THE EXAMINER:

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"This is true Liberty, when Freeborn Men, having to advise the Public, may speak free."---Euripides.

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Provincial Parliament.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

WEDNESDAY, 29th February, 1860.

The following Petitions were presented to the House, and the same were received and read.

By the Hon. Col. Swabey, a petition of Hugh McLeod, of Charlottetown, Shipwright, in destitute circumstances, praying relief.

By the Hon. Mr. Walker, a Petition of Mary Shea, of Charlottetown, with two helpless children in indigent circumstances, praying relief.

Ordered, That the last two preceding petitions be referred to the Special Committee appointed to report on all petitions relating to Paupers.

By Hon. Mr. Hutchinson, a petition of William D. Lawson and others, Trustees of the Stanhope District School, praying that the Council will concur with the House of Assembly in granting their teacher, Stephen E. Lawson, his allowance for six months' services, which has been withheld in consequence of his not having had the average attendance of scholars required by law.

Ordered, That the said Petition be referred to the Special Committee appointed to report on all Petitions relating to Education.

The Hon. Edward Palmer, a member of Her Majesty's Executive Council, by command of the Lieutenant Governor, laid before the Council the accounts of the Colonial Treasurer for the year ending 31st January, 1860.

Also, the Accounts of the Public Lands Office, for the same period.

Ordered, That the said Accounts do lie on the Table.

The Hon. Mr. Palmer, by command of His Excellency, laid before the Council copy of a Despatch from His Grace, the Duke of Newcastle to His Excellency, dated 30th March, 1859, relating to the establishment of the sytem of compulsory pre-payment of postage, which was read.

Ordered, That the said Despatch do lie on the Table.

THURSDAY, March 1, 1860.

PETITIONS.

The following Petitions were presented to the House, and the same were received and read; viz:

By Hon. Mr. McIntyre, a Petition of Raymond Campbell, of East Point, Township No. 47, setting forth the loss of a registered money letter, which he deposited in the Way Office, at East Point, in the year 1857, to be transmitted to India, and praying relief.

By Hon. Mr. Simpson, a Petition of divers Inhabitants of *French River, New London, and adjacent settlements*, praying that this House will concur with the House of Assembly, in granting a sum in aid of individual subscription, for deepening the Channel at or near the mouth of *French River*.

Ordered, That the last two preceding Petitions be referred to the Committee appointed to report on all Petitions relating to miscellaneous subjects.

Hon. Mr. Simpson also presented a Petition of John McLeod and others, of Cardigan River, setting forth the destitute and helpless condition of Christiana McSwan, and praying relief.

Ordered, That the said Petition be referred to the Special Committee appointed to report on all Petitions relating to Paupers.

MESSAGE FROM HIS EXCELLENCY.

The Hon. Mr. Palmer, a Member of Her Majesty's Executive Council, informed the House that he was directed by His Excellency, the Lieutenant Governor, to lay before the House *the following written Message*, signed by His Excellency:—

MESSAGE.

"George Dundas, Lieut. Governor.

"The Lieutenant Governor has received from His Grace the Duke of Newcastle an acknowledgment of the Address from *the House of Assembly to Her Majesty*, praying for a reconstruction of the Legislative Council, which was transmitted by Sir Dominick Daly to Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton, late Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies.

"While acquainting the House that the Address was duly laid at the foot of the Throne, the Lieutenant Governor does not feel himself at liberty at present to make public the correspondence which has since ensued upon the subject, and he, therefore, trusts that the House of Assembly will be satisfied with the assurance that their Address has received the anxious consideration of Her Majesty's Secretary of State, who, while relying on the spirit of mutual forbearance to promote concord between the Upper and the Lower Houses, has yet placed in the hands of the Lieutenant Governor the power of making such an alteration in the Legislative Council as will ensure the harmonious working together of the two branches of the Legislature.

"Government House, February 29, 1860."

FRIDAY, March 2, 1860.

EXPIRING LAWS.

Hon. Mr. Forgan, from the Committee appointed to examine and report upon the Expiring Laws, presented to the House the Report of the Committee, which he read in his place, and which is as follows:—

"Your Committee appointed to examine and report upon the Laws that have expired, or are about to expire, report that—

"The Act 12th Vic. cap. 13 intituled 'An Act relating to the duties of the Harbour Master of the Port of Charlottetown, and for the better regulation of the Public Wharfs therein,' so far as the same has not been repealed by the Bye Law of the City of Charlottetown, cap 30, intituled 'A Law defining the duties of Harbour and Ballast Masters and Wharfingers, and the rate of Wharfage,' will expire at the end of the present Session. That the Act, 12th Vic., cap. 19, intituled 'An Act to regulate the Survey of Timber and Lumber;' and the Act 12th Vic, cap. 20, intituled 'An Act to prevent Pedlars travelling and selling within this Island, without Licence,' will expire at the end of the present Session of Assembly; and that the Act 22nd Vic., cap. 1, intituled 'An Act for raising a Revenue,' will expire on the first day of May next."

