

Mr. TOBIN.—The question asked by the hon. member for Inverness is very pertinent. Some of the articles we import are warehoused, and others again not. We import a quantity of fish from Newfoundland; it is re-exported. Then again there is salt which is re-shipped to Newfoundland. A large quantity of other goods is also re-exported to the neighboring provinces. These goods are actually in the exports and imports, and it is very difficult to find out in the trade returns what is the real consumption of the province of Nova Scotia. I have turned my attention to this subject for some time past and I arrived, by the calculations made, at the conclusion that about two and a half millions were re-exported from this country. If any means could be arranged by which our trade returns would give a true estimate of the goods that would be re-exported a great benefit would be conferred. As respects the small amount of exports to Great Britain, I am not surprised. Except timber, peltry, and a few other things, we have little to send them. Sometimes, when the market affords it, we export sugar and molasses.

Hon. PROV. SECY.—There is the shipping to be added to the amount of goods exported.

Mr. ANNAND.—Our trade returns, though improved in some respects, by no means compare favorably with those of New Brunswick or Canada. I know, from my own experience, that we cannot expect to have the returns as perfect until there is more assistance in the Financial Secretary's office. If I can help the hon. gentleman in making an improvement in this particular, I shall be most happy to do so.

Hon. PROV. SEC.—The chief difficulty arises in the outports of the country, and not in the office of the Financial Secretary.

Mr. ANNAND.—As long as the Financial Secretary is at the head of the revenue department, the responsibility must be thrown upon him. It is somewhat important to know exactly our imports. Some system ought to be initiated by which we can arrive at all the information required.

Hon. PROV. SEC.—One great difficulty has arisen from the impossibility of getting duplicate returns from importers. If that were done, our trade-returns would be much more perfect.

Mr. ROSS.—The Government have an officer, whose duty it is to inspect the several offices throughout the country, and he might insist as to the returns that were necessary. I know that there is no disposition on the part of any controller or customs officer to withhold any returns that are requisite.

Hon. ATTY. GEN.—The difficulty lies deeper than gentlemen think. I know that in my own county cargoes of cattle are sent away without being cleared at all. The hon. member for Victoria will also hear testimony to this fact.

Mr. ROSS.—There is nothing of the kind now in the county of Victoria.

Hon. ATTY. GEN.—Well, it was the case sometime ago. Unless there is some more stringent rule carried out, by which parties will be obliged under penalties to have the property cleared out, you cannot arrive at an accurate estimate. In Canada, in many things, they only make an approximate estimate, I believe.

Hon. FIN. SEC.—There is a great deal of force in what the hon. member for Halifax has stated with regard to the want of sufficient assistance in the Financial Secretary's Office.

The present trade returns are an evidence of the work that is now thrown upon the office; in consequence of certain improvements that have been introduced, the size of the book is nearly doubled. This shows that the amount of labour has also equally increased.

The house then went into Committee and passed the Sydney and Louisbourg Railway Bill.

A Bill to incorporate the International Coal and Railway Company,—and a Bill to incorporate the Clyde Coal Mining Company, were passed through the Committee, after which the Committee adjourned and the House resumed.

Mr. ANNAND asked the Government for a return of all correspondence, if any, since the first day of January, 1863, between the Executive Government and the Imperial authorities, respecting the Militia and the Military and Naval Defences of Nova Scotia.

Mr. KING presented a petition from Douglas against Confederation.

Mr. HATFIELD, a petition from Israel Harding, for a patent for a new system of tanning.

Dr. BROWN, a petition from King's County, against the School Act, and two petitions from the same county against Confederation.

Mr. RAY, a petition from Wilmot against the School Bill.

Hon. Mr. SHANNON, a petition from the Wesleyan Conference in reference to Dalhousie College.

Also, a petition from the Union Engine Company, and an act to incorporate them.

Hon. PROV. SECRETARY laid on the table of the house the Receiver General's Railway accounts for the past year.

Mr. CHURCHILL, a petition from Newport for aid, for the erection of a public wharf.

Mr. HILL, a petition from the inhabitants of Hants County, on the subject of the Railway rates.

Mr. MILLER presented a petition from the Inhabitants of Carriboo Cove and River Inhabitants, on the subject of the protection of the fisheries and the necessity of some regulations for the setting of nets at Port Hood Island.—Also a petition for the Rev. Mr. Gerroir and a number of other Inhabitants of Little Arichat praying for aid to improve the harbor. The hon gentleman called attention to the importance of this subject and trusted that it would receive favourable consideration at the hands of the government. The petition states that some 7 or 8,000 tons of shipping is owned at that place, besides a number of vessels in the course of construction—owing to a beach having been washed away, the harbor was not capable of safely containing the quantity of shipping that was in the habit of resorting thither. The petition was handed to the Financial Secretary.

The House adjourned until 3 o'clock to-morrow.

THURSDAY, 23rd Feby., 1865.

The House met at 3 o'clock.

MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS.

Hon. JAS. McDONALD presented a petition from an aged teacher, praying for a free grant of land.

Mr. BILL presented a petition, numerously signed by the inhabitants of Lakeville, Kings', against the School Act; another from the in-