Provincial Legislature.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY, February 21.

The select committee appointed on the sixteenth day of February instant, to take into consideration the Petitions presented to this House from various parts of the Province, praying relief in consequence of the distress and destitution occasioned by the failure of the Grain and Potato crops, having examined the various petitions referred to them, beg leave to report—A Bill to provide for the necessities occasioned by the failure of the Potato and other crops during the past year.

On motion of Mr. R. D. Wilmot, the house went again into committee of the whole on a Bill to secure the more efficient supply of seamen in this Province. Resolved, that the further consideration of this Bill be postponed until the next session of the Legislature. And upon the question, the committee divided, yeas 19, nays 10.

FEBRUARY 22.

Read a third time as engrossed, a Bill to alter part of the Great Road from Hampton Ferry to Groom's Bridge, so called.

Mr. End moved for leave to present a Petition from John Woolner, William Napier, Esquires, and three hundred and six others, inhabitants of the county of Gloucester, praying Legislative encouragement towards the Fisheries in that county. The order of the House, limiting the time for introducing Petitions, being in this instance dispensed with, leave was granted, and the Petition then read. Ordered, that the Petition be received and referred to the committee appointed to take into consideration all matters connected with the Fisheries to report thereon.

On motion of Mr. Boyd, the House went into committee of the whole on a bill to repeal all the acts regulating Tavern Keepers and Retailers, and to prevent the sale of Intoxicating Liquors, under certain quantities. Resolved, that the further consideration of this Bill be postponed until the next session of the Legislature. Yeas 22. Nays 14.

FEBRUARY 24.

Read a third time as engrossed, a Bill to amend an Act for the amendment of the Charter of the city of Saint John. That the Bill do pass.

Read a third time as engrossed, A Bill to consolidate and amend the Laws relative to offences against the person. That the Bill do pass.

On motion of Mr. Vail, Resolved, that the Petition of Richard O'Neil, praying to be remunerated for losses sustained on Contracts entered into by him on the Great Roads in King's County, in the year 1840 and 1841, and which was presented to the House on the ninth day of February instant, and ordered to lie on the table, be now referred to the Committee appointed to take into consideration the sums required for the improvement of the Roads throughout the Province, to report thereon.

On motion of Mr. Woodward, the house, according to the order of the day of yesterday, went into Committee of the whole in further consideration of the Messages received from His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor, and resumed the Debate upon the Extract of the Despatch upon the Right Honorable Earl Grey, Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies, to His Excellency Sir John Harvey, Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia, relating to the Tenure of Public Offices and Executive Councillors, and which was communicated to this House on the 10th day of February instant.

The Chairman reported, that the Committee having the subject matter of the said Despatch before them, the following Resolution was moved:—

Resolved, As the opinion of this Committee, that the House should approve of the principles of Colonial Government contained in the Despatch of the Right Honorable Earl Grey, Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies, of the thirty first March, 1847, and of their application to this Province.

To which an amendment was moved—To expunge the whole of the said Resolution after the words "Resolved, as the opinion of this Committee," and substitute as follows:—

"That the Tenure of Public Offices in this Colony should depend on official integrity, talent and independence, rather than on the achievement of Legislative popularity."

Upon the question for adopting the amendment, the Committee divided as follows:—

YEAS.—Messrs. End, Barbarie, S. Earle, Carman, Thompson, M'Leod.

NAYS.—The Hon. Mr. Speaker, hon. Mr Hazen, hon Mr Baillie, hon Mr. Rankin, Messrs. Brown, Hannington, Jordan, Ritchie, Steves, Woodward, Fisher, L. A. Wilmot, R. D. Wilmot, Connell, Boyd, Cranney, Porter, Wark, Miles, Taylor, Street, J. Earle, Partelow, Vail, Botsford, Read, Montgomery, Smith.

Whereupon it was decided in the negative.

The question was then taken upon the original Resolution, when the Committee again divided as follows:—

YEAS.—The hon Mr. Speaker, hon Mr. Hazen, hon Mr Baillie, hon Mr Rankin, Messrs. Brown, Hannington, Jordan, Ritchie, Steves, Woodward, Fisher, L A Wilmot, R D Wilmot, Read, Montgomery, Smith, Partelow, J Earle, Wark, Boyd Cranney, Porter, Connell.

NAYS.—Messrs. End, Barberie, Taylor, Miles, M'Leod, Gilbert, Thomson, Carman, Vail, Botsford, S. Earle. And so it was carried in the affirmative.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Tuesday, February 22.

The house went into committee on a Bill to regulate the recovery of Seamen's wages; hon Mr Saunders in the Chair

Hon Mr. Minchin said this was a local Bill and according to the Rules of the house should have been read in Sessions. He therefore moved it to be postponed for three months.