Ordered, That the Report of the Committee be received.

PETITIONS.

The following Petitions were presented to the House, and the same were received and read, viz:—

By Hon. Mr. Palmer, a Petition of Robert Galbraith, setting forth that, on the 6th Dec., 1859, he paid into the Colonial Treasury the sum of Four Pounds one Shilling for Pint Licence for one year, at Mount Stewart Bridge; but that, on the 9th January, 1860, he was obliged to vacate the premises for which said License had been taken out; and, therefore, praying, as the Licence is now no longer of any use to him, proportionate to the unexpired period of the time for which his Licence was granted.

Also by the Hon. Mr. Palmer, a Petition of Alexander E. Holland, Postmaster at St. Eleanor's, praying that this House will concur with the House of Assembly in increasing his present allowance, which is altogether unremunerative for the duties of that office.—Hon. Mr. Palmer observed that the amounts of duties performed by different Postmasters differed greatly according as the District, in which they were severally situated, were thinly or well populated, and on other accounts also. The duties of some of our Postmasters was little more than nominal, and the allowances made to them might almost be regarded as sinecures; whilst those of others were so onerous that on a fair consideration thereof it certainly appeared that they were very inadequately remunerated for their services. The salaries or allowances made to the country Postmasters should be proportionate to the amount of duties severally performed by them. These situations should be filled by none but trustworthy persons; and all such should be suitably rewarded. He never had, and he never would oppose a fair and full remuneration of public officers, of whatever grade; and should it be found that the counterpart of the Petition then before their Honors had met with the favorable consideration of the House of Assembly, he would cheerfully assent to their act on thereon.

Ordered, That the last two preceding Petitions be referred to the special Committee appointed to report on all Petitions relating to miscellaneous subjects.

By the Hon. Mr. Simpson, a Petition of Alexander Fraser, of Township No. 52, an aged person, nearly blind, and whose son is of insane mind, praying relief.

Ordered, That the said Petition be referred to the special Committee appointed to report on all Petitions relating to Paupers.

By the Hon Mr. Palmer, a Petition of Archibald C. Beckford, of Grand River, Township No. 14, an unlicenced Teacher, praying remuneration for his services as such for the past year.

By the Hon. Mr. Walker, a Petition of Marinus Blanchard, of Rustico, a Licenced Teacher, praying that this House will concur with the House of Assembly in granting the sum of ten pounds, which has been deducted from his allowance, in consequence of the boundaries of his School District not being defined and described as the Law directs.

The Petition having been received and read,—

His Honor Mr. Walker said that, not being aware of the particular circumstances of the case, except as they were set forth in the Petition, he was not prepared to advance anything further on behalf of the Petitioner; but he believed he was well entitled to the favorable consideration of the Legislature.

Hon. Mr. Bagnall.—I laid off the District. The School is an Acadian School; but another school-house has been built since, in another part of the District; and the consequence is that the claims made on behalf of the two schools clash with each other. Under the late Government the Teacher of the Acadian School received the Statute allowance of a first class Teacher; but, under the present Administration, he has not been considered as entitled to such allowance.

Hon. Col. Swabey—If I rightly recollect both the Education Act and the Board of Education recognise, in certain cases, an inferior class of District Teachers, to whom an allowance less than that made to first class Teachers is made on their production of the requisite certificates. Probably it has been thought proper to place the Petitioner in that class.

Ordered, That the Petition be referred to the special Committee appointed to report on all Petitions relating to Education.

By the Hon. Mr. McIntyre, a Petition of Artemas Morrow, Licenced Teacher, praying that this House will concur with the House of Assembly in granting him remuneration for his services at Morrel, his allowance having been withheld, in consequence of a deficiency of one half of a Scholar, in the daily attendance required by law.

Ordered, That this Petition be referred to the special Committee appointed to report on all Petitions relating to Education.

MESSAGE FROM HIS EXCELLENCY—DESPATCHES.

The Hon. Mr. Palmer, a Member of Her Majesty's Executive Council, by command of His Excellency, the Lieutenant Governor, laid before the House copies of Despatches, relating to the Land Commission, which were ordered to be laid on the table.

LAND TENURE.

