

The Newfoundlandlander.

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HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

MONDAY, Feb. 8.

The House met pursuant to adjournment. The Hon. ATTORNEY GENERAL gave notice that, on this day, to-wit, the 8th inst., he would move the House into Committee of the Whole, on the subject of the Union of this Island with the Dominion of Canada.

Mr. GLEN gave notice that, on to-morrow, he would ask the hon. Colonial Secretary for a return of the amount expended by the Commissioners for relief of the able-bodied poor in the Ferryland District, viz:—

Amount expended by—Leary in Renews, " by Wm. Carter in Ferryland, " by M. Williams in Bay Bulls.

The following notices, given on the first day of the session, were accidentally omitted in the report of that day's proceedings.

Mr. TALBOT gave notice that, on to-morrow, he would move that the salary of the Sergeant-at-Arms, shall not exceed the sum of \$200.

Mr. TALBOT also gave notice that, on to-morrow, he would move that the reporting and publishing of the debates of the House, as at present provided for, be discontinued.

Mr. TALBOT also gave notice that, on to-morrow, he will ask leave to bring in a Bill to abolish the present office of Surveyor General, and to provide for the Land Service, by combining it with the duties of the Chairman of the Board of Works.

Pursuant to Order of the Day, the House resolved itself into Committee of the Whole on the Address of thanks, Mr. KNIGHT in the chair.

The fourth section of the Address having been read, as follows:—

"We are pleased to learn that Your Excellency's personal exertions in endeavoring to settle the vexed question of the French Shore, have been so far successful that there is now a prospect of its being arranged in a manner advantageous to both parties interested in it, and that the Policy indicated in Lord Carnarvon's despatch, of the 7th December, 1865, has been so far modified that Your Excellency will now be enabled to issue Grants under certain restrictions for Mining and other purposes in that locality."

Hon. RECEIVER GENERAL.—This is a great crisis in our world's history, and not confined to any particular country. Sweep your eye over the orb which we inhabit, you there observe a succession of events that must elate and surprise the dwellers thereon. The very crust that envelopes the habitable globe, seems to be worn out by the combustion of the central fires. Earthquakes tear asunder the solid crust and suddenly engulf not only the works of man but man himself. Volcanoes, the canyons of these central fires, are loud with fumes and fury. Soras sweep the ocean and engulf the floating argosies that career upon its bosom, swallowing up the treasures and the men which they contain. Let us circumscribe our view and regard our own Island, what do we see? The stalwart inhabitants of the country fleeing from its shores, and those remaining are stricken with poverty and deprived of their very self-reliance. Widows weeping for their husbands who have been torn from their arms; mothers for their sons who have been untimely reft from them; children looking in vain for the parents who will never again return to care them. He (Hon. R.G.) did not speak of these things for the purpose of fostering despair. He still saw in this Island all the elements of wealth which it had ever possessed. Her fisheries were liable to be as productive as ever. New elements of wealth present themselves which capitalists are anxious to explore. In a crisis such as this we surely ought not to exhaust our strength and temper in imprudent and acrimonious debates. That was why he spoke of these things. He calmly stated these circumstances which were patent to every one acquainted with the history of the world. To those who feel with the greatest intensity the sufferings of the people, it must be apparent that we, as Representatives of the people, to whom is entrusted the serious care of searching out the causes of the misfortunes of the people, should come dispassionately to the considerations which would enable us to embody in Legislation the curative processes which will in some degree remove those overwhelming afflictions. After this exordium, which he hoped hon. gentlemen would not consider exaggerated, he would enter on a short review of the substantial matters contained in His Excellency's speech. The first important matter presenting itself is the circumstance that the Executive have taken upon themselves the responsibility of inducing His Excellency to issue a Proclamation restoring the issue of Poor Relief to the disabled and the infirm. He (Hon. R.G.) had always dreaded the consequences of indiscriminate Relief to the able-bodied poor. He had foreseen that it would deprive the people, and drag down to one common level the industrious men of the Island. His views on this subject had been repeatedly before the public, and their publication had subjected him to ridicule, and ultimately to the loss of official position; but he had the satisfaction of seeing that at the present time every one recognised the necessity of acting upon those principles which he had from time to time laid down. In 1868 this system of indiscriminate relief reached its culminating point, and when nearly a quarter of a million of dollars had been expended, it was high time for Government to stay its hand. It required great honesty on the part of supporters of the Government to sustain the Executive policy, and it was highly creditable to them if they had done so, and hon. members opposite, with one or two exceptions, had very fairly responded to the necessity of the act. The next question to which attention is called is the subject of territorial rights on the French Shore. Last year he (Hon. R.G.) had crossed the Atlantic, and had had two interviews with the Duke of Buckingham, who had made promises which he had faithfully fulfilled. At

