

NOVA-SCOTIA.

PROVINCIAL PARLIAMENT.

On the first day of the Session, after the Speech had been read, the new members were sworn in and took those formidable oaths against the Pope and the Pretender, which have been so long and so justly obnoxious to a very large class of our fellow Citizens—and are as useless at the present day, as they are hostile to the whole spirit, if not the actual letter, of modern British Legislation. Mr. Stewart asked and obtained leave to introduce a Bill to abolish them, and substitute a shorter and more rational form, which was granted. The usual Committees were appointed, and some conversation arose on the propriety of levying a tax on the owners of large tracts of wilderness Lands, to be laid out in opening roads through them, and facilitating the improvement of the Country.

On Friday the House met late, to afford time to the Committee to prepare the answer to the Governor's Speech, which, having been reported and discussed, was finally passed.

Mr. DOYLE then moved the following Resolution:

Resolved—That a Committee be appointed to wait on His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor, and request His Excellency to direct the proper Officers to transmit to this House, a Statement of the funds invested for the endowment of Dalhousie College; with the period and mode of the investment, name of the fund and amount of interest which has accumulated. Also, all correspondence between His Majesty's Ministers, and this Province, the measures adopted by the Governors of Windsor College, together with a transcript of the records kept by the Governors of both Institutions since 1830, the communications to and from the Colonial Office, and all documents in their possession or under their control, relative to the projected union of the College.

Some discussion arose upon this—Members on the one side, being desirous to wait until His Excellency should bring the subject formally before the House—while on the other, it was contended that the language of the Message was indefinite—merely stating that His Excellency might, not that he would do so; and it would at all events be necessary to have all the information the Resolution required, before the House could be called upon to come to a decision. The Message seemed to imply some neglect on the part of the House, in allowing a subject of so much importance to remain in abeyance so long, when in fact it had never been brought forward in a way to prove that the Government had it much at heart, or to justify the Legislature in making up an opinion. The Resolution was finally withdrawn and the House adjourned.

Saturday, Jan'y. 23. A Resolution was moved by Mr. Young, for the appointment of a Committee, to consist of a Member from each County, to report a Bill for the support of Common Schools throughout the Country. We were not in when the Resolution was offered, and did not hear the terms of it or the observations by which it was prefaced, if any were made. Mr. Uniacke concurred in the Resolution, and expressed himself in favour of adopting the principle of assessment. Mr. Bell then rose and said, that he had long entertained a similar opinion—he was happy to see it avowed on the floor of the house, and should be prepared to vote for any measure making a wise application of that principle to the necessities of this Country. He had marked with admiration the effects produced by the assessment system in Scotland and the New England States. How does it happen, said he, that go where they will, the people of Scotland

generally rise above the lower rank of mere laborers?—because they have had the blessings of early education, and the intelligence and virtue—the habits of industry and frugality, acquired in youth—are their safeguards from poverty and crime; and constantly advance them, in the midst of a less enlightened population, to competence and respectability, and often to situations of affluence and honor. If we look to New England, there we see a people rapidly developing the resources of a country, not very richly endowed by nature—where public institutions are sustained with unbounded liberality—and individual enterprise is constantly seeking out new objects of profitable industry—where no man need be idle, and where poverty scarcely exists. These high privileges and honorable characteristic traits, New England owes to her admirable system of education. Why should we then hesitate to adopt it? Much had been said about the Quit Rents, and the propriety of levying a tax upon large tracts of wilderness lands. He owned some lands in the interior, and if the proceeds of such a tax were to go to the support of education throughout the country, most cheerfully would he pay his proportion, even twice or three times told.

Mr. COCHRAN was opposed to assessment, because he never would consent to lay a direct tax upon the people to which they themselves were opposed. They might, under the former law, have assessed themselves—but in not one single township, so far as he could learn, did they do so.

Mr. UNIACKE admitted that the facts might be as stated by the hon. member from Newport, and yet prove nothing against the adoption of the principle of assessment. It was idle to suppose that any people would voluntarily lay a tax upon themselves—even for a good purpose; and particularly that they would curtail their means of immediate sensual gratification, for the attainment of an indirect intellectual benefit—of slow growth—and the worth of which, from its very absence, was likely to be undervalued. In vain would the Legislature entrust the maintenance of the poor to the operation of private benevolence—funds were therefore raised by a levy on the whole, to form those offices of humanity which all might neglect.