Hon Col. Swabey—If what is communicated in this Despatch is a full statement of all the proceedings which have been taken at Home towards the appointment of a Commission to investigate and settle the whole question of the Land Tenures, and the result of those proceedings, we must conclude that all which has been done concerning the question has been nugatory. Indeed, from the fact that the communication on the subject, made on the 6th Sept., 1859, to Sir S. Cunard, the chief of the P. E. Island landowners at Home, in pursuance of the direction to that effect of the Duke of Newcastle, has elicited no reply from that gentleman, we may very fairly infer that the great proprietors are not disposed to sanction such a Commission as that prayed for by the Address of the House of Assembly. Since, therefore, nothing, so far as we know, has as yet been positively determined by the Home Government touching the appointment of such a Commission, I will not now take up the time of the House by entering upon any consideration of the probable efficacy of the labors of such a Commission if appointed. Any discussion of the question would, as it now stands, be premature; but should it again be agitated in the Legislature, I will, I trust, be prepared to enter at large upon the consideration of it.

Hon. Mr. Palmer did not think it necessary that he should make any particular reply to his Honor. It was very probable that in a week or two further Despatches would be received relative to the question; and then, perhaps, they would be able to deal with it in a more tangible form.

His Honor the President—It does not appear that the Address to the Queen of the House of Assembly has been laid before Her Majesty. His Grace the Duke of Newcastle's Despatch merely acknowledges the receipt of it; and yet we are told, in His Excellency's opening Speech, that it (the Address of the House of Assembly of last Session) "was graciously received by Her Majesty."

Hon Mr. Palmer.—The Colonial Secretary is a Colonial Minister; and, when an Address comes into his hands, although he may not think it necessary to lay it actually before Her Majesty, yet, as having been before him, one of Her Majesty's principal advisers, it may fairly be said to have been laid before Her Majesty. Numbers of applications forwarded Home, and supposed to have been laid at the foot of the Throne, have not actually been laid before Her Majesty; but having been duly considered by Her Majesty's Ministers, are answered in the same manner. As according to the practice, as well as theory, of the British Constitution, the Sovereign is regarded as acting in conformity with the advice or counsel of Administration, to whom alone responsibility attaches. In most cases, it can make no difference whether address or applications are merely considered by the Ministers of the Crown, or, besides being so considered, are also laid at the foot of the Throne; and, in either case, it may, therefore, be said "they have been graciously received."

Hon. Col. Swabey admitted that, in some cases, when addresses or applications to the Sovereign had not actually been laid before the Sovereign, such answers might be admissible enough. They had been considered by the Ministers whose duty it was to advise concerning them; who, not feeling themselves at liberty to advise a compliance with the prayers thereof, might be allowed to say, in reply, that "they had been graciously received," for the Sovereign was supposed to receive all petitions, addresses, or applications, from any loyal subjects, or body of loyal subjects, graciously. When, for instance, it is determined to waive the prayer of a private address, it is, nevertheless, often said, in reply, that "it was graciously received." But here when the Minister says, "I cannot advise Her Majesty to entertain the question," is not the inference plain that he had not laid the Address before Her Majesty? And when the Despatch conveys such a denial or repulse of the Address, was it not too much to say in the Speech, "the Address which, last Session, you submitted to the Crown, praying that a Commission be appointed to investigate and settle the whole question of the Land Tenures?" I cannot acquit His Excellency's Speech from the charge of inaccuracy in this particular.

Hon. Mr. Johnson observed that, as the Address had been received and gravely and anxiously considered by Her Majesty's Minister, the Principal Secretary for the Colonies—who, on all Colonial Questions, is Her Majesty's chief adviser—and who, as he found that he could not advise Her Majesty to entertain the question, unless it were fully understood that the Commission were to be at liberty to propose any measures which they might themselves judge desirable, had, in his Despatch relative to it, clearly stated why advice favorable to the proposition could not then be given to Her Majesty, it was, in his opinion, quite allowable to say that it had been graciously received by Her Majesty. All addresses or petitions, couched in loyal and respectful language, were graciously received; and certainly the Address of the House of Assembly had that recommendation to be graciously received by Her Majesty. It certainly may easily be imagined that an Address may be graciously received by Her Majesty, although there may be no intention to comply with the prayer of it.

Hon. Mr. Palmer.—It is very common, in another Branch of the Legislature to find members cavilling about words, merely to captivate the public ear; but, in this, the Upper Branch, it is supposed that every subject is fairly and gravely considered, and that all are above having recourse, for any purpose whatsoever, to false or frivolous objections. As has been very properly observed by His Honor Mr. Johnson, all petitions or addresses to the Sovereign, which are couched in loyal and respectful language, are graciously received, whether it be intended that the prayers thereof shall be complied with or not. And so it is, in the Legislature, unless when a Petition, owing to its real or alleged impropriety, is thrown under the Table. If His Honor Colonel Swabey will refer to the Journals, he will find that Addresses or Despatches on the Land Question have been reported as "graciously received," although their propositions were so extreme, that it was impossible for the Home Government, for one moment, to contemplate or purpose compliance with them. One Minister, in some such case, may say, the Address was graciously received by Her Majesty, whilst another, more scrupulous, might merely state the simple fact of its having been received by the Minister. I think that, in *the present case, when it has been distinctly intimated that*, provided it shall be fully understood that the Commission are to be at liberty to propose any measures which they may themselves judge desirable, the prayer of the Address will be complied with, it was perfectly allowable to say, in the Speech, that it (the Address) was graciously received by Her Majesty.