his own expense he had remained for a considerable time in London, and while there, unauthorized by the Executive, he had presented to his Grace the following memorial.

"TO HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM AND CHANDOS.

"May it please your Grace.—The memorial of John Kent, member of the Executive Council of Newfoundland, and member of the House of Assembly for St. John's.

"Humbly sheweth,

That memorialist was appointed in 1859 joint British Commissioner in connection with Commodore Damp, on the part of Great Britain, and the Marquis De Montaigne and the Count De Gobineau on the part of France, to take evidence on the causes of dispute arising between the fisherman of both nations on that part of the coast commonly called the French Shore.

"That since that period all causes of complaint have ceased, owing to the British fishermen having discontinued to resort to that part of the coast for the purposes of the fishery. That now a new question was arisen, growing out of a knowledge that British Residents possess, that valuable deposits of minerals exist on that part of the Island. That the Governor of Newfoundland has been prohibited, as your Grace is aware, to issue licences of search for said minerals.

"That your memorialist humbly submits that he is a question of this nature was never contemplated by the framers of the treaty of Utrecht, still the terms of that treaty are sufficiently comprehensive to embrace every necessary condition to enable Her Majesty's Government to issue licences of search for minerals, or for any other purpose unconnected with the fisheries.

"A perusal of article 13 of the above mentioned treaty will clearly show the limited rights of the French; and that the utilization of the soil for agricultural or mineral or any other purposes outside of those limited rights, and not interfering with their fishing privilege, belongs to the prerogative of the Queen.

The terms of the treaty carefully exclude the French from the exercise of any Dominion over the soil.—The treaty does not acknowledge the right on the part of the French to remove fixed settlements belonging to British subjects. That right, by the declaration of His Britannic Majesty attached to the treaty of Versailles in 1763, is reserved to the Sovereign of Great Britain.

"The French are prohibited from remaining on the Island after the termination of the fishing season.

"Memorialist humbly submits that at the present time there are many reasons to induce Her Majesty's Ministers to view this question in a favorable point of view. As the population of the Island increases, the fisheries are not sufficient to support the inhabitants. Poverty in consequence is wide spread. The large bounties given by the Government of France for the encouragement of their fisheries, and the exclusion of British fish from the markets of France, by imposing on its importation a prohibitory duty, tend to increase the difficulties of our fishermen. The Newfoundland Government are most anxious to open up new resources for the employment of the people. The mineral wealth of the Colony is beginning to attract the attention of capitalists. Under these circumstances the denial of the right of search for minerals on the part of H. M. Government, is considered by the Colonists as a very strained interpretation of the treaties; and that denial is felt the more, as it emanated altogether from H. M. Government, the French authorities never having objected to any occupation of the soil on the part of British settlers who did not interrupt by their competition the fishermen of France; and further, when the Government of Newfoundland appointed a Stipendiary Magistrate in George's Bay, within the limits of the French rights of fishery, the French authorities made no remonstrance, as it was considered no violation of the treaty rights of the nation.

