

of personal property over which his wife could have no control. Again, in respect to real estate, the wife held no control over it during his life. The husband could mortgage, or sell it, whilst she had only a contingent interest in it—that was, if she happened to live longer than he did. He (Mr. H.) contended, that if it were right to protect a wife by settlements previous to marriage, it was equally right that she should be protected in respect to property which might come to her after that event. The object of all law should be to encourage industry and enterprise, not only in the sterner sex, but also in cases where women were the heads of families, accumulating property by their energy and skill. He did not apprehend the difficulty suggested by the Prov. Secy. that this change in the law would engender domestic strife, any more than the present law relating to dower or marriage settlements. He therefore approved of the general scope of the bill, and as regards the mode of dealing with it. The principle could be tested on the second reading, or it could be read by consent and committed, each gentleman reserving to himself the right of objecting to the details, or if they were not modified to suit his views, of voting against the whole bill in committee.

Hon. FINL. SECY. said, if he had had any doubts as to the propriety of the bill, they were entirely removed by the speech of the hon. Prov. Secy.; for if that hon. gentleman, with his acknowledged ability, could not advance better arguments than he had done, it must indeed be a poor case he was advocating. His (Mr. McD's) arguments and meaning had been entirely perverted by the Prov. Secy.; he did not say that want of sense, economy, or prudence, was sufficient to send a man to the Lunatic Asylum, or to deprive him of the right to manage his property; but he did say, that some provision was needed in the law to guard against cases where persons wanting in these qualities had become possessed of property by their wives, and were inclined to squander it, and leave their wives and children destitute and helpless. The argument used by the Prov. Secy. that all this might be secured by a marriage settlement rather strengthened his position—the policy was the same in both cases—and the object of this law was to do what a prudent father would do on the marriage of his daughter, viz.: put her property beyond the control of her husband. If every one was prudent enough to do this the necessity for this bill would not be so great, but it was to guard against cases where the foresight had been neglected, that the bill was designed. It was by no means a novel idea for a precedent could be found in English law. By the laws of the city of London, any married woman engaged in trade, owns her property irrespective of the control of her husband. Surely, no one could contend that it was a proper state of things, that where a husband abandons his wife and leaves the country, and she by her industry and skill, not only educates and supports her family, but accumulates property, that he should be allowed to come back and squander her hard earned earnings, and perhaps throw her out of doors. Yet such was the present law—and he was presenting no fanciful view of it, for an instance of that kind had come within his own observation. All this law proposed to do then was to secure to the married woman the

property she had accumulated by her energy and industry. It proposed to take away nothing from the husband, so there was no hardship in it as far as he was concerned. The hon. gentleman concluded by expressing the hope that the house would deal with the bill in some form, and remedy the grievances under which married women were now laboring.

Mr. TOBIN doubted the propriety of the bill or whether it would secure the object it contemplated. At all events the bill should not pass until it had been fully examined in all its details by a special committee.

Mr. S. McDONNELL also briefly expressed his dissent to the bill in its present form.

Mr. KAULBACK was proceeding to give his views upon the subject, but the hour for adjournment having arrived the debate was adjourned.

Hon. Mr. SHANNON, from the committee on private bills, reported up seven.

After which the house adjourned until three o'clock the next day.

FRIDAY, 3d March.

The house met at 3 o'clock.

PETITIONS.

Mr. BOURNOT presented a petition from a number of the inhabitants of Gabarous, C. B., for additional mail accommodation.

Mr. ROSS, a petition for a way office at Kempt Head, Boulardrie.

Mr. HILL, a petition for a daily mail to Brooklyn, Hants.

Mr. C. J. CAMPBELL, four petitions:—one of Mr. Kidston and others of Bedeque for an amendment in the license law; another from Murdock McLeod, an aged school teacher, for a free grant of land; the third from the inhabitants of Washabuck, Vic., for a way office; and the fourth from John McNeil in reference to a ferry.

Mr. ROBICHEAU, a petition from the county of Digby in reference to the School Bill.

Mr. MORE, a petition from Kentville against the Union of the Colonies, and another from Lower Horton in regard to the School Bill.

Mr. BLANCHARD, a petition from the Postmaster of Plaister Cove, for an increase of salary.

Mr. P. SMYTH, a petition from River Inhabitants against the Union of the Colonies; another from John McNeil of Mabou, for an increase of salary.

INFORMATION ASKED FOR.

Mr. LOCKE asked the government to lay on the table copies of the letter from the Clerk of peace in 1860, to order a survey of the township lines in Chester; also copies of order in Council to the Commissioner in Crown Lands, to have the lines surveyed; also copies of order of Council to have the lines surveyed in the district of Chester. Also the names of patients in the Provincial Asylum from the county of Lunenburg, which are chargeable to that county, &c.

Mr. KAULBACK was glad to see so much interest taken in the county of Lunenburg by an hon. gentleman. He presumed he had some satisfactory object in making such an enquiry.

Mr. BLANCHARD asked the government to lay on the table all correspondence touching the appointment of delegates in connection with the Union of the Colonies, and in doing