Hon Col. Swabey—There is a most evident discrepancy between the Duke of Newcastle's Despatch and the Speech of His Excellency the Lieut. Governor. From the Despatch, we distinctly gather that the Address was not laid before Her Majesty. How then could it possibly be graciously received! No explanation which I have heard can alter the facts, though there must be a presumption that, on His Excellency's part, there could be no intention to leave this impression.

R. B. Irving, Reporter.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

FRIDAY, Feb. 24.

BILL TO AUTHORIZE THE GRANTING OF FISHING LICENCES TO CITIZENS OF THE UNITED STATES FOR VESSELS BUILT ON THE ISLAND.

Hon. Mr. HAVILAND moved the order of the day that the House go into Committee on said Bill.

Hon. Mr. WIGHTMAN.—I think it would not be right to allow Americans to come here and enjoy the privileges which the Bill would afford. They were granted Free Trade, in which they have never fully reciprocated; and under the Alien Bill they can now hold land in the Colony, therefore I consider that to permit them also to build vessels on the Island would be giving them too much liberty. As *our forests are becoming pretty much reduced*, we have little enough wood for our own ship-building trade, without allowing the Americans to come in and use it up. But I do not think they would avail themselves of the privilege which the Bill seeks to confer, because fishing licenses, or liberty to sail in our waters, would not enable them to go to other places, or even carry their fish to market.

Hon. Mr. HAVILAND.—The Bill is not a Government measure. I myself am wholly responsible for what it contains. I did not, however, expect opposition from the last speaker, as he was a member of the Government which granted Free Trade with the United States. If the Americans are so narrow-minded as not to reciprocate, I am sorry for it. Such conduct is contrary to the spirit of the age. Free Trade principles are rapidly gaining ground, and are now advocated by the ablest statesmen and economists of the present day. Even the Emperor of France is taking up the subject, and has lately concluded a treaty with Britain which places the commercial relations of those two countries on a more liberal basis, than they have ever been heretofore. It is selfish for a merchant to oppose the measure because it will allow Americans to use the wood of the Colony. We permit them to come here and purchase land, but we must not let them interfere with the merchants. The sooner our forests are cleared away, and the land turned into cultivated farms, the better for the Colony. The Bill will be a great advantage to the people of this Island. The Americans will come here to build vessels and to fish, consequently our young men will be employed. Under existing arrangements our people cannot look for employment from the Americans fishing on our coasts, for according to the laws of the Union, their ships must be manned by citizens of the United States. There were croakers in England when Free Trade was first proposed there. The cry was, could we compete with the Russians and others who lived on black bread? Will the Americans be allowed to glut our markets? But Sir Robert Peel braved all opposition, and introduced the measure contrary to the wishes of the farmers of Britain. Let us carry out that which has been so nobly begun. Let us have the mantle of Adam Smith to fall upon us. I appeal to gentlemen on the other side of the House to give the measure their support.

Hon. Mr. POPE.—Probably the introducer of the Bill did not think that I would oppose it. I am not prepared to go for anything so much against ourselves. We are told that the Emperor of the French is in favour of Free Trade, but he expects something as an equivalent. We should not give away our privileges merely to keep up with what is called the spirit of the age. I am not disposed to give away our rights, and receive nothing in return. The Americans can come here now and purchase free land; but we cannot get registers in the United States for our vessels, nor will they allow us to take freights from one of their ports to another. I consider it my duty to oppose the Bill.

Hon. Col. GRAY.—I am not a merchant, but have a little general experience, and will offer a few remarks. I think the hon. member for Georgetown should not attribute narrow-mindedness to every one who differs from him. The last speaker remarked that the Emperor of France would not give Free Trade unless he received something in return; but I believe if we pass this Bill we will get something in return. When we passed the Alien Bill, the design was to get hold of the dollars; and I think this measure will be the means of bringing in more. The introducer of the Bill, in his argument, overlooked one point. When the Americans come here they will not only employ our young men, but as they will not be able to sail the ships built on the Island in other waters, they will be under the necessity of laying them up here during the winter. The fish, instead of being sent home all around by water to the United States, will probably be sent by railroad from Shediac, and the vessels laid up either at Charlottetown or some of the other ports, the consequence of which will be that the crews will mostly remain on the Island all winter. By and bye I think we will ship nothing to Nova Scotia or New Brunswick, but will send all our produce to the United States. In my opinion our merchants who build large ships will not be injured by the Bill. The Americans only require small craft for the fishing trade, therefore they would not compete with the builders of large vessels. I think even the merchants would be gainers by this measure on account of the increased circulation of money. I have no objection to the Bill.