"Memorialist further begs to inform your Grace that in Paris, a few days ago, he had a conversation with Admiral the Marquis de Montaigne, the former Commissioner, who expressed an opinion that he considered it a great hardship that British subjects were denied the right of exploration on the French Shore, and he also stated that he was satisfied that if a negotiation was entered into with the Government of France, an arrangement satisfactory to all parties would be concluded.

"In submitting the foregoing statement for your Grace's consideration, memorialist declares that the parties who take a leading interest in this question are those most attached to the present state. They see Nova Scotia, perhaps without cause, distracted and divided, and they do not wish that the just discontent of Newfoundland should swell the chorus of disunion.

"They wish to see the Dominion of Canada composed of a series of contented Colonies, indebted to the mother Country for the charter of their rights, and in the hour of danger her support, and not her weakness.

"All which your memorialist humbly submits for your Grace's consideration.

After presenting this memorial he received a communication to the effect that the Governor had been requested to come home to take the whole matter into consideration. With regard to the mail service, he believed that general satis-

faction had been given. At present a moiety of the subsidy was paid by the Imperial Government, and the remainder by the Colony; but at the expiration of three years we will have to bear the whole amount of that subsidy, £9,000 sterling. The next question referred to is the great question of Confederation, which embraces every phase of our present state, social, political and financial. It concerns our relations in regard to our own internal Government, our brother colonists, the mother country, and foreign countries. We have to ask ourselves the simple question—Is the present state of things satisfactory? If every hon. member ask himself that question, in the silent solitude of the night, when the outer world and all its considerations are excluded, when the conscience works most powerfully, he must declare that the present condition of affairs is not as we would have it? The next question, then, is whether the present constitution of the country is capable of rectifying and removing the evils that afflict it. If the majority of this Assembly should determine that at the present constitution is powerless for good, we have to determine what remedial measure is necessary to restore confidence to the people, and produce that state of things which was the object of Henry the Fourth's desire, that every peasant in his dominions should have a fowl in his pot. The next question is whether or not our fellow colonists are anxious to associate with us. If that be so, ought we to shut out the bare consideration of the question, or ought we not to see whether it would be advisable to secure a form of Government which would rescue us from our Slough of Despond? Are the terms fair and equitable which the Dominion Government offer us? They offer to relieve us of a great portion of our official expenditure, which, presuming Mr. Pensen's figures to be correct,—

Mr. GLEN.—Nabockish.

Hon. RECEIVER GENERAL.—Presuming these to be correct, this expenditure amounts to \$223,000, and they offer to subsidize us to the amount of \$116,500. They offer us a tariff by which all the articles of primary consumption are duty free. He held in his hand an enumerated list of the articles admitted free under that tariff, which were as follows:—

Extract from Canadian Tariff, assented to in May, 1863, showing Sundry Goods admitted free under said Act, imported from Ports not within the Dominion, all articles grown, produced or manufactured therein, being free:—

