

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

THURSDAY, Jan'y 31st, 1861.

The second session of the Twenty-second Parliament of the Province of Nova Scotia, was this day opened at half-past two o'clock, P. M., by His Excellency the EARL OF MULGRAVE, Lieutenant Governor, with the following Speech:

Mr. President, and Honorable Gentlemen of the Legislative Council:

Mr. Speaker, and Gentlemen of the House of Assembly:

The year which has just closed will be ever honorably distinguished, by the visit to this continent of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales. In no part of Her Majesty's dominions was the reception of the Heir Apparent more tasteful and appropriate, or more loyal and enthusiastic than in this Province; and it affords me infinite pleasure to be able to assure you that His Royal Highness returned to England most favorably impressed with the scenes through which he passed, with the unanimity that characterized, and the order which controlled our public displays; and above all with the attachment to the Throne, and veneration for the virtues which adorn it, so universally diffused among the population of Nova Scotia.

It will, I am sure, be gratifying to you, to learn that this year we shall again be honored by a visit from another member of the Royal Family; as Her Majesty's ship *St. George*, in which His Royal Highness Prince Alfred is serving as a Midshipman, has been ordered to join the North American Squadron, and will visit Halifax next Summer.

The Legislature, during the last Session, having placed at my disposal the means necessary for the formation and organization of Volunteer Corps, I have not failed to use my best endeavors to encourage the loyal spirit which has been evinced by the inhabitants of this Colony, who, at considerable pecuniary sacrifice, have voluntarily enrolled themselves for the defence of their country. It affords me much satisfaction to inform you, that the movement, although still in its infancy, is progressing most favorably. In the rural districts twenty-one Companies have already been formed. Duly qualified Instructors have been appointed to superintend their training, and by this means, I trust they will shortly equal in efficiency those metropolitan corps, whose appearance and discipline during the late visit of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, reflected so much credit on the Colony, and elicited the praise of all who saw them.

Mr. Speaker, and Gentlemen of the House of Assembly:

The Public Accounts of the past, and the estimates for the current year, shall be laid before you without delay.

Mr. President, and Honorable Gentlemen of the Legislative Council:

Mr. Speaker, and Gentlemen of the House of Assembly:

It affords me great satisfaction to be able to inform you that the Revenues of the past year are far in excess of those collected in any preceding year of our Provincial history. They have been amply sufficient to meet all the obligations of the Government at home and abroad—to cover the services not likely to recur—and to justify the conviction, that, in providing liberally for internal improvements, the resources of Nova Scotia

have not been miscalculated or her credit overstrained.

You will learn, with satisfaction, that while our Railways have been worked, without serious accident, or loss of life, a judicious economy, in the management of them, has restored confidence in their productive power.

The extension of the Railway system is anxiously looked for by the population that lie beyond their present termini; and it will be for you to judge, when you have had time to examine the state of the revenue, whether you can with due regard to the public credit resume operations in the spring.

Much inconvenience has been felt by the stoppage of the trains at Richmond, and a heavy tax is paid for the transportation of passengers, country produce and merchandize to and from the centre of the City.

A survey has been conducted, with a view to provide greater facilities, and when the plans and estimates are submitted, you will be able to decide whether the country can afford to give to its industry this further measure of relief.

Shortly after the close of the last Session, the attention of the Government was called to the unsatisfactory condition of the Provincial Hospital for the Insane. A rigid enquiry was instituted into its management, which was found to be very extravagant. The financial administration was promptly transferred to the Board of Works, and you will be pleased to learn, that while harmony has been restored in the internal economy of the institution, a large saving has been effected in the annual expenditure.

Your attention will be called to a measure for connecting the Island of Cape Breton with the mainland, by a Steam Ferry across the Strait of Canso, and for connecting, by steam, Hantsport, Cornwallis, and Cumberland, with the Railway terminus at Windsor. You will also be asked to sanction the erection of a public Wharf at Digby, the completion of new Roads from Mills Village to La Have, from Plaister Cove towards Baddeck, and other public works, for which the ordinary resources of the Counties have been hitherto found inadequate to provide.

In accordance with the policy suggested in a despatch received from the Right Hon. the Secretary of State for the Colonies, I have caused a Board of Statistics to be duly organized, under the laws of the Province; and proceedings are in progress for taking a Census on the thirtieth day of March next.

The anomalies, so apparent in the representation, and the imperfections in the Act of 1859, suggest a new adjustment of the division line of districts, and redistribution of the franchise.

Your attention will be directed to these subjects, and to a measure, based upon the English Statutes, for ensuring greater purity in the conduct of elections.

While our neighbors are passing through trials the most severe, and are menaced with civil war, we ought, in resuming our Legislative labors, to be thankful to the Giver of all Good, for the permanence of our Institutions, and for the freedom and tranquility they secure.

On their return the Speaker, following the usual form, read the Speech to the House.

ELECTION RETURNS.

The returns of the elections in the Counties of Cumberland and Victoria were then read by the Clerk. R. Donkin and C. Campbell, Esqrs., the newly elected members for these counties, were