

PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY—FREDERICTON, Tuesday, February 3.

The only discussion which occurred this day was on the MILITIA BILL.

In committee of the whole, (Mr. Hamington in the chair), which occupied the attention of the house for 2 1/2 hours.

The debate, however, though extremely lengthy, was little more than a mere repetition of the same arguments that have been repeatedly advanced and as often reported on the same question, of late years; and we therefore shall endeavor, in culling from the mass, to confine our transcripts as much as possible to the new members and the new matter brought forward.

The object of the bill was to repeal the 6th section of the Militia Act of 1825, and so much of the 15th section of the same act, as entitles Adjutants and Sergeant-Majors to pay, and to reduce the Militia duties to one day's muster for enrolment, leaving the Inspecting Field Officers as they are.

Mr. Gilbert briefly stated the objects of the bill, as founded on the report of the select committee appointed to enquire into the subject, and commented on the expense and inutility of the present system, and the general call for its modification.

Mr. McLeod, after stating that the duties of adjutants were much more arduous than those of any other officers of a militia, observed that he was sensible that the Militia had not much improved in discipline; and that though there were some exceptions, the benefit derived from the system was by no means equal to the outlay and loss of time.

Mr. Speaker then moved an amendment, to the same effect as the 1st section of the bill, but more effectively worded, which was adopted.

The committee then proceeded with the details of the bill, amidst a good deal of desultory discussion, in the course of which several amendments were proposed by Messrs. Palmer, Manning, and Weldon, and two only of which were adopted, to-wit: to reduce the fine for aliens from 3s. to 10s., (being in proportion to the reduction of the drill days,) and to abolish the fine payable by exempt soldiers; and finally the bill was agreed to as amended.

Wednesday, February 4. HERRING FISHERY.

Mr. Weldon presented a petition from 80 inhabitants of the Island of Grand Manan, praying that a repeal of the same law, which he proposed might be referred to the Committee of Trade.

Mr. Partlow said, that that part of his Excellency's speech relative to the coast fisheries was already referred to the Committee of Trade, to report thereon by bill or otherwise. These petitions, in his opinion, had reference to the subject matter of that part of his Excellency's speech, and should, therefore, be referred to that Committee.

Mr. Johnston repeated the opinions advanced by him yesterday; and further observed, that Mr. Speaker had said that public opinion was decidedly against paying the council; he agreed with the hon. Speaker on that point, but would go a little farther, and say, that public opinion was against paying the speaker, and he (Mr. J.) should therefore be for striking both out of the bill; he would say nothing more than he already said as to the rest of the bill.

Mr. Milos was not only opposed to this section, but also to every other section of the bill; though he did not object to paying the Speaker's expenses and those of the members of his house, in a fair and moderate degree, yet he was against including the Council. He would not have them connected together, but let them stand each on their own merits; otherwise the country would say that the house had granted pay to the Council to secure their own pay.

Mr. Chisholm was against giving Members' pay altogether. He contended that it was the cause of their constituents that they were advocating, by insisting on this point. The real question was whether the people should have a right to choose their own representatives, and to pay them with their own money. No services were ever so well performed, as those that were paid for. He had never heard any complaints of doors against paying the members of this house; there was nothing of the kind in his country; it was only from St. John the cry came, and he had never heard of any complaints from any other part of the province.

Mr. Burnham proposed £25, Mr. Woodward £40, and Mr. End £10.—The last motion, however, was not seconded. Mr. Robinson suggested £29 8s. 4d. or 25 guineas.

On the motion for £40, the committee again practised the rule of division, and negatived it by 19 to 6. Messrs. Freeze, Brown, Gilbert, McLeod, Morehouse, Hayward, Miles, Connell, Sloan, Burns, Stewart, Hamington, Allen, Taylor.

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