Bark used for dyeing; Waxing or Watening; Anchors; Ashes, Pot, Pearl and Salt; Bread and Biscuit from Great Britain; Cattle Wicks, Cotton; Cocoa Paste from Great Britain; Cotton Netting for India Rubber Shoes; Cotton Waste; Cotton Wool; Farming Implements and Utensils, when imported by Agricultural Societies for the encouragement of Agriculture; Salt for Huts and Boats; Fire Brick; Wax, Linseed, Tallow and Seals, Linen and Twines; Flax Waste; Junk; Lumber, plank and Sawed of Mahogany, Rosewood, Walnut, Cherry, and Chestnut, and Fir or Pine; Machinery when used in the original construction of Mills, &c.; Nails, Composition; Nails, Sheathing; Oakum; Oil Cake; Philosophical Instruments and Apparatus, including Globes, when imported by, and for the use of Colleges and Schools, Scientific or Literary Societies, Printing Ink; Printing Presses, except portable hand Printing Presses; Ships' Binnacle Lamps; Blocks and Patent Bushes for Blocks; Bunting, Cables, Iron Chain, over half an inch, shackled or swivelled, or not; Compasses, Dead Eyes, Dead Lights, Deck Plings, Iron, Rudder's Masts or parts of, Iron, Pumps and Pump-Gear, Rudder Irons, Shackles, Sieves, Signal Lamps, Steering Apparatus, Travelling Trucks, Wedges, Wire Ropes, Cables, hemp and grass, when used for ships or vessels only; Cordage, when used for ships or vessels only; Sail Cloth or Canvas from No. 1 to 6, when used for ships or vessels only; Varnish, Black and Bright, when used for ships or vessels only; Spikes, Composition, Twists, Silk for Hats Bots and Shoes; Veneering of Wood or Ivory; Wire Cloth of Brass and Copper, Brass—Bar, Rod, Sheet and Scrap, cranks for Steam Boats, forged in the rough, Cranks for Mills, Copper in Pig, Bars, Rods, Bolts, and Sheets, and Scaffolding Iron of the descriptions following:—Strap, Rivet, or Pig, Puddled in Bars, Blooms and Biles, Biles and Spikes galvanized, Lead in Sheet or Pig, Rail Road Bars, Steel, wrought or cast, in Bars or Rods, Steel Plate, cut to any form, but not moulded, Tin in Bar, Blocks, Pig or granulated, Type Metal, in Blocks or Pigs, Wire of Brass and Copper, round or flat, Yellow Metal in bolts, bars and for sheathing, Zinc in sheets, blocks and pigs, Coal and Coke, Cocoa, Bean and Shell, Corkwood, Corkwood Bark, Eggs, Flour, Wheat and Rye, Flax, undressed, Fire Clay, Firewood, Fish, Fresh, not to include Oysters or Lobsters in tins or Kags, Fish Bait, Furs, undressed, Grain of all kinds, Hay, Hemp, undressed, Hides, Hops, Horas, Indian Corn, Indian Meal, Indian Rubber, unmanufactured, Manilla Grass, Manures, Moss for upholstery purposes, Ores of Metals, of all kinds, Pelis, Pitch, Plants, Roots, Rosin, Salt, Seeds for Agriculture, Horticulture or Manufacture purposes, Straws, Skins, undressed, Tails, undressed, Tanned Hides, Tar, Turpentine, unmanufactured, Turpentine, undressed, Turpentine other than spirits of, Vegetables, culinary, Whale Oil, in the casks from on ship board, and in the condition in which it was first landed, Wood of all kinds, wholly unmanufactured, Wool.

NOTE.—About 150 articles of Raw material necessary for domestic manufactures admitted free, in addition to the enumerated articles already described.

CIRCULAR—15.—Under the head of "Ships" it will be observed that four articles, viz., "Cables of Hemp and Grass," "Cordage," "Sail Cloth or Canvas from No. 1 to 6, and Varnish, black or bright, are free only, when used for ships or vessels.

Entry of these goods must be accompanied with a declaration on oath, that they are to be used for vessel only. When duty paid, a drawback will be allowed when evidence is furnished satisfactory to the Collector at whose Port the duty thereon was paid, that such articles have been actually used in the building, repairing or rigging or outfit of a ship or vessel.

This tariff, then, is proposed to be substituted for our present local tariff, under which every article, from a cable used as a sheet anchor, is subject to taxation. Under our present tariff the gross Revenue does not amount to the official expenditure proposed to be defrayed by the Dominion, with the further sum required to liquidate our local expenditure. Supposing, then, that we should accept this offer, it would be the result? Should we reduce our present constitution, so as to square with its lessened responsibility? Such reduction might readily be effected, without any diminution of efficiency, and the total expenditure might be as follows:—