Hon. Mr. Johnston hoped the Committee would not do that. The Bill might have been in Session for ought they knew to the contrary, and he would propose they report progress to enable them to ascertain the fact. In reference to the provisions of the Bill, however, he thought them somewhat strange. It reflected upon the Magistrates of saint John: and while it would not prevent them from acting, they holding their authority under an Imperial Act, it would compel them, whenever they might be called upon to interfere, to perform the duty, and hand over the fees to the Clerk, to form a fund for the payment of the new officer's salary.

Hon. Solicitor General would make a few remarks upon the merits of the Bill. It was his opinion that if it passed that House it could not become law, as it was repugnant to one of the Imperial Acts. He knew several very active Magistrates in saint John, who had attended to most of the business of the city and county ever since he had known them—a period of sixteen years—without remuneration; he would particularise Messrs. Peters, Porter, Vanhorne and Smith. (Here the hon member read extracts from the Imperial Act relating to seamen, and contended that the Bill, being repugnant to its provisions, could not be acted upon.) The Magistrates he had named were not only active in the discharge of their duties, but they were also exceedingly cautious, applying to the proper Law Officer, in all doubtful cases, for his advice. They conducted all the criminal cases without pay; and now the Bill aimed to supplant them, so far as seamen were concerned—or rather it would allow them to do the work, and another to get the pay for it. The Imperial Parliament had seen fit to enact very stringent laws for the protection of the poor, ignorant and thoughtless seamen. (Here his honor read extracts, providing that in order to bind seamen properly to their ships, the master when concluding an arrangement with them is bound to read over the written articles of agreement, until they understand them, and the said articles must be signed in presence of a witness.) These were the late regulations under the Imperial Act, and in all the late proceeding in saint John, he had no doubt but the Magistrates had decided according to law, and that in consequence of neglect on the part of masters to fulfil the letter of the Law, when entering into an agreement with seamen, they (the Magistrates) had been obliged to decide against them; for if any part of the form had been neglected, the men could leave the ship at any port, and sue and recover wages for the period they had served. The masters might think this hard, but the Bill now before the House, if passed into law, would not make it better for them, as a Stipendiary Magistrate must under the circumstances, come to the same decision. The Committee would also bear in mind that the Imperial Act only applied to ships owned in Great Britain. He looked upon this Bill as an invidious attack upon active and laborious Magistrates, and would second the motion for postponement.

Hon. Mr. Botsford was not prepared to go into the merits of the Bill, and hoped progress would be reported. In carrying out the Imperial Act as described by his honour the Solicitor General, a very great power, and he thought a dangerous power, was entrusted to the Magistrates. There were many well informed persons, who considered the power given to Magistrates under our statutes, to recover sums not exceeding five pounds, in a summary manner, more than they should be entrusted with, and that the said amount should be limited to two pounds instead of five. He (hon. Mr. Botsford) wished to place the power of dealing with the Imperial Act on a better basis—in the hands of one properly qualified and responsible person; and the more the hon. Solicitor General explained the intricacy of the Imperial Act, the more was he (hon. Mr. B) convinced of the necessity for this Bill. In reply to the hon. member who had called it a local Bill, he (hon Mr. B) did not consider it in that light. At all events he thought they should have further time for consideration; he therefore hoped they would report progress.

Hon Solicitor General said the hon member who had just spoken, in proposing to have a proper person appointed, who should manage the business much better than the Magistrates, would do well to inform their honours what legal gentleman they could get to accept the office, and perform the labour, for seventy-five pounds a year! The hon. member's proposition would have been very well had the salary been £200 a year, but no legal gentleman, properly qualified, would devote his time to it for £75. He (hon Mr. Botsford,—"What! not in St. John, where we are fifty lawyers?") It would be of no use for the house to pass the bill, saying "we wish the salary was larger;" they could not amend it by striking out the words "seventy five," and inserting the words "two hundred." But if this objection were set aside, and the Bill could become law, it would produce no good results, for the officer appointed must come to the same conclusion as the Magistrates would. Masters were negligent, and the sailors, prompted by Crimps, would leave their ships and sue for wages. This could only be remedied by additional care on the part of Masters, in making the agreement strictly according to law. For his part he could not see the necessity for any further consideration.

Hon. Mr. Simonds differed with the construction which the hon. member (hon Mr. Botsford) had put upon the Bill; he considered it purely local; it did not even extend to the parish of Portland. He thought it unnecessary to discuss its merits at present, as the proper course would be to adjourn until they could ascertain if it had been read in Sessions. If it had not, that, in his opinion, must seal its fate. If it had, they might then proceed with the discussion.

Hon. Col. Wyer said the Bill was before the House without a certificate that it had been read in sessions, and that therefore the house could not proceed with it. As to the salary provided for the officer, it was too small; no legal gentleman would perform the duties for £75 a year. He should support the motion for the postponement.

Hon. Mr Johnston said he differed in part from the view the hon. Solicitor General had taken of the measure; but as he considered it a local Bill, he hoped progress would be reported, that the Committee might ascertain whether it had been read in sessions, and if it had not, that would settle the question.

