

THE EXAMINER.

Monday, April 14, 1851.

EDITORS of newspapers may attempt to disguise the fact as they will, but we are of opinion—and in expressing this opinion we trust our modesty will be duly appreciated—that lengthy observations in reference to their own conduct, principles and purposes, are nothing less than a series of puffs, unpalatable to the taste of intelligent readers, and productive of no solid advantage to those by whom that species of advertising is employed. By this declaration it will be readily perceived that we mean to be amazingly concise in the remarks we are about to offer on re-assuming the labours, responsibilities, and it may be, the pleasure and profits of the Editorial Chair. We have a decided aversion to long stories, long speeches, long sermons, and long editorial articles, when the plot happens to be neither very intricate nor interesting—the argument void of profundity, and the eloquence of fervour—the morality and theology of a sort of second-hand character—and in the latter case, the information neither novel nor extensive. In plain terms, we would have this essential principle fully understood, that when little is to be communicated little should be said.

We have but little then to say (and the Lord knows we have not the leisure, if we had the inclination, to say much) in explanation of the motives by which we are prompted to emerge from our quiet and repose; and to court the smiles and patronage of our friends, and as we must expect it, the hostility of our foes. Apart from any considerations of self, the chief aim of the EXAMINER will be to assist in the application and development of those political principles which challenged its most earnest advocacy in times past, and which are, happily, now about to be made the basis of our local Government. To enlarge upon these principles is uncalled for and unnecessary;—no matter who the individuals are who constitute the Government, they will receive the support and approval of THE EXAMINER only so long as the principles, in virtue of which they will exercise controul over the administration of our affairs, may be steadily followed out, and made to subservise, as they can, the best interests of the inhabitants of this Island.

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LEGISLATIVE PROCEEDINGS.

FOR the information of such of our readers as may not previously have had an opportunity to become acquainted with the progress of public business in the House of Assembly since the commencement of the present Session, we offer the following sketch of its proceedings, in anticipation of our publishing the wearisome debates which they occasioned. We shall only make one remark, by way of preface, that the majority of the Assembly have hitherto unanimously directed their best endeavours to the attainment of the one great object so eagerly desired by the people, namely, the introduction of Responsible Government, as a preliminary to which they have steadily insisted upon the constitutional right of

the Assembly to have the Executive Council so constructed that it may act in harmony with the popular Branch of the Legislature.

The Lieutenant Governor, in the Speech with which he opened the Session, announced the gratifying fact that he was authorised to concede Responsible Government, and to surrender to the local Legislature the disposal of the Crown Revenues of this Colony, on certain conditions; which conditions it afterwards appeared were, the granting of retiring Pensions of £200 per annum each to the Attorney General and Colonial Secretary. After having given these conditions deliberate consideration, the Assembly, by Address, informed His Excellency that it was their unanimous opinion that the creation of a Pension List would be utterly repudiated by the People—that the majority were of opinion that the Colonial Secretary and Attorney General did not come within the terms of Lord Grey's recommendation, and were excluded from every fair expectation of compensation on the relinquishment of their offices, as not having left England to fill the situations, on their vacating of which Pensions are claimed for them; and therefore, not coming within the terms of Lord John Russell's Despatch of the 16th October, 1839, which "announced the rules thereafter to be observed in Prince Edward Island, as well as in the other Colonies, in reference to the tenure of office"—but that, nevertheless, should His Excellency deem the reasons which they had set forth at length in certain Resolutions accompanying their Address—against granting the Pensions, insufficient and unsatisfactory, they would—actuated by an anxious desire to bring the negotiation to an amicable termination—be prepared to relinquish their demand to the surrender of the ungranted Crown Lands on Townships 15 and 55, and the Town and Pasture Lots in Georgetown and Princetown, out of which Her Majesty's Government might award such compensation as they might deem the Colonial Secretary and Attorney General, on a reconsideration of their claims, justly entitled to. His Excellency by his Message, in his reply to their Address, informed the Assembly that "he had no discretionary authority to yield the conditions on which Responsible Government is to be conceded, and the Crown Revenues surrendered;" and that the mode suggested by the Assembly would be insufficient to enable his Excellency to carry out either the letter or the spirit of his instructions, as the average on the last five years' returns of the revenue derived from the sale of ungranted lands was only £108 5s. 3d. currency per annum. After having duly deliberated upon this Message, the Assembly, actuated by a sincere desire to remove every obstruction to the due prosecution of the public business, agreed to an Address, wherein they inform his Excellency that they will provide the full amount of compensation demanded for the Attorney General and Colonial Secretary, on his Excellency's complying with the well-understood wishes of the people of this Island, in reference to the reconstruction of his Government. By a Resolution of the House, accompanying the Address, his Excellency is informed that they propose to derive the necessary funds for the contemplated allowances from a tax of one farthing per acre, to be imposed upon owners or occupiers of

Land of not less than 500 acres possessed by each individual. With respect to the operation of such a Tax, the Assembly by no means intended to impose an additional burthen upon the tenantry; but, on the other hand, they hope to be able to direct its operation by the Bill which shall enact it, as to cause it to fall upon Proprietors, and to prevent them from shifting the burthen intended for their own shoulders to those of their tenants.

With respect to other matters of general interest, it will be seen, by the following statement, that the Assembly, even amidst the perplexity and uncertainty in which they have been involved, arising from the impediments which have unduly obstructed their negotiation for the introduction of Responsible Government, have laboured to render the Session otherwise as fully productive as possible of measures of public utility.

