankee neighbours will feel it the most, and it will be their turn next to plead for a renewal of the Treaty even on the same basis. Perhaps the most difficult part of the Government is the last, the equal appropriation of the public monies. That it has not in many cases been so apportioned is apparent to any unprejudiced mind, and will be whilst *Dalhousie* gets the lion's share of the College funds. As far as my observation goes countries enjoying free institutions will never be satisfied until the Tax is equal, and the distribution is also equal. Certainly the Government deserves credit for grappling with the Educational Question and the introduction of Free Schools. The very liberal grant for the cause of Education, shows unmistakably, that they were sincere, and the move was one in the right direction.

A Bill to remodel and change the whole school system of the Province would, as a matter of course, meet with much opposition as it came in contact with the conflicting interests of different parties and individuals. It would be defective in details, and would of course need amendments. Here was a chance for the opponents of the measure to work, and they did work with a vengeance, and succeeded in mutilating the Bill, so that its best friends are ashamed to defend it. Worse and worse have been the amendments. Thus what was really intended as the greatest boon to the country, has been made distasteful to the masses and a source of difficulty to the Government. It is always much easier to draw attention to a grievance, then it is to point out the remedy, yet I think if the real friends of the Government will furnish the real facts during the session, they might aid them very much.

I heard a gentleman from Annapolis tell, that in olden time smuggling was carried on, and that to a large extent. One morning a vessel was boarded by the Revenue officer to the no small amazement of the captain, who was sitting in his cabin chuckling over the success of his voyage, and counting up the profits on his smuggled goods, "Fairly caught!" says the officer, "Well, yes, it seems so. Take something to drink, officer." "I will, and thank you too. Good stuff that." The Captain puts a doubt on over one of the officer's eyes. "I see yet," says he. The Captain placed another over the other eye, "I see nothing now," says he, and put for the shore, leaving the captain to dispose of his cargo to the best advantage.

Government need never expect to get a reliable statement of facts from those whose interest it is to make them believe that as a general thing the Law for promoting the education of the province is working well. Whether they are blinded by doublets, or interest in some other form I know not. But this I do know, that some of the published statements of the working of the Law, as far as my knowledge goes are at variance with the facts. Is it good policy to sing a lullaby, when enemies are preparing to spring a mine beneath our feet? Let the school law be amended by the friends of Free Schools and not by its enemies.

Now Sir, through your kind permission, I will endeavour briefly to point out some of the defects in the present Law, and how it might be remedied. For instance, in poor and scattered districts, where, with the best attention to the subject, they can have a school but one quarter, or at most one half the year, they have as the

Law now is, to tax themselves in double the amount of large and wealthy districts to pay the Teachers' salary at the end of the term, whether three or six months. They are paying not only their share of the Provincial Grant, but a direct Tax collected as the Poor and County Rates, wealthy sections that can have schools all the year round getting the money. This is a flagrant injustice, and calls for an immediate remedy which can be applied by letting the funds from the two above sources accumulate and go to the sole benefit of such districts. And surely the machinery for working the Law might be much simplified, by which the expense would be much lessened.

Let the Legislature take the matter into serious consideration, for there is not one of more vital import before them. As they deal with this question, so will they be dealt with when again they have to appeal to the people.

As to Confederation its friends need not feel any very serious alarm. Circumstances are gradually forcing it on the colonies as a dernier resort. The leading minds of all parties are agreed on the subject. The opposition to the scheme is in most instances but factious and only to blind, to work the School Bill behind the scenes. I do hope that others better qualified will give their views on the subject, through the press, to enable the Government to select from and make such alterations as they may deem best for the general good of the province.

Respectfully yours,

A COLCHESTER FARMER.

For the Christian Messenger.

OBITUARY NOTICE.

MRS. MARGARET MIDDLEMAS,

Relict of the late Geo. Middlemas, was born in Roxburghshire, Scotland, Jan. 12th, 1784, and was married to the late George Middlemas in 1808. In 1817, they came to Nova Scotia, and after a short stay in Liverpool, made their way in the depth of winter through the wilderness to Caledonia. Mrs. Middlemas was the first woman that visited, and made her home in this their wilderness place. There was no carriage road then from Liverpool to her forest home. Her three little children accompanied her, one of whom a babe she brought in her arms, walking the weary distance of 25 miles. With much fortitude and great power of endurance she past through almost incredible hardships, as the devoted pioneer mother of a new country. The community rose around her, and the chamber of sickness often bailed her friendly presence as a ministering angel of comfort. Her home has always been marked with that generous hospitality so characteristic of her own native land. She long survived the hardships of earlier life, and lived to see a populous community with its schools and churches, comfortable homes and refinements rise up around her. Long honored as the mother of the first born child of Caledonia, the benedictions not only of her own offspring to the fourth generation, but of the community fall upon her dust and memory. In childhood she enjoyed the influences of a pious home and the prayers of devoted parents. In early youth she united with the Presbyterian Church at home, and when long removed from its watchcare she still clung to her bible, communed much with God in prayer, and cherished the fond hope of entering into that rest that remaineth for the people of God. Her husband died in 1853, since which time till her death, Feb. 23rd, 1866, she has been tenderly cared for in the family of her son whom she brought here in his infancy. A short time after her husband's death she was left to fill the place of a mother to three little grandchildren. She watched over them with true maternal affection. And in her childhood of age they in turn devotedly administered to her comfort, and now mourn her death as for a mother.