Hon. Mr Simonds said there were thirty Magistrates in st John, and he thought they could very well perform the duty without the appointment of a special officer.

Hon Mr. BENJ. L. PETERS, Botsford thought that from the fact of there being so many magistrates in saint John, it was pretty clear some of them did not understand the Imperial Act, and therefore there was a greater necessity for this Bill.

Hon Solicitor General said there were about fifty Magistrates in the city and county of St. John, but that most of the labour was performed by some half dozen.

Hon. Mr. Hatch said the hon member opposite (hon Mr. Botsford) had frequently, upon other occasions, abruptly put a stop to the proceedings by saying "Oh! this is a local Bill, and has not been read in sessions;" but now the hon. member had changed his tone. He (hon Mr. Hatch) should be cautious how he permitted hon member to lead him in this respect for the future. (Laughter.) He considered the Bill now before the House purely local in its character, and if it had not been read in sessions they could not pass it. He wished to report progress.

Hon. Solicitor General spoke in terms of high commendation of the saint John magistrates, who take an active part in public affairs. The Imperial Act extends to every part of the United Kingdom, and he did not think that in any of those parts—London and Liverpool excepted—could more efficient Magistrates be found than in st. John.

Hon. Mr. Minchin could see no good reason for protecting progress. He considered the Bill brought forward to benefit shipowners at the expense of poor seamen.

Hon. Mr. Botsford said it was really wonderful to what conclusions some hon members did arrive. The hon. member who had just sat down had concluded that the Bill is to oppress poor seamen, whereas it is declared on the face of it that it is to *protect* seamen. The Bill was introduced to provide that the Imperial Act be properly carried out, and as that Act was passed to protect seamen, certainly the strict observance of it must necessarily be in their favour, and the appointment of an officer who understands that act, be the best guarantee that they will obtain their rights.

Hon. Solicitor General was surprised that the hon. member supposed all this good could be effected by a person enjoying the *great* salary of seventy five pounds a-year.

The motion was then put for reporting progress: *Content*, Hon. Messrs. Johnston, Shore, Botsford, Simonds, and Hatch. *Non-Content*, Hon. Messrs. President, Kinnear, Saunders, Wyer, and Minchin. The division being equal, the Chairman, Hon. Mr. Saunders, gave his casting vote in the negative." The question being then taken to postpone, the same division took place, the *Contents* in the first division being *Non-Contents* on this; and the Chairman now giving his casting vote in the affirmative, the motion was carried. The Committee then arose, and the Chairman reported the resolution, but when the President put the question whether the report be received, the House divided, *Content*, Hon. Messrs. Kinnear, Saunders, Wyer, and Minchin; *Non Content*, Hon. Messrs Johnston, Shore, Botsford, Simonds, and Hatch; and therefore the report was rejected. Here there was considerable confusion and some laughter. Hon. Mr. Botsford moved that the Bill be recommitted to-morrow, while some hon. members said "the Bill is lost." The question then dropped, and it was impossible for us to learn what division the House had come to.

The House went into a committee on a Bill to regulate the measurement of Cord Wood. Several hon. members considered the Bill entirely *useless*, but as all considered it *harmless* it was allowed to pass. Hon. Mr. Johnston said it fixes the cart load—one fourth of a cord—at 35 3-4 feet. The House then went into a committee on a Bill to authorize the Corporation of St. Mary's Church, Richibucto, to sell a piece of land belonging to the said Church (by and with the consent of the B-shop) and apply the proceeds to the purchase of other lands for a glebe. Some conversation took place as to the propriety of passing this Bill in the absence of any petition in its favour. Hon Solicitor General thought it could do no harm, as the Bill did not go to *enact*, but merely to *authorize*, and that not without the Bishop's consent. After a brief discussion progress was reported, and the House adjourned.—*Commercial Times.*

"It will be seen that when in Committee, in this House, the Chairman votes, and if the division be then equal he *also* gives a casting vote! This custom must (as in the present case) lead to great inconvenience, for in all equal divisions the *House*—when the President resumes his Chair—may undo what the *Committee* has done.—ED.

ABD--EL--KADER.

"The wars are ended." Abd-el-Kader, driven into a corner by the troops of the Emperor of Morocco, has preferred the doubtful hospitality of the French to the chances which still remained to him of prolonging the contest by a temporary retreat. On the 22nd of December he surrendered to General Lamoriciere, upon the condition that he should be allowed safe conduct to St. Jean d'Acre or Alexandria. The General assented to the arrangement—the Duc d'Aumale ratified it, and expressses, in his Dispatch to the French Government, his hope that it will be carried into effect. At the same time the Duke announces that he intends to send the Emir and his relatives to *Marseilles*.