In the first place, they have deliberated concerning the best mode of affording good or real EDUCATION to all the youth of the Colony; and a majority of the House stand pledged to the introduction of "the system of State Education," or one of a similar nature, the leading feature of which is the paying of Teachers' Salaries altogether out of the public funds; and meanwhile, the House have agreed that the present Act for the encouragement of Education shall be amended, and continued for another year.

A MILITIA BILL, introduced by Mr. MOONEY, with the view to the saving of time and expense to those who are subject to Militia duty, has passed the House, and been sent up to the Council. It provides that the Militia shall not be liable to be mustered or called out for training, except in times of war and civil commotion; and that as the duties of that officer who has to receive the Militia Returns, will now be less onerous, since annual inspection will no longer be necessary, the present annual allowance of £75 shall be reduced to £25.

The introduction of a Bill by Mr. WHELAN, to relieve members of the House of Assembly from the liability to pay a fine of £20, on being appointed to the office of Sheriff, after having undergone several discussions, has eventuated in the passing of a Bill, which abolishes the fine of £20 imposed by previous Acts, on persons refusing to take the office of Sheriff, and leaves the acceptance of that office entirely optional; and provides that the appointment of Sheriffs shall be vested entirely in the Lieutenant Governor and Council, not subject to the nomination of the Chief Justice.

A Bill to regulate the Costs of Distress levied for payment of Rents, introduced by Mr. COLES, is before the House; and as a measure tending to ameliorate the condition of the tenantry, in times of trial and difficulty, will no doubt receive the hearty support of the majority.

Another Bill, also introduced by Mr. COLES, having for its object the protection of TENANTS' RIGHTS, and the securing of compensation to ejected tenants for their improvements, is also before the Assembly; and in passing through its different stages—for pass it will, in spite of the most determined opposition which, as is already evident, will be made to it by a portion of the House—every care will be taken by the real friends of the tenantry to have its several provisions so framed as to afford the unfortunate tenant all the relief to which he shall be equitably entitled.

THE GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE.

On Saturday afternoon the House of Assembly received a Message from the Lieut. Governor in answer to their address of the 9th instant, which address will be found on the 6th page. We are unable to make room for the publication of this Message in our present sheet. A few lines, however, will be sufficient to convey its meaning. The Lieut. Governor seemed to think that the Assembly's offer to vote compensation to the Attorney General and Colonial Secretary was contingent upon an additional land tax receiving the sanction of the two Branches of the Legislature; and as there was no certainty of such sanction being obtained, his Excellency felt himself precluded from giving an opinion as to the practicability of the offer, and therefore considered himself placed in a position which rendered it imperative upon him to refer the whole proceedings, relating to the negotiation, to Her Majesty's Government, and to apply for further instructions.

This is the pith of the Message which awakened such intense glorification in the breasts of the Obstructives. We confess that we can see nothing either in the style or spirit of the document to afford the smallest possible satisfaction to the minority and their supporters out of doors. On the contrary, in more than one passage of the Message, the allusions, whether wittingly or unwittingly made by His Excellency, are anything but complimentary to the minority, who are considered not to be "a very formidable opposition," and who receive a very pointed rebuke in the expression of his Excellency's surprise to find the majority combining with them to prevent His Excellency from carrying out his instructions. What tickled the fancy of the minority and their friends, and blinded them to every other part of the Message, is the intimation of reference being had to the Home Government, which would, for a little while, avert the great calamity of loss of office, in anticipation of which, every day, for the last three weeks, they have been steeped in the uttermost despair. No wonder then a little beam of hope exhilarates, nay nearly sets them mad.

But we are compassionate enough now to consummate the calamity which must sooner or later overtake them, and terminate at once their misery. The plan we would recommend to the majority of the House, in order to accomplish this desirable object, is, to vote the coveted compensation for the Attorney General and Col. Secretary out of the general Revenue, and afterwards try the fate of a Land Tax Bill on its own merits. This is the only way for putting the minority hors de combat, and enabling the majority to draw their teeth.

FIRE!

On Sunday morning about 1 o'clock, a Fire broke out in Sydney Street, and completely destroyed three houses—one owned by Mr. Wm. Barnstead, Baker; one by Mrs. P. B. Doyle; and one by Charles Welsh, Esq., merchant. Mrs. Doyle's house was between the two others, and was the one in which the fire originated—how, we have not been able to ascertain; Mr. Welsh's house was occupied by Mrs. Fair, tavern-keeper; Mr. Barnstead's by himself. Mrs. Doyle lost all her furniture and clothing.—Mr. Barnstead a considerable portion of his. Mr. Barnstead was insured to the amount of £200—Mrs. Doyle £150,—no insurance upon the other house. Owing to the high wind which prevailed, it was with great difficulty and exertion the fire was prevented from spreading to the opposite and adjoining premises. The townsmen and military worked remarkably well.

MURRAY HARBOUR ELECTION.—The Election for the Third District of King's County will be held to-morrow. Mr. Wightman, of Georgetown, and Mr. McIntosh, of Lot 43, are the candidates. The latter we are informed is likely to beat his powerful antagonist by about 100 votes. Well understanding Mr. McIntosh's political principles, and having the utmost confidence in his integrity, we sincerely hope the information may prove to be correct.