Mr. B. DEWOLFE denied the facts affirmed by the member for Newport. It was not true that the people were so universally opposed to the assessment system. On the contrary, he knew of several settlements, where, under the old act, it had been cheerfully adopted. He was satisfied that the House would act wisely to sustain that system—as nothing could have a greater influence upon the common welfare. The resolution was then passed, and a Committee composed of a member from each County named.

Mr. SMITH reported the following address on the subject of the timber duties, prepared by a joint Committee of the Council and Assembly, which was unanimously adopted:

TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.
May it please your Majesty.

We, your Majesty's Council and House of Assembly of this your Majesty's loyal Province of Nova Scotia, now convened in General Assembly, beg leave to approach your Majesty's Throne, and most respectfully to submit to the consideration of your Majesty's Government, the Copy of a Memorial to your Majesty in the year 1834, upon the subject of the Timber Trade of the British North American Provinces.

Your Majesty was graciously pleased to inform the acting Governor of Nova Scotia, by a Despatch, dated 4th April, 1834, from the Honorable E. G. Stanley, your Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies, "that it

was not the intention of your Majesty's Government to propose to Parliament any alteration in the duties affecting that trade the present year," and that no steps would be taken without the fullest consideration of the Colonial interests involved.

That the people of Nova Scotia, conceiving that no alteration would be made in the duties affecting the Timber trade, until after a full investigation of the subject by your Majesty's Government, and being entirely satisfied that such investigation must produce conviction that many important interests of your Majesty's subjects would be sacrificed, by the introduction of any material change in this trade, have not since pressed the subject on your Majesty's notice. That they have since increased their establishments for the manufacture of timber and deals, knowing that the shipping and navigation of Great Britain, the manufactures, those engaged in the fisheries, and even the poorest description of Emigrants from Great Britain to these Colonies, are all deeply interested in the measure; and that your Majesty's Government would not, without due deliberation, destroy a trade so important to the Empire.

With much surprise and deep concern therefore, the People of this Province have learned that a Committee of the House of Commons of the Imperial Parliament have recommended a change in the Duties, which, if adopted by Parliament, must be ruinous to that branch of the Trade of these Colonies, and give a monopoly of the British Market in Timber and Deals to Foreigners.

That little argument is necessary to prove that Colonial interests are not more deeply concerned in the proposed measure, than the Shipping, Manufacturing and Commercial welfare of the Parent State. To the view presented in the accompanying Memorial, it does not seem requisite to add more until they are controverted and disproved; even as a measure of finance merely, it may be problematical whether it will answer that object, when a few years shall have destroyed the Shipping and Commerce engaged in this trade, which has heretofore directly or indirectly augmented the Revenue of Great-Britain.

Under all circumstances, therefore, we humbly implore, on behalf of the People of Nova Scotia, that your Majesty will not sanction any change in a branch of Trade which has hitherto proved so highly beneficial to the Empire at large.

Mr. Doyle's Resolution relative to the Colleges, was then again offered, and passed without opposition.

At one o'clock, on Saturday (Jan. 23.), His Majesty's Council waited upon his Excellency, at Government House, with the following Address in answer to His Speech:

To His Excellency Major General, Sir COLIN CAMPBELL, Knight Commander of the most Hon. Military Order of the Bath, Lieutenant Governor and Commander in Chief in and over His Majesty's Province of Nova Scotia and its Dependencies, &c. &c. &c.

The Address of His Majesty's Council:

His Majesty's Council thank your Excellency for your Speech at the opening of this Session of the General Assembly. It affords them much pleasure to know that your visits to many parts of this Province have been productive of gratification to you; and that personal observation has enabled your Excellency to bear testimony of the favourable appearance of the Province, and the industry of its inhabitants.

They have great reason to be thankful for the abundant harvest, with which it has pleased Providence to bless the land. The plenty thus produced will add much to the general