

Hazard's



Gazette,

FARMERS' JOURNAL, AND COMMERCIAL ADVERTISER.

Established 1823.

Charlottetown, P. E. Island, Wednesday, March 28, 1855.

New Series, No. 227

COLONIAL LEGISLATURE.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY, MONDAY, March 26.

The Act to prevent the running at large of swine in Prince Town Royalty, was read the third time and passed.

Bill to impose a Tax on Rent Rolls was read a second time.

Mr. COLES stated the Bill was to place a Tax on Proprietors about equal to the Land Tax paid by Tenants, in support of a Military Force, the balance to go to the support of Education.

Mr. PALMER did not think the Bill was introduced in good faith, the tax on wilderness lands was called a penal tax, and was for the purpose of making the proprietors settle their lands, the present tax is because they are thus settled. When Responsible Government was given to the Island, he understood a compact had been entered into, that no further burthens should be put on the land. In consequence of this compact, the Bill would not pass at the Colonial Office; he thought the persons bringing in this Bill did not wish to have an armed force, they could thus answer one part of their constituents, by saying, proprietors prevented the Bill from getting the Royal Assent, and thus their having an armed force, and others by saying, if proprietors want an armed force, why do they not pay for it.

Mr. DUNN thought it would be the greatest injury that has ever yet been inflicted on the Tenants. Landlords who have hitherto been lenient to the Tenantry, will now be obliged to enforce their rents to meet this tax, even to their last cow, no discrimination can be used. He did not think an armed force would be necessary, beyond a few police.

Mr. MOONEY. The persons who have property should be made to pay for a force to protect it. Proprietors had the most property here.

Mr. COLES. The Bill was introduced in the faith of the Government carrying the Bill through; he knew of no compact entered into at the Colonial office. Mr. DUNN had said, that he would rather vote for giving up the land altogether than for the present Bill, if so, he had better write to Earl Selkirk to give up the Land to Mr. Cooper, as a contribution to the escheat fund. Small proprietors are already heavily taxed, the tax will not bear on Land unless it is less.

Mr. LORD did wonder at opposition being given to the Bill, but he did not agree with his friends about the amount of the tax, he wanted 5 per cent put on resident proprietors and 7 1/2 on absentees.

Mr. COOPER would agree with the last speaker, and he would wish a clause introduced to support the poor.

Mr. WHELAN concurred in making two separate taxes, but he would advocate 5 per cent on absentees and 4 per cent on residents.

Mr. COLES was not in favour of taxing absentees to a much greater extent than residents. Agents spent a good deal of their money for them.

Mr. PERRY moved, that the absent Proprietor be taxed 1s. 3d. on the Pound, but afterwards withdrew it.

Mr. WARBURTON thought, if the amount sent out of the country bore an extra tax, it would be more just; some proprietors spent the whole amount received on their estates.

HON. THE SPEAKER. The tax is not on the receipts but on the amount of rent payable. He thought that as an encouragement to resident proprietors, a difference should be made in the tax.

Mr. LORD did not think so small a difference as 3d. on the Pound was enough, and moved that it be filled up with 1s. 6d. being a difference of 6d. on the Pound over the resident proprietor.

Mr. CLARK stated, that the whole of the money did not go to the proprietors, the agents got a share which was spent on the Island.

Mr. M'INTOSH would go for the largest tax on non-resident proprietors.

Mr. LAIRD would vote with Mr. Lord, and he did not think it would endanger the Bill.

Mr. COOPER. A landlord could perform many acts which an agent could not, he would therefore vote for the largest sum.

Mr. PALMER would vote for a discriminating tax, he would vote for a larger difference, if he thought it would be carried by the House.

The motion being put, it was carried without a division, to tax resident proprietors, one shilling on the pound, and non residents 1s. 6d.

TUESDAY, MARCH 27.

Report of Commissioners on Breakwater at Cape Traverse was read and laid on the table.

HOUSE IN COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY.