A funeral sermon was preached on the day of her burial by the writer, from Proverbs xiv. 32, "The righteous hath hope in his death." May the hope of support in death, of immortality, of a resurrection and a glorious eternity of perfect happiness, be the rich inheritance of all her mourning kindred.—*Com. by Rev. D. O. Parker.* *Arbordale, Feb. 26th, 1866.*

[Wesleyan please copy.]

Provincial Parliament.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

MONDAY, March 5th.

Petitions were presented by Mr. Colin Campbell, Mr. Ray, Mr. Allison, Mr. Blanchard, Mr. Robicheau, Mr. Whitman, Mr. Kaulback, and Mr. Locke.

A discussion here arose respecting Militia Affairs, introduced by Mr. Colin Campbell. He complained of the expenditure being larger than that for which the legislature had provided, and of the published accounts being complicated, so that it was almost impossible to ascertain what had been expended. He thought the benefits were not an equivalent to the amount appropriated to this service.

Hon. Prov. Secy. did not think that when the papers were brought to the notice of the House, and when the Committee of Public Accounts could be called to examine them, it would be

found, as the hon. member anticipated, that the grant of last year had been exceeded, but believed it would then be seen that the expenditure had been made with that due regard to economy which the House had a right to expect. The purchase of the iron swords referred to had been effected by the late Government, and all the present Government had to do was to discharge the liability thus existing. If they were not steel he said he hoped the day was far distant when any others would be needed.

Mr. Colin Campbell said he hoped members would speak on this subject as they felt.

Mr. Archibald said that the hon. member had suggested a subject that afforded a great field for criticism, but the time was not favorable for the discussion. He inquired what day would be convenient for discussing matters connected with the Pictou Railway.

Hon. Prov. Secy. replied that the following day would be convenient.

Protection of Fisheries.—Hon. Provincial Secretary, as chairman of the committee on this subject, reported to the House a resolution adopted by the committee to the effect that a humble address be presented to Her Majesty the Queen, soliciting aid in the protection of the fisheries on the coast of British North America, and that the Legislative Council be requested to join in such address, a conference with that body being desired by means of a committee on the general state of the Province. The report was adopted.

Hon. Prov. Secy. laid on the table the report of the Chief Commissioner of Railways.

Mr. Pryor and Mr. Shannon introduced bills concerning the City of Halifax.

The Legislative Council, by message, informed the House that they had agreed to the proposed conference.

School Lands.—Hon. Provincial Secretary laid on the table the report of the commissioners appointed to examine and report on the claims of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel to certain school lands within the Province.

Mr. Archibald said this report, sounded more like a dispatch from the Bishop of Nova Scotia than the report of commissioners appointed to examine carefully into the subject. He was perfectly astonished that any commissioners, should undertake to decide the whole matter without giving a hearing to gentlemen representing interests adverse to those of the claimants. The district of Horton was interested in the matter to the extent of about £200 per year, and yet not the slightest intimation had been given to the member representing it that the commissioners were conducting the investigation. He (Mr. A.) represented two other districts that were deeply interested,—one of them, Truro, having appropriated the school lands from year to year to the support of their common schools,—and yet had no idea that the enquiry was being carried on.

Hon. Prov. Secy. said that the Commissioners had been appointed on the recommendation of the committee having charge of the subject last year, and the government were only responsible as to the selections made.

Hon. Mr. Shannon would be sorry to think that the House should be committed by any such report. The subject was a very important and interesting one, and calculated to cause a great deal of discussion.

Mr. Blanchard was glad to hear it admitted that the report was not intended to be viewed as a decision. Whatever the intention was, the commissioners had assumed the right to decide, and had undertaken to decide, without hearing the evidence. The report being so entirely one-sided, he thought there would be no use in referring to it again, but thought that the bills should be revived and sent back to the committee.

Dr. Brown said he was not surprised at the report of the Commission, that had just been read—he was opposed to the appointment of that Commission last Session, because he did not anticipate that any good could come from it. He thought the House was the proper place to try questions involving the rights of the people, and he regretted this question of the school lands had been removed out of the House. He hoped there was no disposition, nor did he believe there was, on the part of the House to adopt the report: such a course would be most unfair, and would be deeply felt by the inhabitants of Horton whom he had the honor to represent.

Mr. McLellan said he had been disposed to report favorably on the Onslow and Horton bills, but some gentlemen thought it better that a thorough investigation should be had, and to this view he had yielded, entertaining no idea that the report would be a statement of one side of the case.

