

TUESDAY, March 28.

industrious than others; and it was equally so that, if the more indolent and thoughtless were encouraged to depend upon assistance from Government whenever overtaken by scarcity and distress, such encouragement would tend greatly to the increasing of their natural indolence and carelessness. The proprietors, as a body, contributed very little to the general revenue, and if, when their tenants were suffering from the consequences of bad crops, they would not come forward to assist them, a tax ought to be imposed upon their property, the proceeds of which would afford a legitimate fund out of which to relieve their distressed tenants, in seasons of scarcity. He (Mr. C.) was fully convinced of the great scarcity of grain, for, at this season of the year, in plentiful times, his storehouses would be full; whilst at the present time he had not sufficient for a day's consumption. He hoped something would be done immediately for the relief of those who, the House would be convinced, are actually in want of food. He hoped that in that part of the country from which the Rev. Mr. Cooper wrote the letter then before the House, the agents of proprietors would be found to possess a little more of the milk of human kindness than some of them do who reside nearer town. A poor man the other day had to pay his Agent £12. By making great sacrifices, he had made up £11, but the Agent refused to take anything less than the whole sum. He (Mr. Coles) thought the case a very hard one, and made up the deficiency for the man.

Mr. Clark knew many tenants who have paid their rents this year, but who have not seed to put in the ground. He thought nothing less than an additional grant of £500 would be of much service; but he hoped that those who might have the management of the money, would be careful to see that none but the really deserving were provided for. The proprietors, he hoped, would see the necessity of contributing a portion of the money that would be required for that purpose.

Mr. Palmer did not doubt that much distress prevailed, but he thought it would be of no use, at that late period, to talk about compelling the proprietors, by the enacting of laws or otherwise, to contribute for the purpose of diminishing existing distress amongst their tenants. He thought the appointment of a committee would be the most regular proceeding. Still he was of opinion that ample information was at hand, to enable the House to determine at once what course they ought to pursue. For himself, he saw no better plan than increasing the grant for the Road Service, and directing the money to be disposed of, by giving out small contracts, to be paid for immediately by the Commissioners.

The Hon. Mr. Coles submitted that the real question to be determined was, what should be done for those who, at that moment, were without food, and destitute of the means of procuring it. Many, he feared, would actually die before the month of June or July, when the road work is usually performed. It would, he thought, be the best way immediately to advance small sums to such of the most distressed as may safely be trusted, to be repaid by work upon the roads as soon as the season shall permit it to be performed. At any rate, continued the hon. member, the road work, this year, will have to be executed at a more early period than usual, because the people will have to labour upon them to earn money to buy seed. He thought nothing short of an additional £300 to each County would meet the emergency.

The hon. Speaker would not even agree to that without the appointment of a committee. Independently of the enquiries of a committee it was impossible to judge of the real amount of distress which actually existed in the country. There was, he feared, too much of exaggeration and imposition intermingled with the truth, in too many of the tales of suffering and privation then in circulation. He was not afraid that any one would die of hunger in Prince Edward Island, at least not this season. He would agree to the proposition, on condition that a committee should be appointed to report from time to time. He wished the people to know that they must cease to place their dependence for relief upon the Government, unless when under the pressure of some most extraordinary and urgent necessity. The hon. Speaker then concluded by moving the following Resolution:

Resolved, That it be recommended to the House to appoint a Committee to report upon the causes to which the destitution, said to exist amongst the inhabitants, in many parts of the Colony, is to be attributed—the best means of alleviating such distress, and of preventing the numerous applications of the Tenantry to the Government for pecuniary relief for the future; with power to send for persons, papers, and records, and to report from time to time.

A long debate ensued, partaken in by all the members of the committee. Ultimately the additional grant of 9000—3000 to each County—proposed by hon. Mr. Coles, was carried. The hon. Speaker's resolution having also been agreed to, the Chairman reported that the Committee had come to two resolutions, which he would report when the House should be pleased to receive the same, and had directed him to ask leave to sit again. The standing order having been suspended, the House received the report; and, on motion, Messrs. Rae, Montgomery, Thornton, F. Longworth, N. Conroy, LeLacheur, and D. McDonald, were appointed a Committee in conformity with the last resolution.

Crown Lands.—During the morning sitting, the House were engaged in Committee exclusively on consideration of the draft of an Address to the Queen, praying Her Majesty to reduce the upset price of Crown Lands: Mr. D. McDonald in the Chair. A debate ensued, in which the main question related to squatters, as touching the situation in which they would stand, in the event of Her Majesty returning a favorable answer to the Address: hon. members contending that in cases, in which squatters had taken up several lots, they should not have the privilege of taking the whole at the reduced price. An amendment to this effect was offered, which, being negatived, the report of the special committee was agreed to, and ordered to be engrossed.

Currency.—The afternoon sitting of the House was consumed in Committee on further consideration of the Currency Bill: Mr. Whelan in the Chair. A long debate took place upon an additional clause offered by Mr. D. McLean, to the effect that, notwithstanding Leases of lands in this Colony may have provided that the rent shall be paid in *British Sterling*, the custom has been to pay in the Currency of the Island, with one ninth added thereto; that therefore, in future, the latter shall be the legal payment, and that none other shall be recoverable by law proceedings or otherwise. The debate terminated by the motion in favour of the clause being carried by a majority of 10 to 8. Several other amendments of the same hon. member having been agreed to, the Chairman reported progress, and asked leave to sit again.

WEDNESDAY, March 29.