The following sums were voted to the following gentlemen, for the relief of paupers: J. Warburton, £3 10s; John M'Neill, £5 10s; Rev. H. Swabey, £8; R. Mooney, £34 10s; Rev. P. M'Intyre, £32 10s; L. Pebers, £22 5s; S. Perry, 34; J. M'Intosh, £9; J. Bearisto, £7; Rev. D. M'Donald, £23 19s; P. Nicholson, £9 4s; S. M'Kinnon, £12 10s; Rev. Alex. Munroe, £0 0; John M'Gill, £38; John Morrow, £6 10s; John Nichol, £2 10s; Hugh M'Donald, £18 10s; John Aitken, £15 10s; Martha Lang, £10; J. Muirhead, £9; W. W. Lord, £39; Rev. Pius M'Phoe, £24 15s; J. Dingwell, £14. The following sums were appropriated: £14 for assessment on Pews in St. Paul's Church. £19 to James Easton, Teacher of Infant School. £5 to Martin Byrne, Georgetown, additional sum as Postmaster.

After a discussion of some length on special amounts to paupers, Mr. PALMER suggested, that instead of special grants, a sum should be voted for each county to be distributed by the Grand Jury, or a Committee appointed by the House.

Mr. LORD agreed with the Hon. Member, and suggested, that the Clergymen should have the disposal of the money.

Mr. COLES thought the old plan was the best, he would never allow the money to be disposed of by the Grand Jury. A Committee would have to travel many miles, before they could meet to appropriate.

Mr. PERRY thought it was the duty of the House even to take more time, if required. £5 to Patrick Power, an additional allowance as Postmaster. £20 for Mechanic's Institute.

Mr. COLES stated that in 1852, £500 was voted for the discovery of Coal, but it has never been claimed. Parties living between this and Georgetown who were acquainted with the working of mines, had informed him of the probability of coal being in that quarter, he proposed that £— pounds be placed at the disposal of the Government, for the purpose of boring for coal.

Mr. M'INTOSH. £200 have already been spent, and all we have had is a few specimens of Rock on the Mantelpiece of the Library.

Mr. COLES said, that it would be quite different from getting a person to look over the surface of the country. Mr. Hobbs told him that apparatus could be made here for about 5s per foot, and there were persons here who understood the way to work it.

Mr. COOPER thought if coal was likely to be found, joint stock Companies with the inducement held out by the government offer, would have tried the experiment.

Mr. M'INTOSH was satisfied, that there was no coal on the Island.

Mr. MOONEY would rather give a company a charter, and make them sell the coal at a fair rate, than grant a sum to bore. He never went further in the ground than 6 feet, and could not say what might be in it.

Mr. LORD said it was a waste of money to appropriate £200 to bore for coal. He was satisfied Mr. Hobbs had not the materials to make a boring machine, and he would not vote for a sum of money to be thrown away in that way. Let a proper machine be procured from Britain and let the work be done effectually.

Mr. COLES would employ the parties and pay them by the foot, he believed that 200 fathoms was the deepest that would be required to go.

Mr. CLARK was surprised that Mr. Lord spoke so much against the enterprise, at the same time that he would vote for a larger sum. The people on the North side of the Island suffered for want of wood; he would be induced to sell his farm, because fuel was so difficult to be obtained where he lived. Coal could seldom be procured at any price.

Mr. PALMER would support the resolution, he knew that farmers were cutting all the wood off their farms, and would be in great want of fuel.

He would rather vote for a sufficient sum and have the work done properly, the government being held responsible for the manner in which they may carry out the plan.

Mr. LONGWORTH thought, that the time had come when we should ascertain whether we had coal, and he would leave it in the hands of the government; the apparatus for boring might be had cheaply in New Brunswick, where it had been used.

Mr. SPEAKER would vote that a sufficient sum be placed at the disposal of the government; it could not well be limited to a certain sum. The idea that our Bogs might be turned to account was once broached, but we believe that it was satisfactorily ascertained, that any thing resembling turf could not be procured on the Island, the people must therefore turn their attention to coal.

