THE PICTOU RAILWAY.

And so this hopeful enterprise is as good as a fixed fact. After long years frittered away in worse than idle talk, the common sense of the country has prevailed. What ought to have been taken in hand and accomplished at the very inception of railways in this province, without a moment's hesitation, but which a policy little less than suicidal has so long permitted to slumber, is about to be awakened into active and profitable existence. As has frequently been remarked through the columns of this journal, the railroad to Pictou ought to have preceded that to Windsor by many years. The former is one of promise to the Province at large, the latter at best a mere public convenience to an inconsiderable section of the western counties. So long since as thirty years, men of sound judgment declared that a line of railway to Pictou would prove a paying, if not profitable, investment to any parties having sufficient enterprise to embark in such an undertaking.

It was, however, the misfortune of the people of Nova Scotia to have their attention diverted from what could at any time have been accomplished, within themselves, to a gigantic scheme, the accomplishment of which is beyond the ability of even the combined resources of the whole of the British North American Provinces. The intercolonial Railway, to connect Halifax Harbor with the River St. Lawrence, can never be constructed save as a great national work. In the first place, British America is not in a position to enter upon such an undertaking, as the construction of a properly equipped railroad, running through six hundred miles of wilderness; and even admitting that by outside assistance the undertaking was consummated, the interest on the capital invested, and the cost of keeping up the plant and rolling stock, would swamp the resources of the United Provinces long before any return could reasonably be hoped for. A calm retrospect, since the commencement of the agitation of this vexed question of railways in this Province, can scarcely fail to convince any unprejudiced person of the utter fallacy of the multifarious caculation of those who have from time to time argued, from figures, that a railway from Halifax to Quebec would be a paying concern, even allowing that the capital required to construct it had been procured at the low rate of three and a half per cent. per annum. Thinking men had no hope in the great Intercolonial Railway, other than as a great national work, the object of which was to more speedily settle up the interior of these Provinces, than they can possibly be without such artificial aid, and the consequent exaltation of British North America into a worthy rival of the adjoining Great Republic. In order to attain this much coveted prosperity, it would be absolutely and indispensably necessary that the mother country should be prepared to make very considerable pecuniary sacrifices. A trifle compared with the cost of even what, to the British public, might be a little war, would suffice to make the North American wilderness to blossom as the rose, afford homes to millions, and consolidate British power in the Western World above and beyond all precedent. But who could hope to convince the powers that be of the truth of this great fact

Therefore there can be no doubt whatever that the Legislature of this Province has acted well and wisely in waiving, for the present at least, all hope of securing what is unattainable, and applying the credit of this country to the development of its now hidden resources. To this end the contemplated construction of the Pictou Railway is preeminently a step, aye, and a very long one, in the right direction. We are not surprised that the people of Pictou, and the Eastern Counties, should have rejoiced with exceeding great joy when the news came over the wires, that the House of Assembly had decided by an altogether overwhelming majority to connect the coal fields of that rich county with the capital. All honour to the men who have thus carried this hopeful measure through the House. The Pictou Railway is fraught with promise in the present and future of this Province; and this is so clear to an ordinary mind that a wayfaring man, even though he were a fool, can scarcely err therein. The rise and progress of New York, both City and State, afford the most illustrious example of the benefits resulting to a whole people from the prosecution of public works. De Witt Clinton's name will ever remain at the head of the list of those who aspire to be public benefactors on this great continent. Since his day railroads have competed successfully with canals and rivers. What railways and canals have done for the State of New York, proportionately, railways east and west will do for Nova Scotia In 1820 the commerce of New York was 50 per cent. greater than that of Boston. In 1860 it was full 200 per cent. greater. The difference was the result solely of the superior public spirit of one compared with the other. We, in Nova Scotia, have loitered along by the way, but it is not yet too late to taste of the good time coming. Let us construct our own local lines, by which alone the interior of the country can be improved, and its real resources developed and these completed, there will be no necessity for coaxing the adjacent Provinces and States uniting with our people in sharing with each other in the general prosperity.—*Halifax Reporter, March 19.*

SECRETARY SEWARD INVITES A KICKING, AND GETS IT.

(*From the New York World*)

The "whirligig of time brings in its revenges." There is no man so ugly who may not expect, if he will but persistently keep alive and moving about the world, to encounter another man uglier than himself. There is no woman so scandalised, who, with patience and keeping her ears open, may not hope to hear worse things said of some hapless sister than have ever been said of herself. And so Earl Russell, after enjoying for a whole generation an unquestioned pre-eminence as the most timidly truculent of statesmen, has at last met with a more softly roaring sucking-dove of a lion than himself. Twenty years ago the little earl was immortalized in *Punch* for the manner and form of his grand demonstration against the pretensions of Romanism, in England. All Protestant Britain trembled to the inmost recesses of its remotest green-grocer's shop with rage at the audacity of the Papacy in nominating Catholic bishops to titular British sees. Earl Russell took up the insolent challenge of the Vatican and conceived a bill of pains and penalties to be inflicted upon Cardinal Wiseman and his confederate prelates. But when the bill came to the birth it was so very mild and gently remonstrant a bill that *Punch*, with the applause of all England, took up the parable of his cartoon against "Finality John" under the guise of a small urchin who was making his way at hot speed around the corner of the Cardinal's house after chalking up in bold letters against the Cardinal's door "No Popery!" Such terror in the successful urchin's wizened countenance—such mingled indignation and amusement in the rubicund visage of the prince of the church looking out of the window after the offender!

And now, behold the steamer brings us news that Earl Russell has boldly boxed the ears of Mr Seward and tweaked the nose of Mr. Adams on the floor of the British House of Lords The thing is so startling, and the performances must have been to Earl Russell himself so delightfully novel and exhilirating, that one is half tempted to forget at whose expense the little man has found at last his life's great opportunity.

But only "half" tempted, and the temptation must be resisted. Earl Russell may legitimately rejoice in his deed of derring-do, but Americans must blush with shame and indignation that an American secretary of state and an American foreign minister should be the "vile body of his triumph."