Mr. DAVIES.—I cannot see that the measure would injure the merchants, or any other class of our population. As regards free trade, I believe we have derived the greatest share of the benefits from it so far. I am in favor of passing any measure that might be the means of increasing the trade of the Island. In my opinion it would not materially affect our ship-building to allow the Americans to come here and build small fishing vessels, which would be laid up during winter. As the ship-building trade has been very unprofitable of late years, probably we have not much to lose in this respect. I think that whatever is a benefit to the merchants, is a benefit to the farmers; and what is an advantage to the farmers, is also in favor of the merchants.

Hon. Mr. COLES.—I am surprised that a measure affecting our relation with foreign countries has not been made a Government measure. In the British Parliament, no member would introduce a Bill of this kind without first asking the Government if they intended to bring in such a measure, or if it had their approval. I presume there is a majority of the Government in favor of the Bill; why then has it not been brought in as a Government measure? But I will go on to the principles of the Bill. When I was in the United States, I endeavored to get our ships admitted to American registry, but they would not accede to this. The Canadian Government are now loudly complaining of this unfairness, for as the treaty stands the Americans are reaping nearly all the advantages. The Home Government, I think, would not sanction this Bill, because they refused to allow one sent from Canada of a somewhat similar nature. All the Colonies must unite if they expect to carry anything. I would suggest that an address be sent to the Imperial Government, asking them to interfere and get American registery for our ships; and that the other Colonies be solicited to join us in this request. An arrangement of this kind would be more advantageous to all parties than what is proposed by the measure, for if a man-of-war were to fall in with any of the vessels built and licensed under the Bill, she would seize them if beyond three miles from shore. This would be leading the Americans into a trap. I am not opposed to free trade; but I do not think the Bill will be much benefit, for the Americans now take out registers for their vessels in other persons' names. I do not know if those members engaged in the ship-building trade are opposing the Bill from selfish motives. They have a perfect right to protect our privileges. If the Americans are going to give anything, they must get something in return. It was the right of fishing on our coast—which is allowed to be the best fishing ground—that gained Reciprocity from them, and the other Provinces may thank us for the boon. Now we have a right to enquire what is to be received in return for the privileges to be conferred by the Bill. I think it is a measure to gain a little popularity. If they had said, the time has come when it is necessary to address the Home Government on the subject, something might be done. We have no power over the seas, so our licenses would not enable vessels to sail further than our own waters. The arrangement must be made through the Imperial Government; and I hope the hon. member will withdraw his Bill, and get up an address to the British Government, which would pass unanimously. I am not opposed to the principle of the Bill, but let us go about it properly.

Mr. SINCLAIR.—I am happy to think that I will for once be able to support the hon. member for Georgetown. I believe the measure would be an advantage to us, and do not care what benefit it might be to the Americans. If they were allowed to come here and build vessels, it would give an impulse to our young men, and improve our method of shipbuilding; besides they would then employ our men on board their vessels. Giving them liberty to fish on our shores is an advantage to them, but none to us. Let us open up free trade in every way that would be for the general benefit of the Colony. It might injure a few, but we are legislating for the greater number. I fully concur in the principles of the Bill, and think it might prove an advantage to the Island.

Hon. Mr. THORNTON.—I have all along been in favor of free trade. It has not caused all the evils that had been attributed to it. We have given the Americans also the right to hold a certain quantity of land, and I am sorry that we did not give them the liberty to hold more. The Bill under consideration, by inducing them to come here, would create a consumption for our produce, and increase the circulation of money. Every place on the Island that they come to during summer is receiving an advantage. It has been urged as an objection, that they would cut down our forests. I wish there was no other objection. At one time we were not permitted to export juniper knees lest there should be none left for our shipbuilders; but this restriction was removed, and no inconvenience has followed. I hope the merchants will see the propriety of going more into the fishing trade than they have yet done. If it proves remunerative to the Americans why not to them? I think it is out of the question to talk of this small Colony passing an address to the Home Government, and communicating with the other Colonies on the subject of our relations with the United States. It would at least require a long time to complete the arrangement.

Mr. OWEN.—I am disposed to support the Bill, as we should give every encouragement to the Americans to come here. They would employ our young men to fish in the summer, and in the winter to build vessels and work at the cooper trade. The hon. member, Mr. Coles, was wrong in stating that our fisheries are the best; last year the greatest catch was at Gaspe, and other places are just as good as this. I think it would be good policy for us to pass the Bill, because then the Americans might be induced to come to this Island to prosecute the fishing trade.

