

DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Adjourned Session, Proceedings resumed February 13, 1855.

SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS.

TUESDAY, February 13.

Hon. George Coles, Col. Secretary; Hon. James Warburton, Col. Treasurer; Hon. Edward Whelan, Queen's Printer; Hon. Robert Mooney, Registrar of Deeds; and William E. Clarke, Esq., Collector of Excise, were sworn in as Members of the House on their re-election after their acceptance of the offices set against their respective names.

Hon. COL. SECRETARY, by command of His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor, laid upon the Table a Copy of Her Majesty's Commission on the subject of the Patriotic Fund, which having been read by the Clerk, the Hon. Secretary moved that the matter be referred to the Committee of Supply. In doing so, he remarked that the House would rally contribute to the object of the Commission, as had been done in the other Colonies.

Mr. COOPER opposed the motion, arguing that it was premature, the House having not as yet ascertained the amount which would accrue to the Fund from the various Public Meetings which had been held in aid of the object. The District which he represented had contributed liberally from private means, and it would be unfair to tax those who had already paid, by an appropriation of the Public Funds.

Hon. Mr. WHITNEY, in reply to Mr. Cooper, alluded to the various public meetings which had been held throughout the Island, to raise contributions to that fund, at which meetings a resolution was passed, expressing the wish of the inhabitants that the Legislature should make such appropriation to the fund as the state of the revenue and the exigencies of the public service would allow; and it was a well known fact that such a resolution had been adopted by some of those meetings held in the immediate vicinity of the residence of the hon. gentleman who had last spoken. Although the subscriptions thus raised displayed a liberal and generous feeling on the part of the people of this Colony, there was no reason why the Legislature should neglect the great example set by the Parliaments of the other Provinces, especially when it is known that the various peoples represented in those Parliaments were likewise voluntary contributors to the Patriotic Fund.

Mr. COOPER thought that as the Session had but just commenced, it would be advisable to postpone any action until the aggregate amount of voluntary contributions had been ascertained.

Hon. COL. SECRETARY explained that no particular sum was now demanded. His motion being merely for a reference to the Committee of Supply, that the various meetings

manifested clearly the feelings of the people on the subject. That the returns of the different collections would show before the hon. members, but he hoped and believed that a sum voted by the House would be granted irrespective of such returns. That the revenue this year exceeded that of the last by £11,600, and that the people of the Island feeling that the brave men engaged in the war were fighting their battles, although not paid or fed by them, would cheerfully contribute what could be spared from the public purse towards the comfort and support of their widows and orphans.

Mr. HAYLAND had hoped that no opposition would have been made to the motion. Even if £5,000 had been collected out of doors, that fact should have no influence on the House, the members of which he hoped would, in their Legislative capacity, augment the sum raised for the unhappy widows and orphans.

Hon. F. LONGWORTH coincided with the last speaker, and added that they who had subscribed liberally from their private means would have no objection to a public appropriation, while they who had declined to contribute should be made to do so indirectly by the Legislative grant.

Hon. Mr. WIGHTMAN repudiated the idea of taking the amount of private subscriptions as a guide to the House in fixing the amount to be voted in supply. At a meeting attended at Murray Harbor, on the subject, not only did the people subscribe very liberally, but expressly authorized their representatives to vote for a public grant. In looking over the newspapers, he found that the sums subscribed by individuals in the Island bore a greater proportion to their means than was shewn by the returns of some parts of the Mother Country, where greater personal interest must naturally be felt in the cause.

Hon. Mr. MOONEY deprecated all allusion to the neighboring Colonies—Prince Edward Island had been treated very differently from them. They had cause for gratitude to the British Government, but this Island was down-trodden by the Imperial Authorities, and the method now proposed of augmenting the fund, by taxing the people who did not choose to contribute, and render the term "Patriotic" a misnomer.

Hon. Mr. WARBURTON thought that the amount raised elsewhere was no criterion for the House. He could speak for the people whom he represented, not twenty men there were opposed to the grant, and from his knowledge of his constituents, can state their wish that the grant should be a liberal one.