It is at all times a hazardous thing to trust to the magnanimity and generosity of a foe. Even when the war has been carried on with great success upon the part of those to whom the discomfited or exhausted warrior may consign himself, there must remain the recollection of the cost of blood and treasure which the contest has involved, and the conviction that if he be again let loose, or so placed that escape may be easy, the victor for the time being will never be free from the risk of a renewal of war. Abd el Kader has been merciful and considerate towards many French officers who have fallen into his hands. We have, in Murray's volume of "The French in Algeiers," the testimony of M de France to the humanity and kindness of the gallant Arab; and it may be that he has judged of the loftiness of soul which animates his adversaries by his own noble impulses. But a civil Government, remote from the scene of action and governed entirely by a cold and narrow policy, does not enter readily into the feelings which influence gallant soldiers who have learned to respect each other through the bravery and skill they have mutually displayed. The liberality and forbearance of the Duc d'Aumale may be incomprehensible at the Tuileries. Already there are symptoms of a disposition to revoke his Royal Highness's ratification of General Lamoriciere's compact. It has been said by the Minister, or *for* him, that the proceedings of the Duke do not necessarily carry with them the approbation of the Cabinet. From Marseilles the transition to Paris is easy, and the sight of Abd-el Kader, a real caged lion, will be a great treat for the spectacle-loving French. But we must not, in fairness, anticipate the decision of Louis Philippe and Monsieur Guizot. It will be time enough to reprobate when their intentions are fairly disclosed. If they found a close resemblance of Abd-el Kader upon our incarceration of Napoleon, we shall be prepared to shew that the cases are not parallel.

The campaign in Algeria being now, to all intents and purposes, at an end, France will have time to look back upon the proceedings of the past seventeen years, and calculate her gains—and losses. She will be able to inquire into the value of her African possessions, and to improve (it much needs amendment) her system of colonisation and protection.—She will have the means of reconciling the people to their settled rulers, and of imparting to them the blessings of education, sound laws and a liberal policy. This, at least, is her obvious duty. Whether, judging from the past, she can and will do these things, as we have done them in our conquered territories, is another question. The French are not generally good colonists.

But, apart from the value of the territorial acquisition, France will have gained much, in a Military and political point of view, by her Algerian conquests. Her position in the Mediterranean is wonderfully strengthened—the throne has, for upwards of seventeen years, been left unmolested, because the people's minds have been occupied by their ruling passion—Military glory; and, above all advantages, the Army of France has had as much of that description of occupation as goes to the formation of good soldiers, as may enable it to present a formidable front whenever it is brought into collision with another European Army, England indeed, has nothing to fear from troops trained in Africa, for India, China, the Cape, New Zealand, &c., have kept *her* Soldiers in a state of apprentiship for active service, to say nothing of the proved ability of her rawest recruits to stand against the veterans of France; but, to the other nations of Europe whose armies have passed thirty-two years in inglorious activity, the heroes of Isly and the caves of Dahra will probably prove dangerous customers.

H. S. SCRIBNER,

Tailor,

HAS on hand a good selection of CLOTHS suitable for the present season, consisting of Blue, Black, Brown, Olive, and Invisible Green wool dyed Beaver Cloths;
Black, Blue, Olive, and Invisible Green wool dyed Broad Cloths;
Black Cassimere and Doeskins; Fancy Doeskins newest styles;
Fancy Vestings—latest styles;
Which he will make to order, at moderate prices for prompt payments. Nov. 12.

Mr. G. BLATCH,

Barrister and Attorney at Law,

Notary Public, and Conveyancer, &c.

OFFICE in Mr. L. H. DeVeber's Building, on the Western side of Prince William street. Saint John, Feb. 18, 1848.

PRIME BEEF Per *Relief*, from New York—25 Barrels Prime BEEF, in Bond.
Dec. 24. THOMAS HANFORD.

Communication.

[From the Observer.]

To the Editor of the Observer.

SIR,—In a report made in the 'Morning News' paper of the 16th February, under the head "The Legislature.—Reported expressly for the Morning News," the Reporter says: "Mr. Ritchie's Bill to provide for the more efficient "decision in matters relating to Seamen's wages was committed, and led to a tedious rambling discussion of some "two hours. Mr. Ritchie, in opening the debate, explained the necessity for some alterations in the law relating "to the recovery of Seamen's wages; at present the different Magistrates were applied to under the Imperial Act, "and it was found that the Ship-masters or Owners were "generally defeated in these trials where seamen sued for "their wages; it was too great a temptation to place in "the way of Magistrates; the fact was if judgment went "against *Jack*, the Justice would get no fees. He then "took up the returns from the different Magistrates at Saint "John, and pointed to the written record in proof of his assertion; particularly the return from Mr. Peters, who done "the most business in that way. The most frivolous charges would be brought against the Ship-masters, and to "such an extent had this evil been felt, that the Port of St. "John had become celebrated for its heavy charges; the "disbursements were enormous; and had the effect of driving many ships from the harbour entirely. To remedy "this evil the Bill authorized the Government to appoint a "Commissioner, before whom all matters relating to Seamen's wages, &c., should be tried; said Commissioner "to have a salary to be chargeable on the ordinary revenue "of the Province, and all fees collected in such cases to be "paid into the hands of the Provincial Treasurer."