Mr. DOUSE.—With the remarks of the hon. member Mr. Thornton, I fully agree. I would encourage Jonathan in every manner possible to come here, that we might have a chance to get hold of the almighty dollar. The main thing we want is a market for our produce. Something has been gained by free trade. Look at the price of barley now, compared with what it used to be. And I think we would gain more, if we could induce the Americans to come here and carry on business. It has been objected that they would cut down our forests and occupy our land. Let them come along; we can give them plenty of land. At Belfast, I could find room for 10,000, and give them space to launch their ships too.

Hon Mr. LONGWORTH.—We have been taunted for not making the Bill a government measure, as it would materially affect the foreign relations of the Colony. I for my part would not shirk the responsibility of doing so; it would be no disgrace to any government to introduce the Bill. But I think we should afford a fair opportunity to hon. members on the other side of the house to support a measure that would be, for the general benefit. It has been stated that though free trade is the order of the day, yet when we grant any favor we should always see that we receive an equivalent. I consider that the impetus the measure would give to the trade of the Colony would be a sufficient equivalent in this case. The hon. member Mr. Wightman, appears to think that it would prove injurious to the people of the Island. But I am of opinion that it would further every interest of the Colony. Our youth would be benefited by the knowledge which they would receive of the best method of prosecuting the fisheries. By being employed in the building of vessels they would also acquire knowledge in this respect, as the Americans are celebrated for their superior ships. Advantages would accrue to the mercantile interest; money would circulate more freely, and the demand for goods would be increased. By the increased importation our revenue would be augmented. It has been urged as an objection to the Bill, that ships sailing under its provisions would be liable to be seized by a man-of-war. But it is not contemplated to pass the Bill without a suspending clause; it must receive the sanction of the Home Government, and then it would have sufficient authority to render them safe though sailing beyond our waters. It is not intended that the vessels should have the right to trade, but only the right to fish. When in distress, however, vessels can go into any port. Another argument brought forward against the passing of the Bill is that our ships are not admitted to American registry. Though we were granted the privilege, I do not consider it would be any advantage to us, for our ships could not compete with those of the United States; they would not bring half the price. A greater benefit to us than this would be to obtain a share of their carrying trade. But the Americans will never go so far as to grant the Colonies this privilege. I am happy to see that some gentlemen on the opposite side of the House are prepared to support the measure.

Mr. MACNEILL.—I cannot agree with every thing advanced by the hon. member Mr. Longworth. The Americans he said would teach our youth how to fish. This would be very little advantage, for I do not believe the people in the different parts of the country are going to turn their attention to fishing. He also said that the Americans would improve our method of building ships, by taking our young men into their employment. Our mechanics can build as good ships as they can, but our wood is not equal to theirs. The Bill would deprive us of our privileges and give scarcely any advantage in return. In Britain now the people are holding meetings and agitating in favor of doing away with the free trade grievance. We should be careful in passing measures of this kind. I would give every encouragement to the Americans, but will not consent to give away our privileges.

Mr. HOWAT.—The measure would certainly not prove injurious; on the contrary, I think it would be a general benefit. It would be the means of raising the price of agricultural produce, and also the price of timber. We would gain more by selling our timber than by building ships. If the labor spent in building vessels and fishing were spent in cultivating the land, the Colony would improve more rapidly.

Mr. CONROY.—I also am inclined to support the Bill, because the more money that can be brought into the country the better. Shipbuilding would enable our farmers to sell their produce for cash. I would encourage the Americans in every manner to come to the Island. We have a sample of them in our neighborhood, and I wish that we had more like them. In regard to our young men going to fish with the Americans, I could not recommend it, for what they would gain in knowledge, they would lose in morality. Those who come back from the fishing do not appear the same men. They are not so kind; in short if I may be allowed the expression, they have a sort of blackguard appearance. As long as we have plenty of land to cultivate, they should turn their attention to farming.

Mr. HOLM.—I am in favour of the Bill. Our forests are becoming pretty much reduced; but small vessels could be built when large ones could not. Something is required to be done, as our population is scarcely increasing. Some hon. members are not disposed to allow the Americans to come here and build vessels; but we should not act like the dog in the manger, neither take the advantage ourselves nor give it to others.

Mr. DOYLE.—I cannot agree with the hon. member Mr. Conroy, that the Americans bring vice into the country. They are about as moral as other men. I would go for any measure that might increase our trade; but think our young men should be protected in their privileges. If it would be an advantage to the Americans to be allowed to build vessels on the Island, surely those who live here might engage in the trade with a fair chance of success. If the men employed in the fishing vessels would be about here in the winter, they would be more a burden than a benefit to us. I will oppose the Bill.

Mr. MONTGOMERY.—I entertain some doubts respecting the Bill. Probably if we give this privilege to the Americans, they will take away our timber. I think it would be well to encourage the young men of the Colony to engage in the shipbuilding trade. Our own people should be protected.