Hardly a month has elapsed since Mr. Seward's published letters to Mr. Dayton knocked the French opposition senseless by their profound reverential disclaimer of the least intention on the part of the American government of interfering in any way with any projects of the French Emperor in Mexico; and now Earl Russell is enabled by the same accommodating secretary to floor an English opposition by stating publicly that Mr. Seward had never uttered any threats as to what would follow if England failed to prevent the rebel privateers from sailing out of English ports, and by adding that the American minister did not dare to utter any such threats.

Here in America we had been edified with Mr. Seward's "great swelling words" on this theme. The popular feeling was immensely gratified by the semi-savage "bumptiousness" of the defiant secretary's intimations that if England could not stop the privateers America would find means to make her. The defiant secretary was thought a little undiplomatic, certainly, and almost rashly bellicose, but the people easily pardon a fault in that direction

"Undiplomatic," "bellicose?" not the least in the world. Mr. Seward not only saw his way clear around the corner before he set his legend on the Downing street door, but, seeing his way clear, went with all celerity around the corner, and set no legend there at all! He waited till England had checked the privateers, then wrote out the dreadful things he would do if she failed to check them, and then sent his "perilous parchment" to Mr. Adams, and Mr. Adams kept the same in his pocket, judging it, says Earl Russell, with a splendid toss of the head, "more prudent so to do!" Whereupon Mr. Seward, knowing them not to have been presented, forthwith printed them for the delight of the Union, and by way of entreating the British Earl to launch the kick which he has now so successfully administered! Can the force of pidling poltroonery further go?

John Bull swells, of course, with the conscious pride of a man who might have been bullied but has not been; Earl Russell chinks his knightly spurs with the air of a champion; and all Europe is regaled with a spectacle of cheap and cheaply detected brag, which makes the ideal of Jefferson Brick a piece of very indifferent realism.

THE WAR IN THE STATES.

LATEST NEWS FROM THE SEAT OF WAR.

Gen. Sherman left Vicksburg with a force of about 30,000 men. He had two objects; first to desolate the country through which he marched, and to destroy its railways in or-to make a rebel campaign in force impossible during the Summer; second to go to Selma. In the first object he has succeeded; in the second he has failed.—But he has succeeded so completely in the first, and has done his work with such unexpected and extensive thoroughness that his failure to reach Selma need not be deeply deplored. The Southern Mississippi Railroad, crossing the State at right angles to the river, is destroyed. The Mobile and Ohio Railroad, running through the easterly part of the State parallel to the river, has been torn up and irreparably injured for a distance of fifty-six miles north and south of Meridian. The immense supplies accumulated by the rebels at numerous points on the line of these two roads have been burned, and the mills, manufactories, machine-shops, public buildings—in a word, everything which contributed to the military power of the Rebellion—have been annihilated. There are no longer the means of transporting or of subsisting any considerable force of rebel troops—cavalry perhaps excepted—in Southern or Central Mississippi. The uninterrupted navigation of the Mississippi River and the security of Louisiana from rebel invasion are results of this Expedition. Between the forces of the Rebellion east and west of the Mississippi, there can henceforth be no co-operation—scarcely any regular intercourse. For all military purposes the state which Sherman has traversed is a desert—its vast territory not merely useless to the rebels, but an impassable barrier between them and the region in which they expected to have pursued an aggressive campaign.

It is said that Gen. Sherman felt himself able—notwithstanding the inability of Gen. Smith to join him—to have marched direct from Meridian on Mobile, and to have captured the city. We have known before that the rebels expected him too and that the city was slightly defended on the land side. Probably it would have fallen had it been attacked, but the responsibility for the failure does not lie at Gen. Sherman's door.

LATE EUROPEAN NEWS.

Arrival of the English Mail at Halifax.

NEWS BY TELEGRAPH.

HALIFAX, March 30, 7.30 p. m.

Africa arrived Wednesday forenoon.—Parliamentary proceedings important and exciting.

Palmerston declined to produce the opinion of the law officers of the Crown, respecting the seizure of the "Tuscaloosa."

Party motion to refer the subject implicating Stanfield, member of Commons and of Government, in Greece plot to assassinate Emperor Napoleon, lost; Government sustained by ten of a majority. Stanfield had tendered his resignation, but the Government refused to accept it

Ellenborough consented to postpone enquiries relative to Danish affairs, as Russell said it was desirable no discussion should take place, as the Government entertained fond hopes Denmark would agree to Conference, and that armistice would be acceptable to all parties.

Announced Lords would give judgment in Alexandria case soon after Easter.

At Cork, nine men convicted of illegally practising military exercise.

Suspension of Mails via Galway officially announced.

Journals report that Denmark accepts conference without armistice. Belligerents shew increased activity.

Germans vigrously prosecuting siege of Duppel. Prussians had captured Island of Femeren.

Prussians arrested all officials within that portion of Jutland which they occupied.

Heavy firing exchanged at Sunderborg.—Sharp naval engagement off Rugen Island, between five Danish steamers and two Prussian men-of-war and several gunboats. Prussians withdrew, closely pursued by Danes, but reached port safely.

The Pope confined to his bed, seriously ill. Collision between French and Papal troops continue.

Nothing important from Poland. Insurgents watchful and active.

CORRESPONDENCE.

NEW BRUNSWICK AFFAIRS.

(*From our own Correspondent.*)

The excitement and discussions which have prevailed here for the last two months about the Chesapeake affair have at length quite subsided; and now the all-engrossing subject is the initiation of policy for the construction of Provincial Railways. You will have learned before this time that the three men apprehended on a charge of piracy and murder have been discharged from imprisonment. They are now enjoying the "blessings of liberty." When the evidence was taken and the arguments of Counsel heard before the Police Magistrate, that officer ordered the accused to be committed and to be given up to the Federal Government on demand. This decision, however, did not satisfy the pirate's Counsel, and was as gall and wormwood to at least three fourths of our citizens—though this popular feeling of opposition is nothing but intense prejudice toward every occurrence favourable to the Northern Americans, and an equally blinded sympathy for the Southern Rebels. In respect to the "American troubles," New Brunswick is thoroughly secessionist, and consequently hostile in sentiment to the success of the Federal Cause. And before the Yankees contemplate the invasion of this loyal Province it would be prudent for them to remember that we possess a Volunteer force of, probably, one thousand men, fully equipped, well disciplined, and ready for "active operations." With such a domestic army for a defence need we care then how supercilious our behaviour may be towards the Northern States?—Judge Ritchie, of the Supreme Court, granted a *habeas corpus* for a review of the whole proceedings in the matter of the Chesapeake prisoners, and after a full investigation, he ordered their immediate discharge, on the grounds that the preliminary steps were irregular. The question of guilt or innocence was, of course, not examined. It is said that new warrants for their apprehension are issued against the released men; but they have already dissappeared from the city, probably from the province.

