

Mr. RAY presented a petition from Mr. G. R. Grassie for remuneration for Crown Services performed.

Mr. TOBIN presented a petition from 225 of the congregation of the German Evangelical Lutheran Church of Lunenburg against the bill introduced yesterday by Mr. Jost.

The bill and petitions were referred to the Committee on Private Bills.

Mr. D. FRASER presented a petition from Pictou for a grant to build a hospital.

Hon. ATTY. GEN. laid on the table for information of members a copy of the bill introduced by the Committee of Ways and Means into the United States House of Representatives containing the duties proposed to be levied on articles heretofore included in the free list.

BILLS.

The bills to incorporate the Washington Pier and Harbor Company, the Nova Scotia Chamber of Commerce, the Ophir Mining Company, the Merrigomish Coal Mining Company, and the Strait of Canso Marine Railway Company, were read a second time and referred to the Committee on Private Bills.

UNION OF THE COLONIES.

Hon PROV. SEC.—By command of His Excellency I beg leave to lay on the table of the House copies of correspondence relating to the Union of the Colonies. The House is aware that both branches of the Legislature at the last Session passed a resolution in favor of re-opening negotiations for the Union of the Maritime Provinces. When that resolution was under discussion I stated that we had not only no reason to suppose that Prince Edward Island would be prepared to co-operate with the other Colonies in this matter, but we had every reason to anticipate that she would decline to re-open negotiations. At the same time it was thought desirable that an effort should be made to ascertain whether Nova Scotia and New Brunswick could not be brought under the government by a legislative union. The government and the legislature had initiated the policy of a Legislative Union of the Maritime Provinces at the previous session, and owing to circumstances detailed last year the negotiation arising from their action had been postponed, and the greater question of a union of all British North America was brought under consideration. When, however, an immediate union of that kind was found impracticable from the fact that the people of New Brunswick had returned a majority in the new House opposed to the scheme, the Government felt it their duty to revert to their former policy, and in discussing that resolution, I stated that so far from a legislative union of this and the adjoining Province in the slightest degree impeding the larger union, we regarded it as likely to promote that union and as being indispensable to the latter. Upon this subject I have always entertained very strong opinions, and have always felt there were a great many reasons why it was desirable that the Governments of the three Maritime Provinces should be carried on in a united form in case they agreed to enter into the proposed Confederacy. The resolution to which I have referred met with the unanimous approval of the House. I do not mean to say that there were not individual gentlemen who did not concur in the policy proposed, but the reso-

lution must be accepted as the unanimous expression of the opinion of the Legislature. The attention of the Government of New Brunswick was invited to the action thus taken, and corresponding action was adopted by the Legislature of that Province. Subsequently a delegation to England took place from the Governments of the two Provinces, and although the two Governments differed widely in their opinions upon the larger question, they were completely in accord as to the desirability of a Legislative Union of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, and the views which the delegates for New Brunswick expressed upon this matter entirely corresponded with our own. I am aware that these gentlemen urged all the reasons in their power on the Imperial Government to induce their concurrence in the policy adopted. I have stated in detail the results of that delegation and the reception it met at the hands of Her Majesty's Government, and I am frank to say that after the fullest and most unreserved communication on the question we were given to understand that while no antipathy existed to the Legislative Union proposed, that Government having so fully committed themselves to the scheme of Confederation, were unwilling to revert to any policy which would seem to indicate that their opinions had undergone a change or modification, and under these circumstances they were not prepared to give authority to revert to the question of a legislative union, except that question were taken up and passed upon as auxiliary to, and intended to promote, the larger union.

While we were quite at liberty to urge our opinions in favor of a union of the maritime provinces as being conducive to that object, we were not prepared, and the Government of New Brunswick were by no means prepared, to adopt the policy with that view, for, as is well known, they were specially charged to oppose confederation upon the basis of the Quebec scheme. While the delegates, used every means to induce her Majesty's Government to concur with reference to the union of the lower colonies, that Government refused their assent upon the grounds stated. The correspondence contains copies of despatches in reference to the adoption of confederation, which the Imperial Government continue to urge on all the colonies by every argument in their power, and by the use of that influence which they consider themselves entitled to exercise, from the relative position of the countries in a question which they regard as vitally affecting the prosperity of British North America. It also contains despatches setting forth their reasons for declining to assent to the re-opening of the proposed negotiations.

Hon PROV SECY laid on the table a statement asked for by the hon member for Inverness (Mr. Blanchard) in reference to payments for road services. Also, plans and specifications of bridges and returns of engineers, inspectors, &c. on the Pictou Railway.

Mr BLANCHARD introduced a bill to incorporate the Nova Scotia Slate Company.

EDUCATION.

Hon PROV SECY then said:—Mr Speaker, as chairman of the Committee of Education, I beg leave to report in part, from that committee, a bill to amend the act "for the better encouragement of Education," both in relation to