Mr. R. D. Wilmot is made to say that "he bore testimony to the statement made by his hon. colleague; the "difficulties experienced at the Port of St. John in this way "were found to be a great hardship;" and again "the returns shewn by his hon. and learned colleague, Mr. Ritchie, were quite conclusive—and the least said about them "the better."

Mr. Woodward "supported the Bill in a brief speech, "corroborating what had previously been stated."

The tenor of these observations is, clearly charging the Magistrates, to whom applications were made by and on behalf of the Seamen for the recovery of their wages (under the Imperial Act,) with being influenced by mercenary feelings, and with giving judgments in *favor* of the *Seamen for the sake of the fees*; regardless of their *oaths as Magistrates*, and their *honesty as men*. These, appear to me, charges of a very grave and serious nature, and, although we are not informed how many of the Magistrates for the City and County are chargeable; (as the number of reports alluded to is not mentioned) no allusion is made to "one from Mr. Peters"; and that appears to satisfy the *honorable* gentlemen as a ground work for their base slander. Why do they not put that Report in print before the public? that honest minded men might have an opportunity of judging how *far honor* and *truth* will support these *honorable* gentlemen in their rugged aspersions, either as to the cause they assign for the high Port charges resting upon the acts of the Magistrates, or the more barefaced falsehood that their judgments are influenced by the consideration of the *paltry fees*.

By reference to the Report made by direction of His Excellency under resolution of the Assembly, on the subject of actions brought before myself for the period of three years,—say from the first of January, 1844, to the first of January, 1847, (which I suppose to be the Report alluded to by Mr. Ritchie,) it will appear that 217 actions were commenced within that time. Of that number—

59 Cases were *dismissed*—no judgment given, and *the Seamen ordered to return to duty.*	
20 Do. Judgments were given for *Defendants*, and *the Seamen ordered to return to duty.*	
58 Do. No judgment—*the parties settling the claims before trial.*	
80 Do. Judgment given for claimants.	
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Thus shewing that so far as the cases brought before me extend—by that report from which Mr. Ritchie spoke—out of *two hundred and seventeen*, only *eighty* judgments were given in *favor of the seamen*. So much for the truth of Mr. Ritchie's slanderous assertion in reference to "Mr. Peters' report" alluded to.

The amount of fees charged is particularly shewn in the Report, *in each case, including Constable's fees.* Total £118 9 6

Of this sum *Masters* and *Owners* upon judgment for plaintiffs, paid	£72 7 9	
Seamen paid for processes, and serving, &c. to Constables	13 18 9	
Fees *not paid by any party—judgment being given for Defendants*,	32 3 0	
		£118 9 6

How far these facts bear out the extraordinary assertion of Mr. Ritchie—*with the Report in his hand at the time* vouched for by Messrs. *R. D. Wilmot* and *J. Woodward*, I leave for the public to determine.

In speaking of the burthen thrown upon the Port of St. John, which the *Honorable* gentlemen, alike regardless of truth and reason, attribute to the Magistrates—I am somewhat astonished to find that, among the causes assigned, they have forgotten or *intentionally omitted the true and only one*, namely—the immense demand for Seamen, created by the number of new ships built and fitted out at the Port of St. John yearly, requiring crews; and, as no means are adopted by the merchants of St. John to provide seamen in the Colony, the only resource is, the fleet of *British* merchant vessels from Great Britain is required to furnish them; and the English merchants sending ships to this port not only have the seamen taken from them, but are obliged to make heavy advances to procure others in their place. For every case where a seaman receives his discharge in Saint John, under an action to recover wages, I have no doubt *fifty desert* without asking for or seeking to obtain their wages; Ten or Twelve pounds for the run to Great Britain being a greater consideration to them than £2 10s. or £2 15s. per month.

The Magistrates, to my knowledge, are not in the habit of seeking customers in the way of making claims for wages. The seamen are brought, to obtain summonses for the recovery of their wages, to the Magistrate, by some of Mr. Ritchie's own profession; and he cannot suppose *they* would be anxious to proceed unless a justifiable cause of action under the Law authorised them to recover; and however unfairly the honorable gentleman may be disposed to act in raising unjust and false insinuations against Magistrates, he will not be found impugning the integrity of any of his legal brethren.

There is another statement I would make for the information of the Public; which may, in Mr. Ritchie's imagination, afford fresh ground for his false assertions, viz:—From 1st January, 1847, up to 1st January, 1848, there have been brought before me *twenty* cases of applications by seamen for the recovery of their wages. Of these—

Judgment for Claimants, in	9 Cases,
Judgment for Defendants,	2 "
Dismissed,	4 "
	6 "
No Trial—settled by parties,	5 "
	20 "

Thus, out of Twenty Cases, in Six the Claimants were defeated.—in Five, the parties themselves settled before Trial—and in the remaining Nine only, was Judgment given for the Plaintiffs.