Mr. Blackwood said he had felt disposed to grant the prayer of those petitioning for the sale of the lands, but subsequently gave way to the views of those who were in favour of having the whole question closed up by the labours of commissioners. The report, however, presented nothing like the information that the committee had acquired from hearing the statements of a number of parties, who had come from a distance and remained in town during the investigation. If the House could be put in possession of that information there would be no difficulty in arriving at a decision.

Hon. Attorney General expressed his opinion that the committee should have gone more fully into the investigation.

Hon. Provincial Secretary said that the commissioners, had decided a principle—that where the Society had established a school they were entitled to the land. They then enquired to what extent it could be applied to the cases before them.

Hon. Mr. McFarlane said that even by the showing of the report some of these lands had

lapsed, and it was a subject of important enquiry what was to be done with them. It was not stated whether any value was derived from these teachers. In the opinion of the commission the teacher might be in the district for three days only, in order to give them a title to the lands.

The report was laid on the table for the present.

Hon. Prov. Secretary laid on the table copies of despatches relative to inspection of Prisons.

Hon. Atty. General reported, in part, from the Committee on Printing and Reporting.

TUESDAY, March 6th.

Petitions for various objects were presented by Mr. Miller, Mr. S. Campbell, Mr. Whitman, Mr. Annand, Mr. Blanchard, and Mr. Balcan.

Mr. Bourinot introduced a bill to amend chapter 147 of the Revised Statutes, "Of petty offences, trespasses, and assaults."

Hon. Prov. Sec. laid on the table a copy of a circular relating to Chilian and Spanish prizes.

Mr. Tobin introduced a bill to incorporate the Nova Scotian Chamber of Commerce.

The house in Committee on Bills passed several Coal Mining Bills.

Mr. Archibald introduced a bill to amend and consolidate the laws relating to lunacy.

Reciprocity Treaty.—Hon. Atty. Gen. laid on the table copies of correspondence and documents connected with the Reciprocity Treaty, and, in doing so said he desired to give a few explanations in reference to the action taken by the government, and the reasons inducing them to entertain the request, embodied in these documents, made in December last, asking the government to join in a delegation to Washington.

In November last a deputation from the Canadian government, consisting of the Finance Minister and the Postmaster General of that country, visited Washington. The object of the mission to Washington was two-fold; first to ascertain whether an agreement could be come to, on the faith of which the Government of the United States would withdraw the notice for a year or suspend its operation for that time, and second to ascertain whether some of the subjects forming the substance of the treaty could not be arranged by mutual legislation. It was believed that though some of those subjects were fit only for treaty arrangements, some of them could be dealt with in the way mentioned, as for instance, matters relating to the transit, trade and the warehousing of goods. The object in asking for delay was to ascertain whether some satisfactory agreement could be come to for the present, and to ascertain whether there might be harmony of action between the Governments of the different countries, the Administrator of the Government of Canada addressed to Sir W. F. Williams a despatch in the latter part of December or the early part of January last. The government felt they had but one course of action to pursue. If they declined to accede to the request of Canada and failure had resulted, they would have been fairly open to blame for not endeavouring to obtain some modification, or they might be censured for the entire abrogation of the treaty. In that position, and having little time for deliberation, and knowing that by the 3rd of January, the delegates would leave Canada, the government decided to meet, by a representation consisting of one of its members, the gentlemen appointed on the part of Canada; having first ascertained that it was the intention of New Brunswick also to send a representative for the same purpose. We arrived in Washington about the 15th of the month, and immediately consulted with the British Ambassador, and learned from him that in the present state of affairs it would be utterly useless to attempt to ask a renewal of the treaty; we suggested, however, that it might be possible to obtain a suspension of the operation of the notice, and with his concurrence we called upon the Secretary of the Treasury of the United States, who seemed to adopt favorable views to the continuance of negotiations.

In view of the great interests at stake, and knowing that the trade relations of thirty millions of people were involved, we felt we would not be doing our duty if we left any stone unturned by which the committee could be brought to view favorably propositions for reciprocal free trade. We debated the matter for two or three days, and after obtaining a favourable hearing we were in expectation of receiving propositions such as we could fairly consider; but I must say all of us felt very much grieved and disappointed on receiving the document which has been published. Having arrived at that stage of the proceedings, we felt we would not be consulting the true interests of those whom we represented were we to entertain the proposals, and we therefore, after declining to take them into consideration, broke up the negotiations.

Cattle Disease.—Mr. Hill enquired of the government whether any steps had been taken for the prevention of the cattle disease. He thought the importance of this subject could not be overrated.

Hon. Prov. Secretary replied that the subject was under the consideration of the Government, and that it was their intention to introduce a bill relating to it.

Hon. Atty. General said that in the early part of the session of the United States Congress an act was passed prohibiting the importation of cattle from any country. While the delegates were in Washington it having come to the notice of the authorities that hides were being imported these articles were put in quarantine, and it was made compulsory that even the cows carried in the steamers should be slaughtered on their arrival.

Mr. Archibald expressed himself in favour of arming the government with almost arbitrary