The judgment in appeal is regarded by all parties as a most able and impartial *dictum*, and is shortly to be published in pamphlet form. I shall have the pleasure of sending a copy of this publication to the Editor of the Examiner, and upon reading it he can decide whether the judgment should be affirmed or refused.

As yet there have been no important proceedings transacted in the Legislature during the progress of the present session—though one honourable member has been quite successful in procuring the enactment of a statute relating to the destruction of tiger cats—a species of the wolf animal, and by no means friendly to sheep and lambs. The arguments employed in support of this measure, I need not refer to or comment upon, but I have no doubt they were characterised by great ability and extent of information. This session has been signalized, too, by indulgence in offensive personalities. Her Majesty's Attorney General has, so far, carried off the first prize, in this department of Legislation. Mr Skinner, a young and consequential little *homme de la robe* will, it is supposed, be entituled to a second class premium for similar proficiency. Mr. Johnstone's attack—or, as his friends term it—his *defence*, was directed against Mr. Anglin, one of the St. John representatives, charging him with a wilful misrepresentation of some observations made by the former in the course of debate upon the "tiger-cats" bill, and denouncing him as a poltroon and a deliberate liar. The latter replied with perfect *sang froid* that such language was beneath the notice of a gentleman; that duelling was against the precepts of his Church, and that the expressions of the Attorney General were the natural emanations of a mind full of blackguardism. Mr. Anglin is an Irishman, and his countrymen express astonishment at his suffering such insolence to go unpunished; they say that O'Donohoe is as good an Irishman, and that he compelled the haughty Sir Robert Peel to offer ample reparation for utterances reflecting upon the integrity of his opponent.

A few days ago the stability of the Government seemed doubtful. This aspect was produced by the introduction of a Resolution into the House of Assembly recommending the building of a Railway from this city to the American Foundry, which purposed enterprise has taken a firm hold of the popular mind. But the Government opposed it eagerly, and advocated the Intercolonial construction instead. When, however, Nova Scotia followed in the wake of Canada, and abrogated the joint contract concerning the Intercolonial road, the leader of our Government announced his intention to submit in some measure to the popular clamour, and to bring in a Bill that would prove acceptable to the friends of Western Extension. This moderated the opposition to the Government, and perhaps will be the means of securing its further existence. It is proposed by Mr Tilley to give a bonus to any Company who shall undertake to construct Railroads from St John to Fredericton, to Woodstock, to St. Stephen's, to Holton, and from Shediac to Chatham and other places in the Province. Should this work be commenced next summer, it will make good times in New Brunswick, and afford lucrative employment to thousands of its people.

Ship-building has been prosecuted on an extensive scale during the winter, and looks promising for the ensuing summer.

Au revoir, P. E. I.

St. John, N. B., 19th March, 1864.

To the Editor of the Examiner.

Sir.—There is rather a novel chronicle in the last *Monitor*, of the public flogging of a young Micmac, Louis Nicholas, for stealing three flannel shirts from the clothes-line of one Capt. B., *selling* one to procure a *breakfast*—of which he probably was in need—and adorning his "savage" person with the other two. A few days previously, one McGilvray, for the crime of beating and robbing a poor old man, whose confidence he had abused, had received his "forty stripes save one," in the public administration of justice. It would appear that the good people of Georgetown and vicinity had their appetites whetted by that spectacle for another exhibition of the same sort; and in their eagerness to gratify their morbid cravings for this species of gratification have presumed to use the lash of the lictor without the license of the law. Under any circumstances, the punishment of a criminal by public whipping, is revolting enough; and to the credit of fallen humanity it may be written that public flogging is not nearly so common as it formerly was. There are few men, I believe, out of the capital of King's County, who will read the account of the *Monitor's* correspondent of the doings of Judge Lynch and his supporters at Georgetown, without coming to the conclusion that the fast people of that thriving place have, in their eagerness to *save their flannel*, themselves violated the law which they *supposed* had been infracted by their Indian brother.

"Every one is innocent" in the eye of the law, "until he is proved to be guilty" by some legal tribunal, is an old maxim, the justness of which, with reference to criminal accusations, it would be *unjust* to call in question. What legal right, may I not ask, Mr. Editor, had the burghers of Georgetown to empower Captain —— publicly to flog one whom they designate a savage, but who was, nevertheless, a subject of our beloved Queen, and as yet *uncondemned*? Was the redoubtable Captain who inflicted the stripes, as we are told, with all his "strength and muscle," he whose property was supposed to have been appropriated by the savage? If so, let me ask *was he* the proper person to select as the one most likely to temper mercy with justice in the infliction of the illegal stripes? To a civilized community, taking an impartial view of the matter as set before us in the columns of the *Monitor*, the Captain of the Georgetown Volunteers, in the service of Judge Lynch, with horsewhip in hand, laying it on the naked back of his unfortunate victim, appears to be the greater savage of the two.

If the Georgetonians are justifiable in this mode of distributing justice, then, in the name of outraged humanity, do away entirely with the mockery of trial by judge and jury, and all its expensive concomitants, and let there be one rule in the new *regime* for the white "savage" and his less favoured Indian brother. If Hugh McGilvray is to be tried before he is whipped, why in the name of common justice is Louis Nicholas to be whipped before he is tried?