How far do these facts bear up Mr. Ritchie's assertions that "it was too great a temptation to place in the way of Magistrates?"

The Public have now an opportunity of judging between us; and I feel confident that my word for truth will have as much credit with the members of this community, as any statement of Mr. Ritchie's, unsupported in any other way than by his unfounded assertions.

BENJ. L. PETERS.

One of Her Majesty's Justices of the Peace for the City and County of St. John.

MECHANICS' INSTITUTE.—Last Friday evening, P. LeSeyer, Esq., delivered a very interesting lecture on the *Potency of Female Influence*, to a very large and respectable house.—The same gentleman will lecture again next Monday evening.

Last evening, Dr. Paterson, in continuation of his Electrical course, gave an explanation of *Induction*, and the phenomena attending it, and entered upon the consideration of *Voltaic Electricity*.

Next Friday evening, Mr. Poole will exhibit some brilliant experiments in the combination of Carbon and other Substances in Oxygen Gas, and the effects arising from breathing certain deleterious gases by subjecting some noxious animals to their influence.

Electric Telegraph from Halifax to the United States.—At a meeting of the Chamber of Commerce held in this city on the 23d ult., I. D. Andrews, Esquire, American Consul, having submitted a communication from F. O. J. Smith, Esq. of Boston, proposing the establishment of a Telegraphic Line from Halifax through this Province, to connect with the Great Line through the United states to Maine—Therefore

Resolved, That the Chamber has long looked forward to such a line, and consider its establishment as of the first importance to the interests of this Province, and do therefore recommend that every facility and encouragement be given to any company undertaking to carry into effect such a desirable object; and that Messrs. Duncan, Thorgar, and Jardine be a committee to prepare a Bill and Petition to be laid before the Legislature for the purpose of obtaining an Act of Incorporation for the company, and to correspond with and lend assistance to any parties inclined to embark in the undertaking.

THE CHRONICLE.

SAINT JOHN, MARCH 2, 1848.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.—On the 25th the House was engaged with amendments to a Bill relating to the Election of Representatives to serve in General Assembly, which were suggested by the Legislative Council, and finally agreed to. Also, a Bill to regulate the Measurement of Firewood and Bark, the amendments to which were likewise agreed to.

The committee appointed on the 4th of February to take into consideration the application of the Justices of the Peace for the County of Carleton, to be reimbursed expences incurred by reason of a riot on the 4th day of July last, submitted a Report, stating that £1091: 10 shillings had been expended, and recommending that the sum of £725 be paid from the Provincial funds to assist the County in this emergency. They likewise recommend that the balance should be defrayed by assessment on the county, and a bill for that purpose was prepared and read.

Mr. Parlelow moved for leave to bring in a Bill relating to the trade between the British North American possessions, which was granted and the Bill read.

In justice to the Magistrates of the City and County of St. John, and to Colonel PETERS in particular, who have been rather unceremoniously alluded to in the House of Assembly, we have inserted that gentleman's communication, and also a debate in the Legislative Council on the subject of Seamens' trials and wages. To our mercantile readers we commend the remarks of the hon Wm. B. Kinnear, Solicitor General, as being more in accordance with facts than most others, and who possesses a better knowledge of the true state of the matter in question. The Imperial Acts of late years have been made altogether in favour of the Seamen, and if a greater number of judgments have been given in their favour, it must be attributed to a dereliction on the part of ship-masters in not fulfilling the Imperial enactments.

MASONIC BALL.—The Ball given by the Brethren of Albion Lodge, came off last evening at the Saint John Hotel. The company was one of the largest we have seen on similar occasions, and was composed of the *élite* of our city. Dancing commenced about 9 o'clock and was kept up with unabated spirit until after 3. The room was brilliantly lighted, and with the "bright eyes glancing" and the mystic emblems and jewels worn by the Brethren, formed a most animated and gorgeous spectacle.—At "low twelve" the craft were called to refreshment, when the Worshipful Master in his most happy manner, proposed the health of the "fair sisterhood,' which we need not say was drunk with all the honours. The arrangements reflect great credit on the Committee, and the Messrs. Scammell, and we feel assured they will be amply compensated for their pains in having afforded their numerous friends a delightful and "right merry" evening.

The venerable John Quincy Adams, ex-President of the United States, died last week at Washington, at a very advanced age. He was attending his Parliamentary duties in that city as a Representative for the state of Massachusetts.

SAINT JOHN TOTAL ABSTINENCE SOCIETY.—The Annual Meeting of this Society took place in the Hall of the Mechanics' Institute, on Thursday evening last, when the Secretary having read the Report, the following persons were chosen office bearers for the ensuing year:—

Mr. N. S. Demill, President; Messrs. Thomas Harding, John Paddock, John Humbert, W. R. M. Bottis, Vice Presidents; W. H. A. Keans, Corresponding and Recording Secretary; John R. Marshall, Treasurer. Messrs. William Hewitt, Robert Robertson, H. W. Pitts, J. Fairweather, Peter LeSeur, Levi H. Waterhouse, James Gerow, Jr., Robert Reed, Zebedee Ring, George P. Sanction, John F. Masters, John McGrath, John Ansley, George W. Gaynor, Thomas R. Gordon, Executive Committee.

