

DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY,

DURING THE

SECOND SESSION OF THE TWENTY-THIRD PARLIAMENT

OF THE

PROVINCE OF NOVA SCOTIA.

1865.

JOHN GEORGE BOURINOT,
Reporter to House of Assembly.

HALIFAX, N. S.:

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1865.

The petitions were allowed to lie on the table.

PETITIONS.

Mr. LOCKE called the attention of the Government to a petition which he held in his hand from the inhabitants of the county of Shelburne, for a road connection with the County of Annapolis. As the Government intended building a railroad to Annapolis, the inhabitants of Shelburne naturally wished to have better means of communication with the fine agricultural county of Annapolis than they now possessed. He believed, if the Union of the Colonies was consummated, that Shelburne might become one of the great outlets of trade. (Laughter.) All the people asked was an expenditure of \$20,000 or \$30,000.

Mr. BOURNOUT would suggest that the petition lay on the table until such time as the Annapolis Railway was completed.

Hon. PROV. SEC. said that the petition was deserving of consideration; but it should be sent, in accordance with the rules of the House, to the Financial Secretary.

Mr. KILLAM thought it would be as well to understand whether a petition from the people asking for aid towards some particular object should be discussed by the House, or go first to the Government. As it was now, if the Government did not choose to accede to the prayer of a petition, there was an end of it—nothing was heard about it. He thought it best that every petition should come first before the House, who might send it to a Committee or to the Government.

Hon. PROV. SEC. said that he did not see the use of interfering now with an established rule of the House. If any gentleman considered that the Government had not treated any petition presented to them as it deserved, it was always in his power to move for its production, and test the opinion of the House on the subject.

Mr. LOCKE said he would place the petition in the hands of the Government, with the hope that they would give it that favorable consideration which it deserved.

Hon. FIN. SECRETARY stated that it was his intention to publish the petitions handed to him, when they made up any number.

Mr. ARCHIBALD said that if any gentleman wished, he could always call the attention of the Government in the House to any particular petition in which he felt an interest, and then hand it to the Financial Secretary. He had no doubt that if a road could be made as asked for in the petition in question, a great boon would be conferred on the county of Shelburne.

DESPATCH.

Hon. PROV. SECRETARY laid on the table despatches relative to the appointment of Hon. Mr. Johnston as Equity Judge, Hon. W. A. Henry as Attorney General, and Hon. J. W. Ritchie as Solicitor General, and member of the Executive Council.

POST OFFICE REPORT.

Hon. PROV. SEC. laid on the table the Annual Report of the Postmaster General. This report, the hon. gentleman stated, was most satisfactory. Notwithstanding there had been an increase of expenditure entailed by the recommendations of the Post Office Report, the deficiency in the Department was less than during

the previous year. 7 new Post Offices, and 51 Way Offices had been provided for. Only 3 Way Offices had been closed. The number of letters carried through the Post Office was 1,535,864, being an increase of 66,408 over the previous year. The number of newspapers was 3,941,115, or an increase of 276,793 over 1863. 20 new mail routes had been established, and 8 closed,—making a balance of 12 established. The number of mail routes was 4,473. The amount derived from postage-stamps was \$18,576, being an increase of over \$5,000 over 1863. 5 unregistered money letters lost, and 3 registered, said to be tampered with. The net revenue for 1864 was \$53,207.61, being an increase of \$8,032.90 over the previous year.—The expenditure was \$73,163.61, an increase of only \$2,774.53, whilst the increase of revenue was \$8,032.90. Hence the deficit was \$5,258.37 less than the previous year. The amount of money-orders on Great Britain was \$20,000; the amount passing through the Province, \$120,000. The commissions on money orders amounted to \$1,120.44: the business in money orders has nearly doubled since 1863, and a large additional amount of labor is therefore entailed upon the person in charge. Under these circumstances, the Postmaster General asks for an increase of salary for Mr. Thompson—from \$800 to \$1,000 a year.

The petition was referred to the Post Office Committee.

INFORMATION ASKED FOR.

Mr. TOBIN asked the Government to lay on the table at an early day, returns exhibiting the extent and nature of the trade of the Provinces of Canada, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland, including a statement showing the value of public property, including railways, steamers, public buildings, &c., including all property that would be transferred to the General Government in case of the proposed Union of the Colonies being consummated.

Hon. PROV. SECRETARY recognized at once the propriety of the Government being able to place before the House all the information they possibly could in reference to a question of such magnitude, but he was afraid that his hon. friend had imposed a task which to some extent it would be difficult to perform. It would be difficult in the case of this province and New Brunswick—to give an accurate estimate of some of the public property, the Government House for instance.

Mr. ANNAND thought there would be some difficulty in procuring a reliable statement, such as that asked for, from some of the provinces, more especially that of Newfoundland. He observed that so far as Canada was concerned the information sought was easily obtainable.

Mr. TOBIN said that his reason for asking for the information was that he had heard gentlemen complain that they had not the materials within their reach to enable them to take up this question, and deal with it as it should be dealt with.