It would appear, Sir, that the people of some of the Southern sections of King's County, in common with the Georgetonians, entertain some very remarkable notions respecting individual rights and public rectitude. They are not disposed to linger any longer behind the age in the tardy course of common law, but strike out for themselves—as in the case of flogging the Indian—such bold and vigorous measures as must be matter of astonishment to every one excepting themselves! The inhabitants of Lots 61 and 64 are described, in the public prints, to be, at the present time, in a state of open revolt. It is said they have already planted cannon on the Mink River Road, as a means of resistance to the payment of rents. How far "Tenant Leagues" have heretofore benefited the tenantry of this Island, let the experience of former years testify. Cunning and unscrupulous men sometimes, for an object best known to themselves, give such counsel as is not conducive to the welfare of those who *ignorantly* follow it. Let us hope, Mr. Editor, that the present movement in advance of the ordinary methods of distributing justice may not serve for another illustration of the familiar old adage of "jumping out of the frying pan into the fire." It seems pretty clear that if the good people of Georgetown take it into their heads to back up the refractory tenantry in their resistance to the payment of rent, we may expect to see, at no distant date, that the whole tribe of Sheriffs, bailiffs, constables, &c, will be taught, by public example, that the safest way to save their *backs*, if not their *bacon*, will be to keep on the western side of the County line, leaving the inhabitants of Georgetown to settle both their *own* and *other people's* business, according to their own peculiar notions of *meum* and *tuum*.

Having said thus much concerning the administration of justice in Georgetown, I shall bring my present letter to a close. I must express a hope here, that the Vigilance Committee at Georgetown are all men—like the Col. Secretary—of clean hands, who can turn their mental gaze inwards upon themselves, without being convicted by their conscience of even having committed anything worthy of stripes.

I am Sir,
Your very humble servt.
ROGER RIDDLER.

Queen's County, 31st March, 1864.

P. S. It is charitably to be hoped that Capt. B. may not, during the next twenty years, come within the vengeance of the outraged young chieftain. The tomahawk, scalping knife and eel-skins of the Indian are terrible realities, and if Captain B. does not place a vigilant sentry over himself, and keep within the limits of Georgetown proper, he may yet have reason to rue the day in which he ventures to expose his athletic person to the tender mercy of Indian retaliation.

R. R.

Mr. Whelan:—

Sir,—On Tuesday next the annual general meeting of the Union Bank will be held. Perhaps it would not be too much to say that upon the decisions then will very much depend the future prosperity of this infant institution. The Shareholders, in making choice of the Directors, should not only elect the business men who may be liked by their fellows in town, but they should also be favorites with people in the country; and as there is much money belonging to the country which will be invested in the new Bank, and get it into early operation, it behoves its friends in the City to make good selections; and it then depends on the Directors to make a proper choice for President—one who is a favorite with the people, has been some years in business, has had some knowledge of banking, and withal knows, and is known throughout the Island generally as a person of standing and integrity. We folk in the country are somewhat timorous, and prefer placing our hard earned means in the hands of men we respect than in those we do not; and trust "a word to the wise" at this time will not be taken amiss.

A VOICE FROM THE COUNTRY.

Queen's County, 2d April, 1864.

(FOR THE EXAMINER.)

AFFECTION.

More beaut'ful than that rich light
The sun emits in budding spring,
Or sparkling stars of balmy night
That prompts the nightingale to sing
Sweet notes of gratitude to Nature's King.

More beautiful than rainbow shade,
Of mingled texture mild and grand,
Or azure of Heaven's great arcade,
When cloudless seen, by zephyrs fann'd,
While sunsets gold and crimson greets the land.

More beautiful than the soft ray
Shed by the unassuming Queen
Of Night, in full unhidden sway,
When mourning anguish lone and keen
To angel solace bows, and quits the scene.

More beautiful than virgin gold
Set forth in burnished purity,
Or glittering diamond, out the cold
Recesses of the Indian sea
That forms and decks the crown of Majesty.

More beautiful than all that art,
Of truth or fancy, can portray,
Is that affection of the heart
That wends to kindest souls its way
Through earth, air, sky and Heaven's effulgent ray.

H. A. B.

Charlottetown, March, 1864.

TENANT MEETING AT CRAPAUD, LOT 29.

A public meeting of the Tenantry on Township Number Twenty-nine was convened at the Crapaud East Schoolroom, on Monday the 14th inst., at two o'clock, p. m., for the purpose of taking into consideration the plausibility of forming a Tenant League, or of otherwise adopting a mode of procedure tending to their emancipation from the shackles of the Proprietary system — the Land Commission having failed to secure for them the right to purchase the fee simple of their respective lands at a just and reasonable rate. The tenantry, therefore, deem it their combined interest to move in the matter themselves, by using their united exertions towards their release from the system of Landlordism — a system which they deem unjust, burdensome, and highly detrimental to their prosperity and to the general advancement of the Colony. The meeting was numerously attended; and a banner was to be seen floating in the breeze bearing the words: "Vox Populi, Free Land For a Free People; United we stand, Divided we fall."

The Hon. K. Henderson, the representative of the District in the Legislative Council, and Wm. Haslam, Esq., one of the members for the District, were in attendance, and occupied the greater part of the time in stating their views on the Land Question in its present phase; and, in concluding, expressed their sympathy with the Tenantry in the sufferings they endure, and admonished them to pursue a course of rectitude, by acting an honourable part, and in no manner to resort to violence or unconstitutional proceedings in resisting the collection of rent, portraying to them the dangers to be apprehended from *flying in the face of the law*, as Her Majesty possesses the prerogative of causing her laws to be respected in all parts of her dominions.

The tenantry, believing that the present Government have done all in their power to settle the Land Question on terms advantageous to them, but have been incapacitated to effect the object of their negotiations by misrepresentations and influences bearing against them at the Colonial Office, have, therefore, assumed the responsibility of unitedly determining to withhold the further payment of rent, and arrears of rent, until such measures be accomplished as may enable them to convert their Leaseholds into Freeholds on equitable terms, or otherwise ameliorate the present state of affairs and alleviate their depression.

After considerable discussion the following resolutions were proposed and unanimously passed, viz:—

1. *Resolved*, That a Committee forthwith be appointed to draft a Memorial to Lady Fane, requesting her to grant such concessions to her Tenantry as may enable them to convert their Leaseholds into Freeholds on just and moderate terms.