Colonial Secretary.....	\$4,000
Board of Works.....	4,000
Court Houses and Goals.....	8,000
Judicial Department.....	14,000
Repairs of Buildings.....	2,000
Police.....	35,000
Poor Relief.....	90,000
Education.....	65,000
Interest on debt.....	63,000
Pensions.....	9,000
Fire Guns.....	629
Ferries.....	1,723
Legislative Contingencies.....	16,000
Miscellaneous.....	5,000

Total \$314,337

This provides on a scale equal to the present for every species of official expenditure, with the exception of Legislative contingencies, which, under a new constitution, might easily be reduced. This expenditure amounts in all to \$315,000. The grant from the Dominion amounts to \$116,000, so that every year a sum of \$103,000 would be left us for roads—an amount which no local government can hope to have at its disposal for years to come. Vessels too will be admitted without the imposition of light dues, which would at present be to us a saving of \$22,000 per annum. Another item we shall have to bear if we continue as we are, is the subsidy to the mail Steamers, amounting in all to \$13,200, one half of which is now paid by the Imperial Government. The Dominion Government undertakes the responsibility of bearing our debt amounting to \$1,500,000. Our debentures having the stamp of the Dominion, would be equal in value to their own, so that in the London markets our 5 per cents, now unsaleable, would be worth 95, and our 6 per cents from 106 to 103. But how are we to pay the public debt if we remain as we are? There is a grave responsibility of maintaining the credit of the colony incumbent upon all future legislatures, as will appear from the following statement:—

Our Public Debt is as follows:—

Amount Consolidated and payable at the option of the Government \$311,830 22

Amount unpaid of Debentures issued for compensation for losses sustained by election riots, and payable out of future Road Grants

Amount repayable from year 1868	1,535 81
" "	4,816 20
" "	8,864 43
" "	7,469 84
" "	7,732 16
" "	6,603 40
" "	317,733 70
" "	25,540 16
" "	203,616 49
" "	899 25
" "	670 97
" "	25,103 01
" "	24,900 03
" "	33,910 02
" "	23,076 93
" "	23,076 07
" "	19,652 07
" "	3,426 02

\$1,047,669 60

253,559 73

\$1,306,230 33

How shall we pay the public debt if we remain as we are? Here is a responsibility which we must face if we refuse the offer of the Dominion. To whom do we turn this money, represented by the public debt? To the bone and sinew of the country, who, with a longing desire for the future independence of their children have denied themselves comforts and worked late and early in the accumulation of this money. Did not this present to hon. members a serious subject of consideration? Prudent men regarding these things will be constrained to say, "let us associate ourselves with the neighbouring Colonies who are possessed of inextinguishable resources, who will tax us lightly and who, when they regard our geographical position as the bulwark of the St. Lawrence, will not haggle at slight pecuniary considerations." How will the matter affect us in regard to our foreign relations? We see the manner in which our own territory is dealt with, and can we for a moment fancy that our small country with its sparse population could produce the same impression in determining the correct construction of these treaties as if we were united to four millions of men and formed an aggregate Dominion of all the Colonies. Then with regard to the question of Reciprocal free trade with America, suppose that the Americans would agree to change us no duty, it would be impossible for us to remit the duties which we impose so as to give full effect to the arrangement. If such a thing were attempted at present, it would result in colonial insolvency. Then, how were we in position to open up new sources of Commerce upon the basis of free trade with the vast countries of Brazil, Mexico, &c., and when we find from the report lately published in Canada, that there are twelve millions of men daily consuming the same produce which we export, if then we had any means of opening up proper negotiations with these markets, so as to establish some fiscal arrangement, it would be of large advantage to the people of this country. Now he (Hon. R. Gen.) stated his opinion. He had been charged with self-interested motives. He did not see how Confederation could possibly benefit him. He was satisfied that the hon. members opposite, who indulged in these charges did not really believe them themselves, and only wished to show that they were skilled in the art of ingeniously tormenting. But what was the position which the Executive took on this question? Did it force the subject upon an unwilling