Elections Law.—House in Committee on the Bill to consolidate, alter, and amend the Law of Elections. Dr. Jardine in the Chair. The whole of the morning was consumed in determining the additional polling places. In the afternoon, the consideration of the Bill was resumed, but little or no discussion took place, until the clause relating to the qualification of candidates at Elections was read, when Mr. Palmer proposed that the sum of two hundred pounds should be inserted in the clause, as the value of a freehold or leasehold estate, to qualify a person to hold a seat in the Assembly—he (Mr. Palmer) being of opinion that fifty pounds—the amount of a member's qualification in the old law—was entirely too small, and, in fact, as he contended, a mere nominal amount. This proposition led to a very warm, and, we regret to say, unpleasant discussion, terminating without any satisfactory result, and displaying much party feeling. The hon. Speaker supported the view taken by the hon. member for Charlottetown, and he was followed by Messrs. Rae, LeLacheur, and others on the same side of the House, who were replied to by hon. members opposite; when, the debate becoming warm, it was moved that the Speaker take the Chair, and the Chairman report progress. This motion met with strenuous opposition—several gentlemen who opposed it, expressing their desire to come at once to a decision on the clause under consideration, and thus economise the time of the House; till at length the cries of 'question!' and 'order!' resounded through the House, creating some confusion and excitement, in the midst of which the Speaker took the Chair, and shortly after, without doing any further business, the House adjourned.

THE EXAMINER.

MONDAY, APRIL 3, 1843.

PAY TO LEGISLATIVE COUNCILLORS.

At no period—although, in the absence of any real dispute or difference between the two Houses of the Legislature, it is difficult to give it a color—was there ever entertained so much positive hostility towards the Legislative Council, on the part of certain members of the Assembly, as exists in their minds at present; and the cause of this hostility is sensibly and plainly this—a majority of the Legislative Council are known to all the Island as uncompromising reformers, men who we trust ere long will be found—in alliance with the reformers of the Assembly—to be able, as they are willing, to put a stop to all the misdoings which have so long placed the fortunes of the Island at the feet of one dominant, but—we are glad to write it—expiring interest; men who would have voted—had they possessed the franchise—for the Hon. Mr. Coles at New London, and against his enemies in the Legislature. We know these men are obnoxious to the old hacks; but they are so because they possess the sympathy of the people, and pant for the hour, when, by the adoption of the principles of Responsible Government they may be enabled to act in unison with their friends in the Assembly, in governing the country according to the wishes of the People, expressed through a majority of their representatives. This is the land-mark by which they wish to be guided, and it is the goal to which they press forward. In the non-political Gazette, one of the charges brought against the late Lieutenant Governor, is that

his placing some of these friends of the people in the Legislative Council, has tended in no slight degree to repress native talent and enterprise: How is this stupid assertion, we would beg leave to ask, reconcilable with the facts? Since the arrival of these Strangers—who, by the bye, are none of them of so recent importation as Mr. D. McLean—has the revenue retrograded or improved? has Education been extended or diminished? has Charlottetown increased or become less? But above all, are the clouds of monopoly and exclusiveness clearing away, or, to use the expression of the Gazette itself, has there been a repression of "native talent and enterprise?" On the contrary, is not the system of free liberty to every man's exertions and talents the thing which, above all, these strangers, in unison with a large and growing majority of the people, have striven and still strive, against the resistance of an established few, to bring into Town and Country alike? A conclusion, the very reverse of that which is drawn by the Gazette, is the real truth deducible from its own premises.

We are quite willing to admit that the sympathy between the People and the Legislative Council—though never before so great as it is now—is incomplete. It, however, can never be increased by depriving that body of its independence and paying it; thereby rendering it, in fact, the ministerial slave of the Assembly.

The People and the Legislative Council will fully sympathise when the ministry, as it shortly will be, is appointed from the two Houses of Legislature. Then, and not till then, shall we see an end to those unmeasured invectives which different members of the Assembly, in the most unparliamentary manner, indulge in against the Legislative Council when they differ from their views.

When the time comes which we so earnestly desire, the parties in the House of Assembly and in the Legislative Council who hold the Government must be one, and so must their opponents. The members of the Government in the Council must then feel and act with the members of the Government in the Assembly; and through them will be felt the wholesome RULE OF THE MAJORITY OF THE PEOPLE.

We are no enemies to the drawing of Councillors from all corners of the Island, provided, when collected, they form an independent and intelligent body, capable of discriminating between local and general interests, which is their peculiar duty; whilst the representatives of the People in the Assembly are more particularly charged with the interests of their constituents. The contest between these interests generally produces a safe result.

THE LAND TAX.

No. 2.

We have said that we do not approve of the mode in which that portion of the Land Tax imposed upon improved or cultivated land, will be levied or raised. Our grounds of disapprobation are—as concisely as we can state them—these: That the Land Tax, so far as it has been, at any time, suggested and sanctioned by the Imperial Government, has been looked upon in the light of a penal Tax imposed upon the Proprietors for the non-fulfilment of the condition of the original Grants with respect to settlement—which conditions are so notorious that a statement of them here would be quite superfluous—even after they had experienced several acts of special indulgence from the Crown.

As a penal Tax, the "Assessment on Real Estate" in this Colony, was imposed. In the words of the Act, it was "to be paid by the respective owners of land charged by the Act"—not by the tenants. It was to be penal upon the proprietors, not upon their tenantry.

Notwithstanding this intention—if not of the colonial Legislature, most certainly of the Imperial Government—the Proprietors, by the insertion of a certain clause in every Lease granted by them, to the effect that "the Tenant shall pay all Taxes &c. imposed or hereafter to be imposed upon the land by Lease so devised" have freed themselves from a part of the penalty by law imposed upon them, and cast it upon their Tenantry; and—in answer to those who wished to see "the saddle put upon the right horse" maintain that the whole of the penal Tax should come directly out of the pockets of the Proprietors—assert—and not without much shew of reason we admit—that, as the Tenants, if not volun-