2. *Resolved*, That we, the Tenants on the western portion of Township Number Twenty-nine, in the intermediate time, withhold the payment of rent, and arrears of rent, from her Agent, until a decisive and satisfactory answer to the Memorial which we are about to forward to her, be received from Lady Fane.

The shades of night having made their appearance, the meeting was dismissed about half-past six o'clock.

Crapaud, March 14, 1864.

The Examiner.

Charlottetown, April 4, 1864.

LEGISLATIVE PROCEEDINGS.

We are precluded, by want of space, from giving an account of the proceedings of the House of Assembly during the past week. There was nothing, however, of great public importance transacted. A Bill to authorise the establishment of a Savings Bank—a Bill to prevent the fradulent marking of merchandise—a Bill to repeal the Usury Laws—a Bill relating to Bills of Exchange and Promissory Notes—a Bill to amend the Union Bank Act—a Bill to amend the Prince Edward Island Bank Act—a Bill to restrict the payment of silver as a legal tender to the amount of six pounds—and a Bill relating to Anchorage duties—were the only measures, we believe, discussed in the House during the past week: and the debates upon these were very tame and uninteresting. We think the inhabitants of Prince Edward Island might dispense with the whole of them without any disadvantage to their interests. Some petitions were presented, and the usual papers and documents relating to public affairs were brought down by members of Government. Since the debate on the Address in answer to the Governor's Speech, the Session, so far, has been entirely devoid of political interest.

NOTES OF THE DEBATES.

No. 3.

ARREARS OF THE QUIT RENTS.

The opinions of the Hon. Mr. Coles on this question, as enunciated by him, in the course of the Debate on the Draft Answer to His Excellency's Speech, in brief, are these: That—as not one of the Proprietors has effected a commutation of his Quit Rents on the terms offered by Earl Ripon, or in any other way — when, at the end of the present Session, our Land Assessment Act shall expire, during the continuance of which, as therein specified all claims to Quit Rents were to lie dormant, these Rents will revive, both prospectively and retrospectively; and, of arrears, an immense amount will then be due to the Colony, the payment of which it will be the bounden duty of the Government to endeavour at once to enforce.

The excerpts from Despatches and Correspondence on the subject of the Quit Rents, read, and commented upon, by Mr. Coles, as affording authoritative evidence of the correctness of his views on the subject, are as follow:—

1st. From a Despatch of Lord Glenelg's, to Sir C. A. Fitzroy, dated 28th July, 1838—

"I transmit, herewith, for your information, copies of correspondence which has passed between this department and Mr. G. R. Young, relative to the arrangement agreed to by the Earl of Ripon, in 1833, for the commutation of the Quit Rents in Prince Edward Island.

"The principal points discussed in this correspondence are — First: The apparent departure from that arrangement, in the collection, for a sixth year, of the tax imposed by the 2nd George the 4th cap. 17; and secondly, the claim of the Proprietors to be relieved from Quit Rent retrospectively, as well as prospectively, by the payment, at any time within the first period of fifteen, and within the second period of eighteen years' purchase of their several Quit Rents.

"In regard to the second question raised in this correspondence, I thought it right, before pronouncing a final decision, to obtain the opinion of the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury; and I accordingly addressed to their Lordships, through my Under Secretary, the letter of which a copy is herewith enclosed. Their Lordships' decision is contained in Mr. Spearman's letter of the 19th March last; but Mr. Young having, in his letter of the 4th April, controverted that decision, I thought it necessary to submit his arguments for their Lordships' consideration, before taking any final steps in this matter. You will observe, from Mr. Spearman's letter of the 23rd instant, that they do not see any sufficient ground in Mr. Young's communication for altering the opinion which they had previously expressed. In this view I entirely agree, and you will, therefore, consider the decision contained in Mr. Spearman's letter of the 19th March last as a rule for your guidance in this matter."

2nd. The hon. gentleman read from the said Correspondence, a letter to R. Stewart, Esquire, from Lord Howick, dated 14th February, 1833, as follows:—

"Sir: In reference to my lettter of the 28th ultimo, respecting Quit Rents in Prince Edward Island, I am directed by Viscount Goderich to transmit to you the enclosed copy of a despatch to the Governor, explaining the measure which, after mature deliberation, it has been determined to adopt on this subject. In deciding on the course of proceeding which is here announced, His Majesty's Government has been guided by a desire to do justice to the owners of land, and at the same time to promote, as far as possible, the general interests of the Colony. Should you be desirous at once to redeem the Quit Rents on your land at fifteen years' purchase, Lord Goderich will be very happy to afford you every facility for that purpose, and to take measures for procuring you, in conformity with the intention signified in his Lordship's despatch to the Governor a formal release at the same time from the condition respecting settlement.—Signed, Howick."

3rd. From a letter addressed to A. Y. Spearman, Esq., from the Office of the Colonial Secretary, and agreeably to his instructions, Mr. Coles called the attention of the House to the following passages:—

"When land in Prince Edward Island was originally granted by the Crown, one of the conditions annexed to the several grants was the payment of an annual Quit Rent of Three shillings, subsequently reduced to Two shillings, per every 100 acres. In that Colony, however, as in the Continental Provinces of British North America, it was found, during a long series of years, almost impossible to collect this Quit Rent; and accordingly, in 1833, the Earl of Ripon proposed to the Proprietors to extinguish it by the payment of a specified commutation. A copy of the Despatch [Lord Goderich to Lieut. Governor Young, No. 14, 27th January, 1833,] in which his Lordship explained the terms of his proposition, is herewith enclosed for the information of the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury.

"The offer of the Government" (to the Proprietors) "was tantamount to a promise, that, after paying the local tax for five years, the Proprietors should be at liberty to commute their Quit Rents for 15, 18, or 20 years' purchase, as the case might be.

"But other questions have been raised in the course of this discussion, namely—1st. Whether the commutation price is to bear interest from the date at which Lord Ripon's arrangement first came into operation until the time of payment; and 2nd—Whether the payment of it, at any time within the respective periods of two and four years, is an entire acquittal, retrospectively, as well as prospectively, of all Quit Rent.

