

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 suggested 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 1,537,861, being an increase of 65,408 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 \$2,774.33, 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-