

THE STAR, AND CONCEPTION BAY JOURNAL.



Vol. II.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27, 1836.

No. 96

Conception Bay, Newfoundland:—Printed and Published by JOHN T. BURTON, at his Office, CARBONEAR

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Mr BROWN, as Chairman of Subcommittee, brought up the following Address and moved its adoption:

ADDRESS

To His Excellency, Captain HENRY PRESCOTT, C.B., Governor and Commander-in-Chief in and over the Island of Newfoundland and its Dependencies, &c., &c.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY.—We, His Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects the Representatives of the People of Newfoundland in General Assembly convened, having faithfully discharged the onerous duties imposed upon us for four years, during which period we have met in six sessions of the Legislature, are solicitous to resign into the hands of our Constituents the trust reposed in us.

From the time of the convention of the Legislature of Newfoundland to the present day, the principle of short Assemblies has been acknowledged by the House of Assembly, and each succeeding year has a Bill received the sanction of that branch of the Legislature founded thereon.

In the first and second place bills had passed the House of Assembly to exonerate the Members from their charge in three years from the commencement.—In the third year, 1835, a Bill passed both Houses of the Legislature and received the sanction of the Executive upon the Quadrennial principle, and again during the present session have reiterated our demand to be relieved after the expiration of four years, and although we have concurred in passing the present Bill, which goes to extend our duration to six, while it limits all future Assemblies to four years, we have been influenced in acceding that concurrence only by a desire to secure at all events to this Colony a measure of such moment.

We further beg to impress on Your Excellency, that the inhabitants of Newfoundland, in the first use of that franchise ceded to them by our most gracious Sovereign could not exercise it with that judgment necessary for the good government of the colony—the workings of the principles of self-government were unknown to them—the characters of men anxious to take part in public affairs were not developed; and the trust to be reposed in their representatives was but very imperfectly understood—the lapse of time, and above all, the results of our labours, have awakened in the public mind a sense of the importance of Legislative power—we are therefore desirous to return to our constituents the trust reposed in us; so that with the advantage of experience and increased political knowledge, they may confer it on those in whose integrity and abilities they can rely.

Taking all these circumstances into consideration—that many of the members returned to serve in this Assembly came in pledged to their constituents to limit the duration of Assemblies to three years; that for two years they sought to press a measure of that nature, but unable to procure the concurrence of the other branch of the Legislature, they were induced to look for a Quadrennial Act, the main principle of which has once received the solemn sanction of the three Estates, and a second time has been admitted by two—and that two or three members have been unable to attend to

their legislative duties—throwing the entire burthen upon the remainder—and thus enabling a few, by withdrawing from the House, to interrupt the progress of business, and that the present representatives were elected at a time when the principles of self-government were but imperfectly understood. Taking all these circumstances into consideration, we beg respectfully to request Your Excellency will be graciously pleased by dissolving the present House of Assembly at the close of this session to accede to the wishes of the people of Newfoundland expressed through us their representatives to place the present on a footing with all succeeding Assemblies.

Mr SWEETMAN said, as the principle was admitted in that Assembly by the passing unanimously the Quadrennial Bill, they were called upon to support the Address. An obligation might possibly be started, inasmuch as their assent was given to an amendment introduced by the other branch of the Legislature, extending the duration of the present Assembly to two years, making in all six; let the cavillers recollect that their consent to this amendment was extorted, in order to secure the Boon hereafter. The people at the institution of our Local Legislature, were not aware of the extensive powers they delegated; they have now had an opportunity to judge how far that power has been used for their interest, and it is time that they (the Hon. House) render an account of their Stewardship. The absence of several members and their declared intention of not attending any future session, also weighed with him in supporting the address. He could not be personally interested, inasmuch as he was obliged to return the trust of his constituents, intending to leave the Island in a few months, for perhaps some years—and surely the proceedings of the present session afford ample and cogent reasons for a dissolution.—He therefore seconded the adoption of the address.

After a long debate the House divided.—For the motion, Mr Brown, Mr Sweetman, Dr. Carson, Mr Pack and Mr Kent. Against the motion, Mr Row, Mr Howles, Mr Kough, Mr Marten.

The motion was then carried. The whole House, in accordance with their Resolution, waited on His Excellency with the Address, and received the following most gracious

REPLY

Mr Speaker, and Gentlemen of the House of Assembly:—I can have no hesitation in telling you in answer to your address, what I should otherwise have told you at the end of the session, that it is not my intention again to convene the present House of Assembly unless under circumstances of peculiar emergency.

I embrace this occasion of pointing out the necessity of completing without delay the financial arrangements, and many other important matters now before the House; as I am anxious to close a session already protracted to an inconvenient period.