"As to the second question, it is maintained on the part of the claimants that the payment of 15 years' purchase at any period of the first two years, and of 18 years' purchase at any period of the second two years after August, 1837, is a complete acquittal of all Quit Rents whatever.

"In a matter so strictly of a financial character, his Lordship is anxious to have the advantage of the opinion of the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury.

"It will be observed that the Proprietors have requested that, before any decision is adopted unfavourable to them, they may have an opportunity of making a representation of their views to the Lords of the Treasury.

(Signed,) J. Stephen."

4th. Hon. Mr. Coles then read and commented upon the following extracts from a letter of Mr. Spearman's, dated "Treasury Chambers, 19th March, 1838," in answer to that of Mr. Stephen above referred to, and written in obedience to their Lordships' directions:—

"On a review of the proceedings which have given rise to those questions, their Lordships observe, that the Act passed by the Legislature of the Island, in the year 1830, provided for the payment by the inhabitants of a Land Tax, at the rate therein specified, "during the continuance of the Act," on the express condition that the Crown should relinquish all claim to Quit Rent during such continuance."

"After this Act came into operation, viz: in January, 1833, the Earl of Ripon, in a Despatch, dated the 27th of that month, signified to the then Lieutenant Governor of the Island the terms upon which the Tenants of the Crown would be permitted to redeem their Quit Rents, observing, at the same time, 'that the agreement respecting the Quit Rents in Prince Edward Island, embodied in the Provincial Statute of 11 Geo. 4, cap. 17, must not be disturbed,' and also stating, that 'the claim to Quit Rents would revive retrospectively as well as prospectively at the termination of the existing agreement;' but that his Lordship was of opinion, that the arrears due when the plan he had described would come into operation should be remitted, but 'that the punctual payment of all unredeemed Quit Rents ought to be rigorously exacted.'"

"Their Lordships further direct me to observe, that according to this view of the subject, the question as to the payment of interest on the commutation does not arise, as the Proprietors omitting or deferring to commute become liable to the Tax or Rent; and no remission of such liability would be granted, nor would the commutation be completed, nor the title of the Proprietor to the unencumbered property, or to the release from the condition respecting location of Settlers, be perfected without the liquidation of all arrears of Rent.

"I am finally directed to observe, that their Lordships entirely concur in the opinion expressed by Lord Ripon, that having established the conditions of redemption, 'the punctual payment of all unredeemed Quit Rents ought to be rigorously exacted'; and that it will obviously be urgently necessary, in justice to the general interests of the Province, to the service of which the Revenues from this source would be applied; and in order to prevent defaulters from deriving advantages by their irregularity, from which those who duly fulfil their engagements would be precluded, that the collection of these rents should henceforward be strictly enforced."

(Signed) "A. Y. Spearman."

5th. Hon. Mr. Coles then proceeded to shew that Mr. G. R. Young, in a letter addressed to Lord Glenelg, and bearing date 4th April, 1838, attempted to controvert the view taken in Mr. Spearman's letter of the 19th March, 1838, in regard to the interpretation of the terms offered by the Earl of Ripon, in 1833, for the commutation of the Quit Rents in Prince Edward Island; that Lord Glenelg referred the statements and arguments advanced by Mr. Young in his said letter to the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury; and that Mr. Spearman, as directed by their Lordships, returned the following answer, dated "Treasury Chambers, 23rd July, 1838":

"The Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury having had under their consideration the representation from Mr. Young (herewith returned), on behalf of the proprietors of lands subject to Quit Rent in Prince Edward Island, transmitted with your letter of the 23rd April last. I am commanded by their Lordships to request you will acquaint Lord Glenelg that they have not seen any sufficient grounds for altering the views in regard to the terms on which those Rents are redeemable, which were stated in the letter from this Board of the 19th March last, or for assenting to Mr. Young's proposition — the adoption of which, it appears to their Lordships, would operate as a premium to the Proprietors, at the expense of the Provincial Revenues, to defer the redemption of their Quit Rents to the close of the respective periods specified in the Earl of Ripon's Despatch of the 27th January, 1833, instead of holding out an inducement to effect the same without delay.

"(Signed) A. Y. Spearman.

"Jas. Stephen, Esq."

6th. Hon. Mr. Coles, in order to shew that no proprietor had effected a commutation of his Quit Rents, read from the Journal of the House, 15th February, 1838, the following Message from the Lieut. Governor, Sir C. A. Fitzroy:—

"In reply to their Address of the 8th instant, the Lieutenant Governor acquaints the House of Assembly that no commutation of Quit Rents has, as yet been made by any Proprietor of land in this Island in accordance with the terms contained in Lord Ripon's Despatch of the 27th January, 1833."

The hon. gentleman then further called the attention of the House to the answers to certain queries relative to the terms offered in Lord Ripon's Despatch of 27th January, 1833, for the commutation of Quit Rents in P. E. Island, transmitted by Sir C. A. Fitzroy with the above Message to the House of Assembly. They are as follow:—

"The first point submitted to his Lordship's decision" (Lord Glenelg's) "is, whether the Proprietors of lands in Prince Edward Island, upon payment of the composition specified in Lord Ripon's despatch, at the period therein named, are discharged from all claim of arrears of Quit Rents, and of all conditions as to settlement prescribed by the original grants. Upon these points Lord Glenelg considers it hardly necessary to do more than to refer you to the terms of Lord Ripon's Despatch. The remission of Quit Rents was therein specified to extend only to the expiration of the Colonial Act, 11 Geo. 4, cap. 17. Any Proprietor commuting within twelve months from that date would extinguish his Quit Rents altogether; but if the commutation were delayed until a later period, any Quit Rent which should have become due during the interval, subsequent to the expiration of the above mentioned Act, must be paid previously to the Proprietors obtaining a full discharge. A release from the conditions of settling their lands in the proportion of one person to every 200 acres, was a boon held out by Lord Ripon to such Proprietors, as should commute their Quit Rents within the term for which they had been foregone; and in this respect Lord Glenelg would be disposed to adopt the intention of his predecessor.