Mr. BOURNOUT suggested that the information sought be furnished by the hon. member for Colchester, (Mr. Archibald,) who appeared to have collected a great variety of statistics on the subject of a Union.

Mr. ARCHIBALD pointed out that a great deal of the information required could be ob-

tained in the Public Accounts of Canada, which were within the reach of every gentleman. He saw some difficulty, however, in reference to Newfoundland.

THE SCHOOL ACT.

Mr. JOHN CAMPBELL presented a petition from Port Medway, and another from Lower Port Medway, against the School Bill.

FREE GRANTS TO AGED TEACHERS.

Mr. PARKER presented a petition from T. Ryan, an aged school teacher, asking for a free grant of land. This person, he stated, had been a teacher for 40 years, and was every way deserving of this favor.

Hon. PROV. SEC. called attention to the fact that the House had, at the close of last session, declared by a vote of 22 to 11 against the policy of free grants, and that the subject could not now be properly brought up.

Mr. LONGLEY said that if the House wished to prevent other petitions of the same nature coming up, it was advisable to shut out the present one at once.

Mr. KAULBACK was in favor of allowing the reception of the petition, and stated that he had one himself to present, which, through some inadvertency of his own, he had not presented last session.

Hon. PROV. SEC. thought much inconvenience would result if such petitions were allowed to come in after the House had declared against the policy of free grants.

Mr. ARCHIBALD said that the petitioner in the present case was a very respectable person, and thought it hard to shut him out. He thought it might be as well to receive the petition, and see if the Committee on Education would continue the policy it advised last session.

Hon. Mr. SHANNON expressed himself against allowing the question to be opened up again, after it had once been decided.

Mr. ARCHIBALD suggested that the petition lie on the table for the present, in order that it might be seen whether any others of a similar character would come up.

Mr. S. CAMPBELL said that he did not think it wise to contravene a policy adopted by the House by a large majority, and he moved that the petition be not received.

Mr. TOBIN thought it hard treatment to shut out a worthy petitioner. Many things considered by the House unwise at one time, were differently considered by the House at a subsequent period. He was in favor of donating free grants of land to worthy individuals, and in that way opening up our waste tracts.

Hon. J. McDONALD was always in favor of granting free grants of land to aged school-teachers, and had not yet changed his mind; but it would be seen that the House had declared against the policy, and therefore he did not see how the question could now be revived with propriety.

Hon. ATTY. GENERAL alluded to the fact that he had moved the following resolution against the adoption of the recommendation of the Education Committee, which had carried: "Resolved, that that portion of the Report which refers to free grants of land, be not received; but that the grants as heretofore be made, the petitioners to pay the expense of survey; but that owing to the largely increasing number of applicants it is unwise to continue the policy of making free grants here-

after." Hence it would be seen that the reason given for discontinuing the grants was the large number of applicants, and if it existed now of course the House would be bound to continue the policy. Therefore he thought it would be best to allow the petition to lay on the table in order that it might be seen whether any number of applicants would appear. If only a few appeared, then it might be favorably considered.

Mr. S. McDONNELL thought it would be wrong policy to repeal the action of last year.

Mr. BOUKINOT was in favor of giving aged teachers these free grants as some return for their services to the country. It was well enough for the hon. gentlemen in whose counties all the aged teachers were already supplied to declare now against the policy, but it should be remembered that there were other counties that might be differently situated.

The amendment moved by Mr. Stewart Campbell was put to the House and carried on a division by—yeas 20, nays 18.

Mr. PARKER gave notice to rescind.

DALHOUSIE COLLEGE.

Mr. LONGLEY presented a petition from the Baptist Convention, on the subject of Dalhousie College.

Mr. PARKER objected to the reception of the petition on the ground that it dealt with a matter already disposed of by the House.

The petition was read, and allowed to lie on the table.

The House adjourned until 3 o'clock the next day.

WEDNESDAY, Feb. 15.

The House met at 3 o'clock.

FREE GRANTS OF LAND.

Mr. Kaulback presented a petition from J. Dowley, an aged school-teacher, asking for a free grant of land.

Mr. DONKIN presented a petition from Mr. Desbrisay, of Cumberland, on the same subject.

VICE-ADMIRALTY COURT.

Hon. ATTY. GEN. laid on the table copies of correspondence relative to the appointment of officers of the Court of Vice-Admiralty.

ST. PETER'S CANAL.

Mr. LEVESCONTE asked the Government to lay on the table the report of the engineer on the St. Peter's Canal, and if they intended to make provision for the completion of that work.

Hon. PRO. SEC. replied that the report was now under the consideration of the government, who would be prepared to give the hon. gentleman the information he required in a few days.

THE MILITIA CONVENTION.

Mr. STEWART CAMPBELL then said:—When the Militia Committee was under consideration yesterday, I referred to the fact that a body of gentlemen were meeting daily, in this city, in connection with militia affairs. How this body has been appointed—for what purpose, it is constituted—how it is to be paid—what are its functions, are questions I cannot answer. I only gather from information outside the walls of this House, that there is such a body in existence. I consider that this Legislature, constituted as it is, is fully able, and fully autho-