Hon. Mr. PERRY.—I believe the people of this Island are better adapted to cultivate the land than to fish. But I am not afraid our fishermen would lose their morals, by going among the Americans, for these people generally behave well. If they injure the morals of those who go with them to the fishing, surely they would do much more evil by being allowed to settle in the country. I would encourage the Americans to come here, because they would bring capital to the country, and employ our people to build vessels, make barrels and erect sheds and other buildings. Some hon. member remarked that to give them the right to build vessels here, would operate against the young men of Colony engaging in the trade. There is nothing to prevent them from doing so now; they may build as many as they please. But if they do not choose to build vessels, this House could not compel them.

Mr. McAULAY.—We have heard a great deal in reference to the Bill. I was pleased with the remarks of the hon. member, Mr. Perry. By passing the Alien Bill, we gave the Americans a right to the wood on the Island. It has been said that they can obtain registers here now in other persons names. This is a strong argument in favor of the Bill. If they can procure registers in this manner now, what evil would result from making it legal to receive them? If capital is not brought into the Colony, and employment afforded to our young men, they will drift away to other countries. No country can prosper with a sparse population. We, therefore, should endeavor to keep our youth at home. I hear no arguments advanced against the Bill; certainly then it should pass.

Hon. Mr. COLES.—I rise to move the following amendment to the motion made by the hon. member, Mr. Haviland:

Resolved, That it is inexpedient at present to go into Committee on the Bill; but that an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, requesting Her Majesty's Government to negotiate with the American Government, with the view of getting that Government to reciprocate in the coasting trade, and to admit Colonial built vessels to *American registry; and that His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor* be requested to invite the attention of the Governments of the neighbouring Provinces to this important subject.

In my opinion this will be the best course for the House to adopt. No person has any objection to grant the Americans a privilege, if they give one in return. I think, however, that the benefit which will result to them from the measure under consideration will be very slight, as they can now obtain British registers, and sail into any port in the United States, whereas under the provisions of the Bill they will be confined to our own waters. The hon member, Mr. Longworth, said that it would be no advantage to us to have our vessels admitted to American registry. But I contend there would be ten times as many vessels built on the Island if the Americans would concede us this privilege. I concur in what has been said, that it would prove ruinous for their fishermen to remain here all winter; nor would they do so, as they generally trade during that season to the West Indies, or other warm countries. Some hon. members are now great advocates for free trade, who a few years ago strongly opposed the passing of a measure to permit lawyers from the other Provinces to plead in our Courts of Justice. I am pleased to see that they are now becoming so liberal. To get up an Address to Her Majesty is the only course likely to be successful which we can adopt in reference to this subject. I feel certain the British Government would not sanction the Bill, because in case of a war breaking out with the United States, the Americans might send a number of men here and sail off with the vessels licensed under its provisions. The other Provinces, and particularly Canada, which is very powerful, would no doubt join us in this movement.

Hon. Col. GRAY.—The hon. member who has just sat down appears to think that nothing good can emanate from this side of the House. On this account I am glad that the Bill was not introduced as a Government measure. Last year we know how he opposed the resolutions on the Land Question. His case reminds me of the person who was flogged, to whom the chastiser said, strike high or strike low, I cannot please you. The hon. member says he was always in favor of free trade, and talks about what he did to bring it about. But I will not admit that he had anything to do with obtaining reciprocity; it was granted through the interference of the Imperial Government. He says Canada would join us in procuring American registry for Colonial built ships. But she will do very little for us, as she is about £10,000,000 in debt, and desires to go back to the old system of protection. The hon. member also said the Home Government will not sanction the Bill, because it will allow foreigners to come here and build ships. They are allowed to do so in Britain, and why not on this Island? The French have vessels built there, and the first prize taken by our ships in the Russian War, was a vessel built at Greenock.

Mr. COOPER.—I understand the Bill is intended to give foreigners the right to fish all round these coasts in vessels built on this Island. *These vessels are not to be allowed to trade, and they must* be laid up here all winter. The measure is somewhat of a peculiar nature, and I think it would afford the Americans too much liberty. They might, perhaps, become pirates and do what they pleased.