"In regard to the second query which you have submitted, I have to inform you that His Majesty's Government cannot undertake to make a fresh grant to Proprietors redeeming their Quit Rents.

"The last point upon which you desire information is the mode in which parties desirous of effecting a commutation of their Quit Rents should proceed in order to effect that object. Upon this subject I have to refer you to the authorities within the Colony, by whom the details of the plan will be arranged, and to whom the commutation money shall be paid. (Signed) Geo. Grey.

"Sir Charles Saxton, &c. &c. &c.

7th. Hon. Mr. Coles lastly, but especially, called the attention of the House to the Report of a Joint Committee of the Council and Assembly concerning a Memorial of the Proprietors, protesting against the Royal Assent's being given to the Act of the Legislature of P. E. Island, for levying an assessment on all lands in the Island. The said Report was laid before the House of Assembly on the 3rd April, 1838. It is signed by T. H. Haviland, R. Hodgson, John Brecken, Joseph Pope, Edward Palmer, Edward Thornton, Samuel Green, Peter McCallum, and John S. Macdonald. The passages thereof which the hon. gentleman deemed worthy of especial notice are the following:

"Your Committee would next advert to the objections urged against the Land Assessment Act in the Memorial. The Memorialists, in the first place, assert that 'if the Act in question be suffered to go into operation by receiving the Royal allowance, it will repudiate the Despatch from Earl Ripon, dated 27th January, 1833, specifying the terms on which proprietors of land in the Colony can redeem the Quit Rents issuing from their lands, and the arrangements entered into under them by the said proprietors for redeeming the Quit Rents on their lands.' The Committee are at a loss to perceive the analogy between a local assessment, and the redemption of Her Majesty's Quit Rents; the former being a tax to be expended solely in the improvement of the Colony, and the latter a release from the the conditions upon which the original proprietors obtained their grants, not only as regards the Quit Rents due to Her Majesty, but also from the terms of settlement—which terms and conditions were voluntarily assumed and taken upon themselves by the original grantees, on obtaining beneficial grants of large tracts of land from the Crown. It does not, however, appear that any of the proprietors have yet availed themselves of the terms offered by Earl Ripon, in the Despatch alluded to for the redemption of their Quit Rents. And lest it may be presumed that this Colony has hitherto benefited by the collection of Her Majesty's Quit Rents, your Committee would bring under the notice of your Honorable House the fact, that of the immense accumulation of Quit Rents which from time to time have become due and payable to His late Majesty and His Royal predecessors, one shilling has never been expended in the local improvement of the Colony.

"Many of the Grantees finding it difficult to comply with the terms so voluntarily entered into with the Crown, were induced to alienate their grants to land monopolists and others, for an almost nominal consideration.

"Aided by the influence of the few Grantees, or of their immediate descendants, who retained possession of their original grants, these persons succeeded in evading the payment of very large arrears of Quit Rents, which, from time to time became due to the Crown, as well as the condition of settlement, until the year 1818, when they prevailed upon the Imperial Government to remit all the arrears of Quit Rent then due—to reduce the maximum amount to be paid in future to two shillings, sterling, per 100 acres—to grant them a further indulgence of ten years for the settlement of their lands, to be computed from December, 1816, and to relieve them from the condition imposed by the several grants with reference to Foreign Protestants.

"At the expiration of this period, in the year 1826, little or no progress had been made in the improvement of these lands—in illustration of which fact, your Committee need only refer to Townships Numbers 2, 4, 5, and 6, the property referred to by Mr. H. R. Hill; and although this property embraces an area of 80,000 acres, situated in one of the most eligible parts of the Island, both for settlement and commerce, your Committee have authority for stating, that it does not contain more than one family possessing any title to the soil beyond the will of the owner; and there are several other extensive tracts in the Colony which are larly circumstanced. These lands, in consequence of the settlement of other lands in the neighbourhood and the large outlay of public money, from a revenue exclusively derived from the resident population, which had been expended in ruuing and opening Roads through them, and in constructing Bridges, acquired a greatly increased value, and at no cost whatever to the Proprietors, for they still continue to evade the payment of their Quit Rents. The repeated indulgences which those Proprietors received at the hands of the Crown, induced other land speculators of similar views, to embark their capital in the purchase of large tracts of land in the Colony; and the baneful influence which such description of persons exercised upon the prosperity of the Colony, not only in retarding its settlement, but also in frustrating almost every public measure calculated to promote its advancement, because so serious an evil, that in order to compel these monopolists to settle their lands, or to relinquish them to the Crown, the House of Assembly in the Session of 1832, addressed the then Administrator of the Government, for the establishment of a Court of Escheat—the Colonial Legislature passing an Act, at the same time, to regulate its proceedings. Your Committee regret to state that the just and reasonable expectations of the Colonists were defeated by the same influence which had been so prejudicially exercised on former occasions; and a refusal to establish such Court, and a disallowance of the Act in question were the results.

"The House of Assembly again petitioned the Throne, in 1836, for the establishment of a Court of Escheat, which application was also refused. In communicating this refusal, the Right Honorable Lord Glenelg recommended that a penal Tax upon wilderness land should be substituted.

"Your Committee would further remark, that as the collection of Quit Rents will be suspended during the continuance of the Act, of the operation of which the Memorialists complain, the tax of Four Shillings, Currency, per 100 acres, on wilderness lands, will at the present rate of Exchange, only exceed the amount to which these lands would otherwise be liable by about Eight pence Sterling per 100 acres; and as the maximum tax of Four Shillings will cease upon the settlement of these lands, the minimum tax of Two Shillings Currency will operate as a bounty on improvement, which is the main object of the Act in question."