ACCOUNT OF PETRUS PICTORIOUS

During the reign of the martial Bishop of Munster, Christopher Bernard von Galen, was one evening inspecting the fortifications of his capital. When he came to the Buddenthurm, (a prison close

to the promenade) he was struck with a sketch of a fortress on an opposite fence. He inquired in the neighbourhood who had made the drawing on those boards, and was informed by a person living on the spot, that a soldier, who had mounted guard there, from one to three o'clock had begged a bit of chalk of him, and been scribbling there with it.

The engineer immediately rode to the guard house, asked for the soldier who had mounted guard at the hour and place above mentioned, and desired him to call upon him next morning after parade.

The soldier came and the following dialogue ensued:—

"What is your name?" asked the engineer.

"Petrus Pictorius," was the reply.

"From what country?"

"Denmark?"

"How came you to be in the Prince-bishop's service?"

"I was forced by one of his recruiting parties."

"Did you mount guard yesterday from one to three at the Buddenthurm?"

"Yes."

"And make a drawing of a fortress on the fence?"

"Yes."

"The drawing represents, I presume, the Fort of Coesfield, the Prince's residence?"

"Yes; it indeed as it is, but as in my opinion it ought to be."

"Do you know any thing then of the science of fortification?"

"It was always my favourite study."

"And you are a musketeer?"

"They made me so."

"That was only because they were not acquainted with your talents. Have you made any complaint on the subject?"

"No: now I am in for it I will serve my three years out."

"Strange man! Why you might already be an officer?"

"With the loss of my liberty after the term of my service? No, I am much obliged to you."

"Would you do me the favour to make for me a finished drawing of the works you sketched yesterday?"

"I would do it with pleasure, but have neither room nor time for such things."

"I will give you an apartment in my house, and obtain you an exemption from service."

Petrus Pictorius removed to the engineer's, and drew up an essay on the faults of the fortress of Coesfield, and the way to correct them—the whole accompanied by beautiful drawings.

The engineer was not at all surprised at this performance, for he had frequently visited Pictorius while engaged upon it, conversed a great deal with him on every branch of the military art, and found him to be an accomplished tactician.

When the work was finished, the engineer carried it to the Prince. Pictorius was immediately made an officer, and the fortress of Coesfield was altered under his direction agreeably to his plan.

He was soon promoted to a company, but insisted on being at liberty after the years of capitulation, and then always renewed his engagement. At length he was himself appointed engineer, became a favorite with the Prince, and died in his service.

We learn the following particulars of Pictorius from oral tradition.

He was the son of a clergyman in one of the Danish Islands. His father destined him for the civil service, but he preferred the military; yielding, however to his father's wishes, he divided his time between inclination and filial obedience. He obtained promotion and to his great joy was appointed secretary of legation to the Danish embassy at Naples.—During this period his father died. The business of the embassy was brought to a termination; he remained nevertheless, at Naples, and entered into the King's guard. Religious scruples presently arose in his mind; he went to Rome, and was there received into the bosom of the Catholic church. Not long afterwards, he was seized with an irresistible desire to revisit, not Denmark in particular, where he could not expect the most friendly reception from his family, but the North. He quitted the Neapolitan service, as a lieutenant in the guards, traversed Italy, Switzerland, France, and the Netherlands, and visited in his peregrinations the territory of Munster, where a recruiting party of the military prelates seized and carried him off by force.

He had already acquired considerable influence with the prince, when riding one day with him through the town of Coesfield, he was struck with the appearance of a young girl who was looking out of a window. Leaving the Prince to ride forward, he alighted, went into the house, and asked the parents if they would give him the girl for a wife. The parents, refugees from Marburg, whence they had been driven by the calamities of the Thirty years' war, were rejoiced at the prospect of a man whose credit with the prince was well known; but the girl was still extremely young, and the bishop was just then preparing for a new campaign. Pictorius desired, that till the conclusion of peace, the girl might be placed at his expence in a convent at Coesfield for the purpose of finishing her education, and her parents complied. On his return from this campaign, he married the girl, and had by her three sons and one daughter. In his family he was a rigid husband and father, and there was upon the whole a great deal of harshness and obstinacy in his disposition. When he was appointed to the post of engineer, he reminded the prince that the vacancy in his company was not yet filled up. The prince condescendingly replied, that both appointments together were not adequate to his merits.

"No," rejoined Pictorius, "I can eat but one man's bread, and will not deprive a second deserving person of his."

The prince gave away the company, but ordered a sum equal to the emoluments of a captaincy to be privately paid to the wife of Pictorius, who as the prince well knew, could not defray the expenses of housekeeping and educating her children, with the allowance made by her husband.

Pictorius left a memorandum book in his own hand writing, which has since been lost. In this book mathematical problems, observations in domestic economy, medical recipes, poetical pieces in Latin and Danish, recollections of his early youth and travels, &c., were mingled together in the utmost confusion.

"How the deuce my friend do you continue to keep out of gaol, for I know you are as extravagant as myself?"—"True, Tom, but I can afford to be extravagant."