DIOCESAN CHURCH SOCIETY OF NOVA SCOTIA.—A numerously attended and interesting meeting of the General Committee of this Society took place at the National School on the 19th instant. The Lord Bishop in the Chair.

After the customary prayers and reading of minutes communications from several of the Clergy were read, all of which afforded most gratifying proof of the unabated interest of the local Branch in the operations of the Society, and some of them shewing an increase of members and subscriptions, notwithstanding the extreme pressure of the times. Two important propositions were urged in these communications, one by the Rev. Mr. Cochran of Lunenburgh, to the effect "affording assistance to the erection of Parsonage Houses" should be embraced in the benevolent objects of the Society—the other by the Rev. Mr. Leaver, Truro, suggesting the propriety of the Parochial Associations nominating a Member resident in Halifax to represent them in the General Committee. Notice was given that both these objects should be brought before the Committee at its next meeting.

An Ecclesiastical Map of the Province, exhibiting the Churches, Parsonages, Church and Schoollands, &c., was laid before the Board, and a vote of thanks to T B Akins Esq, for the ability, zeal and labour expended upon it, and also to C. H. Belcher Esq., for the material and valuable assistance afforded in its preparation, was passed unanimously.

The half-yearly Return of the Chester Church School was referred to Dr. Twining, who reported favourably upon it, and the Grant of £20 was continued for the current year.

His Lordship the Bishop read a letter from each of the visiting Missionaries, and expressed his thankfulness, which was participated in by all present that these devoted men were, by their zeal and faithfulness conciliating the respect and kindness of all parties, thus realizing in some good measures the anticipations of the friends of the Society. Sub Committees were appointed for drafting Resolutions and making preparations for the Annual Meeting and the Committee adjourned to the 8th of March next.—*Halifax Times.*

Extract from the Log Book of Schr. Voyager from Matanzas for Halifax—On the 10th inst. 9 a. m. observed small boxes floating about, like candle boxes and barrels. At 9 30, saw a wreck ahead; kept away for her; she was a large brig about 300 tons, deeply laden jib-boom gone, part of the foremast standing, mainmast gone from the top, bulwarks gone, midships, had a large house, doors and windows all gone, poop deck, stern railing, wheel, standing bulwarks, house, and T G forecastle painted cream colour, had part of a sail up and down the foremast; the yards masts sails, and rigging alongside; tried to make out her name but could only discern *H I A*; she looked like a new vessel, the sea was making a clean sweep over her; by her appearance she belonged to Philadelphia; had a billet head painted white.

EXEMPLARY PUNISHMENTS.—There is a species of crime that our Criminal Courts have recently visited with more than usual severity; this change we witnessed at the last Leeds Sessions, and the sentences passed at the present Assizes at York are of the same character. The offence to which we allude is that of decoying or forcing travellers and others into houses of ill-fame, where they are plundered of their property, by men and women banded together, and who live upon the plunder of their victims. One of the cases to which we refer is that of Edward Lee and Edward White, charged with robbing Mark Hepworth of £14 14s., in a house of ill-fame, at Leeds, in September last; the former of whom was sentenced to fifteen years and the latter to ten years' transportation. Another was that of Samuel Ross, Ellen Norris, and Elizabeth Ross, who were found guilty of robbing Thomas Smith, of Leeds, on the 30th of October, of 9s., in a brothel, with violence, and each of whom were transported for fifteen years. In another Leeds case the Judge, after the prisoner, Jane Ellis, had been convicted, gave a very proper reprimand to the party, a foreigner, who had been robbed by this prostitute, by telling him that he saw no reason why the country should pay a man's expenses for a prosecution *who got himself robbed* by associating with such characters, and as to his being a foreigner he knew very well what he was about and what kind of company he was in, so that this excuse, which had been made for him by his Counsel, was little worth.

English Paper.

ST JOHNS, N. F., Feb 13.

DISTRESS.—We much regret to learn that in Placentia and its vicinity destitution prevails to an alarming extent. The Rev. Mr. Nowlan came to St. John's overland within the week, to petition the Government for supplies, which we understand are to be forthwith forwarded to the distressed localities.

The present winter is one of unusual mildness; a little snow fell last week, which made good sleighing about town, but not sufficient for hauling in the woods; this was succeeded by a thaw, and the snow has again disappeared; yesterday, (1st February), at 4 o'clock in the afternoon, the thermometer was up to 41 degrees. On Monday the first ice appeared off our harbour, having been drifted from the northward, some of it has since floated in, and the harbour is covered with broken ice of no great thickness. It is no obstruction to navigation however, which is as open as at Midsummer. Persons of experience in the Seal Fishery anticipate a favourable season for that hazardous occupation; the number of vessels fitting out is, however, much smaller than of late years.