That the views enunciated by the Hon. Mr. Coles, relative to arrears of Quit Rents, are strictly correct, must, we think, be quite evident to every person capable of forming a judgment on the matter. The Quit Rents were reserved that they might form a special revenue to be expended in the furtherance of the general interests of the Colony; and for no other end or purpose have they ever been legally available. To appropriate them to any other use or service, was not in the power of the Crown. Hence it follows that it came not within the prerogative of the Crown to extinguish or forgive them, either in whole or in part; and if such power did not reside in the Crown, it most assuredly could not be exercised by a Colonial Secretary — a mere servant of the Crown. By no other means than a fair commutation of them — say at 16, 18, or 20 years' purchase, according to circumstances — was it possible for the Proprietors, tenants of the Crown, to free themselves from the obligations, imposed upon them by their original Grants, to pay these Rents. But, in this way, not even by a single proprietor have they been extinguished; and as the exaction of them was to be suspended only until the expiration of our present Land Assessment Act, which will take place at the close of the present Session, the claim to them — now immediately that of the Colony — will then revive, both prospectively and retrospectively.

To maintain, as seems to be done by some of the Government party, alias the Proprietary party in the House of Assembly, that a Colonial Minister, by a mere Despatch, had it in his power to grant a remission of arrears of Quit Rents to the Proprietors, is just about as absurd as it would be to argue that our Colonial Secretary, Mr. Pope, has it in his power to stay the collection of Land Tax, by a mere letter, addressed by him to the Treasurer, directing him to remit that Tax.

And, be it also especially noted that, as only upon their acceptance of, and compliance with, the terms of commutation offered to them, as a favor by the Earl of Ripon, were the forfeited titles of the Proprietors to be confirmed or made good, the forfeiture of their titles is actually declared by the fact of their having failed to comply with the conditions, by the fulfilment of which they would have been allowed to redeem them. That this is really the case they well know; and, therefore, it is that, by Sir Samuel Cunard's proposed Bill, they are endeavouring to procure a statutory confirmation of their titles.

Hon. Mr. Whelan said, as respected the manner in which the Government had dealt with the Land Question, he knew not which to account the greater—their insincerity or their incapacity. Certainly no Government so extolled by themselves—claiming to stand so high in the estimation of the people—and arrogating to themselves so much influence with higher powers, had ever so completely, so miserably failed in the execution of their designs, and sunk so low even in the estimation of those who, erewhile, were their most ardent admirers, and their firmest supporters, as they had done. The very men who, not long ago, placed the greatest dependence upon their promises—who had the fullest faith in their integrity of purpose—and who were the most eulogistic of their ability, were now the very loudest in preferring against them the charges of insincerity; denouncing them as the betrayers of the people, and as men who had proved themselves to be wholly unworthy of the trust which had been reposed in them. So indignant, indeed, were many of their former friends among the people at the deception which they conceived had been practised upon them, that should any agrarian disturbances arise, should the due execution of the laws, with respect to distraints for rent, be withstood by combined numbers, he believed the instigators to and most active participators in such acts of unlawful resistance would be found among the late friends and supporters of the Government. The people of Prince Edward Island he, however, rejoiced to say, were a loyal, peaceful, and industrious people; and, in fact, no community upon the globe, he believed, could be referred to or instanced as being less prone to riot, tumult, or insurrection than they. The charge, therefore, which, by implication, had been made against them by the Hon. the Leader of the Government, when he anticipated the necessity which might arise of sending for troops to enforce their submission to the laws at the point of the bayonet, and when he spoke of the bloodshed which, consequently, might ensue, was a foul and uncalled for calumny and libel upon the character of the people. The people, when they felt aggrieved, had, constitutionally, as full and perfect a right to hold public meetings for the purpose of discussing their grievances, and of advising with one another for their redress, as they (the members of the House) had then to meet in Session for the discussion and despatch of public affairs; and he trusted that until the abominations of landlordism, as they now existed, should be completely eradicated, they would not cease to agitate zealously and fearlessly—yet, still with due respect to the law—for their extirpation. He did not wonder that the tenantry were now holding meetings in various quarters of the Island to advise with one another as to what they must do with a view to the effecting of their release from their bondage. As to the Land Commission, he had never looked upon it in any other light than as one of the grossest deceptions and greatest impositions ever practised upon the credulity of a people. And as to the Delegation scheme and its results, were they not calculated still more to exasperate the previously much abused and deluded people? The expense of the Delegation, to be paid out of the public purse, would probably be found to amount to as much as £1000. And what was the return made to the people for such appropriation of their money? The mockery of being offered the liberty to acquire the freeholds of their farms at 16 years' purchase! Was it to be wondered at that—thus their every hope blasted—they should be excited? Were they not most cruelly mocked when the Hon. the Leader of the Government told them, that the result of the measures devised by him for their relief had exceeded his most sanguine expectations. He (the Hon. Mr. Whelan) did not represent a tenant constituency: they whom he represented were principally freeholders; yet he was not on that account the less anxious for the relief of the tenantry, nor the less disposed to repel any unjust imputation which might be cast upon their character as a body—such as that which, inferentially was thrown upon it by the Hon. the Leader of the Government when holding out the threat against them that soldiers would be sent amongst them to compel their submission to the laws. Why should they be threatened? They had violated no law. They had infringed no condition of law. But it was to be here, as it had been so often and so long in the country to which he had the honor to owe his birth. The game so long practised there was the game with which the people were threatened here. If they were to meet and hold consultations for the redress of their grievances, the soldiers were to be let loose upon them to shed their blood, and their money or means were, besides, to be taken to pay their butchers. This was the threat held out against a peaceable people; "if you hold public meetings for the discussion of your grievances, we shall presume you are met to concoct plans for resisting the law, and we shall send the military among you for your subjection, and we shall cause your goods, your crops, your lands to be seized for the payment of the soldiery who hold you under their absolute control." The hon. gentleman then, in answer to the assertion which had been made by different hon. members on the Government side of the House, to the effect that, in 1851, the Liberals took office with the distinct understanding that the titles of the proprietors were not to be meddled with or disturbed in any shape or form whatsoever; and that, should any attempt be made to resist the payment of rents, which the local authorities might be powerless to defeat, a military force was to be sent for to Halifax to assist in quelling all such resistance. That this was a fact, he most distinctly denied. The Despatch to which hon. members who had made that most erroneous assertion alluded was that which had been called "*The Bloody Despatch.*" That Despatch certainly empowered, or rather directed, the Lieut. Governor, in the event of any