Hon. Mr. HAVILAND.—I have listened attentively to the arguments on both sides, and am glad the Bill was not made a Government measure. I am pleased to learn that the hon. member for Princetown and myself are for once pulling together. It has been said that the Bill would prevent our young men from building vessels. This is a most fallacious argument, for they can build as many now as they please. The hon. member, Mr. Coles, has alluded to the measure in reference to lawyers. I once thought it necessary that they should be twelve months on the Island before admitted to plead in our Courts; *but am now in favor of free trade among the lawyers, as well as in* every thing else. The hon. member, Mr. McNeill, remarked that public meetings were being held in Britain to agitate against free trade. I admit there have been small meetings of this kind; but take up the public papers—take up the *Times*, and he would see that protection is opposed to the spirit of the age. As regards our joining Canada in the narrow-minded policy which she wishes to adopt, simply because she is burdened with an enormous public debt, I would discard the idea. There is no Colony which has reaped so much from the Reciprocity Treaty as ours, and none which has so much interest in its continuance. Let us then take an independent stand. Sending an Address to the Home Government is a tedious process; but the Bill under consideration is a short method to obtain what we desire. It may or may not meet with the approval of the British Government, but my sole desire in bringing it forward is to benefit my country.

Hon. Mr. COLES.—I wish to correct a statement which has been made by the last speaker. I did not say that we should join Canada in her restrictive policy; but only in her demand for full reciprocity.

The House then divided on Mr. Coles' amendment. For it—Hons. Messrs. Coles, Wightman, Messrs. Doyle, McNeill, J. Yeo.—5.

Against it—Hons. Messrs. Gray, Haviland, Kelly, Laird, Longworth, Perry, Thornton, Whelan, Messrs. Beer, Conroy, Cooper, Davies, Douse, Holm, Howat, Owen, Ramsay, Sinclair, Sutherland, McAulay—20.

The question was then put on the main motion, that the House go into Committee on the Bill, which was agreed to, and the House resolved itself accordingly. After some time spent therein, progress was reported, and the House adjourned.

D. Laird, Reporter.

DECIMAL CURRENCY BILL.

TUESDAY AFTERNOON, February 28.

(*Concluded.*)

Hon. Mr. THORNTON—I have as yet heard no reasons in favor of the Bill sufficient to induce me to support it. I shall, therefore, give it my opposition, as being productive of no good. The Bill provides that the public accounts be made out in dollars and cents, but allows a column in which they may be kept in pounds, shillings and pence. If notice was given last year of the introduction of this Bill, the Government should have given the hon. member, Mr. McNeill, notice that they would not support it. Any measure affecting the currency should be introduced by the Government. There is no inconvenience felt by Americans trading with the Island from our present system. When a man from the United States sees a dollar he knows it is worth 100 cents, and one of our farmers selling his bushel of potatoes for an English shilling is aware that he receives 1s. 6d. currency; but he would be sadly puzzled to tell what that amount would be in cents. As to the alleged facilities to the mercantile community to flow from the adoption of the system of accounting in dollars and cents, I cannot see them; for if a merchant receives his invoice of American goods made up in that currency, he finds no difficulty in ascertaining the amount in ours; and the exporter of our produce to the States as readily computes the amount of his sales there in pounds, shillings and pence. Suppose that troops should be again stationed in the Island—they would be paid in British money, with the value of which they are acquainted—what would the soldier know about cents, if he was required to receive change in a purchase, in such currency? At present he could tell the number of pence or halfpence he would be entitled to receive after paying for what he bought, but he would have no idea of the new computation. We do not require the alteration which the Bill would effect, but what we do want is a legally established coinage, as they have in the other Colonies. Some years ago, a Bill for that purpose was disallowed at home, and the consequence has been that individual speculators have, to their own great profit, been in the habit of putting into circulation a lot of copper coins, of so comparatively small intrinsic value that three of them will not weigh as much as a Nova Scotia penny piece.

Hon. Mr. WIGHTMAN—There is no doubt that the hon. member, Mr. McNeill, in introducing this Bill, was actuated by the best motives—that he sincerely believes in the beneficial character of the change proposed; but I think that before he sought to make so great an alteration in our monetary system he should have elicited the opinions of the Government, to whose province the subject peculiarly appertains. The sudden alteration which the Bill would create must be productive of very serious inconvenience; in fact there would be no end to the confusion it would cause in all matters of account. We had better wait till we see how the system will work in the other Colonies. As has been said in this debate, Canada passed an Act establishing the decimal system some years ago; and some grave objections must have existed to its practical working, or it would have been in operation long since. I have no objection to that system, but its introduction would seriously embarrass the largest portion of the people of the Island. I, therefore, oppose the Bill, which I would cheerfully support if I could see any advantage likely to result from it.

Mr. COOPER—I consider that the decimal system possesses great conveniences, but before we could realize them we would require to have a coinage suitable to it. Until we had that, it would be no easy matter for the bulk of our people to habituate themselves to the new method—which could not work satisfactorily without the decimal coins which would circulate in the other Colonies at the same value as in the Island, which is not the case at present.

Mr. DAVIES—I am in favor of the principle of the decimal system, which would greatly facilitate all monetary calculations, and I doubt not that eventually we shall adopt it; but at present the country does not require it, and is not prepared for it. No merchant labours under any difficulty in consequence of his American accounts being made up in dollars and cents.