LADY MISSING.—Mrs. Desbrisay, a lady who left Canada West in October last for New Brunswick by the way of Boston—was taken ill at Lynn, Mass., about the first of November, and has not been heard of since. Any information relative to her transmitted to Stephen G. Deblois Esq. Chatham street, Boston, or C. A. Harding, Esq., Fredericton N. B., will be gratefully acknowledged by the friends of the lady. This is a painfully mysterious affair and a notice of the fact by the press generally, will confer a favor upon anxious friends.

REMARKABLE ACCIDENT.—The schooner-brig *Hazard*, Captain J. C. Pellet, and of which vessel Mr. J. Desandes, Junior, is owner, left Pernambuco with a cargo for London, and to call at Cork for orders, on the 16th of August last. About the 24th of September last, whilst at sea, it was discovered that she leaked, and had full four feet of water in her hold. After the pumps had been worked for five days the leak, wherever it was, only became worse, and she was compelled to run into the nearest Irish harbor--Sneen, in the Kenmare River. There she discharged her cargo, washauled down, and, strange to tell, it was then discovered that an iron chisel, 10 inches long and 1½ wide, attached to a wooden stick of the length of about three feet, had by some means, how or when can never be known, got into one of the pumps, and that the consequence was, the more the pump was worked the larger grew the hole cut by the chisel in the vessel's bottom. Her cargo was transhipped in another vessel, and the *Hazard* left Sneen in ballast for St. Helier's, where she arrived in November last, and where she now lies. The damage done to the *Hazard* and her cargo by this singular and almost unprecedented accident is estimated at between £800 and £1,000.—*Jersey Times.*

☞ IMPORTANT FROM CENTRAL AMERICA.—By the arrival of the brig R De Zaldo, Captain Roberts, from San Juan, Central America, the New York papers have been put in possession of the following important intelligence from Nicaragua. The fort of San Juan alluded to below was taken possession of by a British man of war in the name of the Mosquito king:

By the brig R. De Zaldo, Captain Roberts, arrived yesterday from San Juan, Central America, we learn that a few days before he left, the British officers and men having charge of Fort san Juan were attacked by the natives, who gained possession of the fort, taking the officers and men prisoners, and carrying them captive to Grenada.

A British steam frigate had arrived at San Juan. Captain R was informed by the Commander of the Frigate that the act would no doubt be considered a declaration of war by the English government.

Captain Roberts is the bearer of despatches from the Government of Central America to the United States, the purport of which is a strong desire for annexation to our Government.

LATE AND IMPORTANT FROM MEXICO.

The steamship New Orleans, Captain Auld, arrived at New Orleans, on the afternoon of the 12th instant from Vera Cruz, with advices ten days later from that port. The most important news by this arrival is the report that the terms of peace offered by the Mexican Government had been accepted by General Scott. We copy from the New Orleans Picayune of the 13th inst., the following details of the intelligence by this arrival:

"The steamship New Orleans, Captain Edward Auld, arrived yesterday afternoon, from Vera Cruz, having sailed the afternoon of Tuesday last, the 8th inst. She brought over sixty officers of the army. Most of them are ordered on the recruiting service. The New Orleans had some thirty other cabin passengers, and about 190 discharged soldiers and quartermasters' men. The ship has made an extraordinary run.

Mr. Freaner arrived at Vera Cruz on Sunday last, the 6th inst., bearing despatches from Gen. Scott for the Government at Washington. He was to have sailed on the 7th inst., on board the U. S. steamer Iris for Mobile. The New Orleans was detained 2 days, to give the Iris time to get in ahead—why, is scarcely known. The New Orleans, however, overtook the Iris, and passed her before she reached the Balize. The despatches brought by Mr. Freaner are of the utmost importance.

The nature of them was not generally known at Vera Cruz, but from a source in which we have abiding confidence, we learn that the Mexican Congress has sent in terms of peace, which General Scott has taken the responsibility of accepting. One of the articles of this arrangement is that twelve thousand United States troops shall remain in Mexico, until certain obligations are fulfilled—the remainder of the troops to be withdrawn.

We learn further that the preliminaries of the treaty of peace were signed on the first day of February by the Mexican Government, and that no doubt was entertained that the Mexican Congress, which was to meet in a few days, would ratify the same by a large majority. By the terms of this treaty we understand the United States obtain the boundary of the Rio Grande, New Mexico, upper California. The pecuniary consideration these concessions is a mere trifle compared with it proposed in the conference at Tacubaya.

Our dates by this arrival are to the evening of the 24 inst., from the city of Mexico, and the information given above comes to us through so many channels and in such authentic form, that we see no reason to question the fact.

Orizaba was captured on the 26th ult. One of the purposes of the expedition was to capture Gen. Santa Anna at Tehuacan. The wily Mexican, however, effected his escape through the treachery of one of his countrymen.

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