Mr. HAVILLARD. Very soon we shall be entirely at the mercy of Nova Scotia, &c., for our fuel. He did not think it likely that persons would run the risk of digging for coal, it would not be theirs, after they found it, the coal was reserved to the government, and it was more their interest to find it, he would vote for a sum sufficient to bore.

Mr. M'DONALD would support a sum sufficient to bore for coal, he had spoken to persons acquainted with mines, who stated that at about 70 feet, they could tell whether there was indications of coal or not. An Irish gentleman had applied for a Lease of our mines, being satisfied he had no doubt, that we had coal in the Island.

The Hon. the SPEAKER's resolution that a sufficient sum be placed at the disposal of the Government to enable them to bore for Coal, was carried without a division.

Mr. MOONEY moved that £ 110s. be paid for keeping the Pump at South Port in repair.

Mr. COLES and others said the Inhabitants should assess themselves to keep it in repair. Mr. SPEAKER said the sum should be paid out of the contingent fund by the Executive.

Mr. LORD, as Chairman of the Committee to whom were referred two Petitions of William Howatt for the balance due on two contracts, and of Robert Wright, for balance of contract for repairs to Dunk River Bridge, reported that the amounts due have been already provided for in the Road Sale.

Mr. MURHEAD as Chairman, to whom was referred the Petition of Inhabitants of Lot 19, praying for the establishment of a Small Debts Court, reported, that as the Session was so near its termination, and as the Small Debts Act required amendment, they recommend, that no action be taken until the next Session.

Mr. CLARK thought, that this report held out an inducement, that a Court would be established, and he would oppose it, as there were Courts already very near.

HOUSE IN COMMITTEE ON TAXING PROPRIETORS.

The following clauses were agreed to: Treasurer may appoint as many deputies as he may see fit, and they shall keep open their Books, until the 5th December.

Deputies to receive 5 per cent commission. Mr. MURHEAD and Mr. LAIRD thought that 2 1/2 per cent was sufficient commission.

Mr. LORD and Mr. M'INTOSH thought that 5 per cent would be a fair rate.

Mr. PALMER. Nothing less than 500 acres of land will be paid for at one time, and consequently it will not be as tedious as the land assessment. In good old times persons had only two or three offices, in these times persons have 4 or 5, so that they may well afford to collect the tax for 2 1/2 per cent.

Mr. SPEAKER. They will have many papers to look over and returns to make up, 5 per cent would not be too much.

Mr. LORD hoped that they would be able to cut out some new offices for their friends.

Mr. WARBURTON said he would be obliged to appoint the same persons, as now collect the land assessment tax, or else it would cause an immense deal of trouble.

Mr. MURHEAD maintained that as the same persons who collect the Land Tax will collect this, 2 1/2 per cent. would pay them well.

Mr. COOPER voted for 5 per cent. Tenants or occupiers shall make a return to Treasurer or deputies of the amount of rent paid, and show their losses or any other documents if required. Penalty for refusing to make return 40s, or to be imprisoned not less than 10 and not over 30 days, half of the penalty to go to the deputy and the other half to the crown.

No Tenant or lessee shall be liable to pay the tax. Rent payable every two or more years shall be averaged, or payable in produce shall be estimated at the value.

Several other clauses passed without discussion, principally bearing on the enforcement of the tax, they were made to agree as much as possible with the Land assessment Act. The Bill has a suspending clause.

Mr. MURHEAD moved that the clause making absent proprietors pay 1s 6d on the pound be reconsidered, and that instead of 1s 6d, it be reduced to 1s 3d, which after some discussion, was agreed to.

The views of the Hon. Mr. LONGWORTH and Mr. MURHEAD, who were not present at the previous debate are now given.

Mr. LONGWORTH hoped that the higher sum would be agreed to, the bone of contention has always been the present proprietors and why now make so little difference, he would rather that residents should be free from the tax altogether.

Mr. MURHEAD would always be found voting to tax absentee proprietors, he did not see why, persons holding large properties in Charlottetown should not be taxed, if it was to be a property tax and so little distinction was to be made with the absentee proprietors.

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