

The Weekly Colonist.

Tuesday, March 14, 1865.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

MONDAY, March 6.

House met at 3:15 p. m. Members present—Messrs. DeCosmos, Franklin, M'Clure, Southgate, Burnaby, Cochrane, Duncan, Carswell, Dennis.

ATTORNEY GENERAL'S FEES. The Speaker read a communication from His Excellency in reply to the motion for returns of the Attorney General's fees, stating that during the year the Government became chargeable with \$2961 on those accounts. His Excellency regretted that the Auditor precluded the possibility of the accounts being apporportioned to the Attorney General and the Solicitor.

FRANCHISE AMENDMENT ACT. Mr. M'Clure introduced his bill to amend the law relating to the Representation of Vancouver Island. It was read a first time and ordered to be printed.

FRANCHISE AMENDMENT ACT. Mr. Dennis moved the second reading of a bill to amend the manner of taking the verdict of a jury in civil cases.

FRANCHISE AMENDMENT ACT. Mr. Franklin said if the principle of the bill were good he thought it should apply to the superior courts as well as to the inferior.

FRANCHISE AMENDMENT ACT. Mr. Dennis said it was so intended. The bill was read a second time.

IMPRISONMENT FOR DEBT. The Speaker said this bill would require to be considered in committee of the whole. It was ordered to be printed.

AMENDED INCORPORATION ACT. The Legislative Council's amendment to the Incorporation Act came up for a first reading.

AMENDED INCORPORATION ACT. Mr. DeCosmos said the House already had an Incorporation Bill before them, which had been postponed to allow the Estimates to be taken up, and he could not see the use of the time of the House being taken up in discussing a bill which was simply perpetuating the old Incorporation.

AMENDED INCORPORATION ACT. Mr. Franklin supported the first reading as a matter of courtesy.

AMENDED INCORPORATION ACT. The bill was read over by the Speaker, when Mr. Duncan moved that the bill be read this day six months, on the grounds that it incorporated the inhabitants and not the land, and also that it had a retrospective aspect. He was in favor of a good Incorporation Act. (Hear, hear.) There could be no doubt that the city was suffering from the want of Municipal authority. The Sanitary condition of the city was particularly in need of the care of a Corporation, and he was firmly of the belief that this was the cause of a great deal of the sickness now prevalent.

AMENDED INCORPORATION ACT. Mr. Franklin was disposed to give the views of the Legislative Council a proper consideration.

AMENDED INCORPORATION ACT. The first reading was lost by a vote of five to three, but the motion for a reading this day six months not having been seconded the bill will come up again to-morrow.

AMENDED INCORPORATION ACT. The House went into committee of the whole on this bill, Mr. Dennis in the chair, commencing at clause 55, which was as follows:

55. The Mayor shall be deemed the Head of the Council, and the Head and Chief Executive Officer of the Corporation; and it shall be his duty to be vigilant and active at all times in causing the law for the Government of the city to be duly executed and put in force; to inspect the conduct of all subordinate officers in the government thereof, and as far as may be in his power, to cause all negligence, carelessness and positive violation of duty to be duly prosecuted and punished, and to communicate from time to time to the Council all such information, and recommend all such measures as may tend to the improvement of the finances, the police, health, security, cleanliness, comfort and ornament of the city.

AMENDED INCORPORATION ACT. Mr. Helmecken moved that the word "police" be struck out.

AMENDED INCORPORATION ACT. Mr. Duncan strongly supported the clause as it stood, advocating the placing of the police under the hands of the Council.

AMENDED INCORPORATION ACT. Mr. DeCosmos said the clause did not place the police under the control of the Council, but he believed that the city would ere long exact that condition.

AMENDED INCORPORATION ACT. The clause was passed with the word "police" struck out.

AMENDED INCORPORATION ACT. Messrs. Franklin, Burnaby, Southgate, and Carswell here left the House.

AMENDED INCORPORATION ACT. Classes 56 to 60, appointing a City Clerk, making provision for the appointment of other civic officers, giving the Council power to fix the place of meeting, and providing that the meetings shall be held openly, except special meetings, were passed.

AMENDED INCORPORATION ACT. Clause 62, providing for the calling together of the new Council was passed.

AMENDED INCORPORATION ACT. Clause 63, providing that any member of the Council may resign by the consent of a majority of the Council, was passed, the majority requiring the consent of the majority being struck out.

AMENDED INCORPORATION ACT. Mr. Dennis here left the House, and there being then no quorum the business of the House came to a stand-still.

AMENDED INCORPORATION ACT. To-morrow (Tuesday) the House will go into committee on Ways and Means, when Dr. Dickson's motions on Wild-Land tax, Capitation tax for the Hospital, and Country Liquor Licenses will be brought up.

TUESDAY, March 7.

House met at 3:15 p. m. Members present—Messrs. DeCosmos, Powell, Franklin, M'Clure, Tolmie, Dickson, Cochrane, Duncan, Dennis.

FRANCHISE AMENDMENT ACT. Mr. Cochrane read a petition from the retail liquor dealers objecting to the system of monthly licensing courts and to the number of licenses granted, and praying that the said court be held annually or semi-annually.

FRANCHISE AMENDMENT ACT. The petition was ordered to be laid on the table.

COASTING TRADE. Mr. Duncan called attention to the coasting trade of the colony. By the Imperial Act of 1854 the coasting trade of all colonies

was reserved to themselves unless they petitioned the Home Government to throw it open. He alluded to the great injustice of our coasting trade being thrown open to foreign competition.

WAYS AND MEANS. The House went into committee on Ways and Means, Mr. Franklin in the chair.

WAYS AND MEANS. The Chairman stated that the amount of supplies voted to Her Majesty's Government for 1865 was \$298,618 25. The probable revenue for the year 1865, calculated on the basis of the year 1863 was \$239,899 25.

WAYS AND MEANS. Mr. Duncan said we had to make up a deficit of \$65,475 75, including the debt of the City of Victoria of \$6,760, which he never expected to get.

COUNTRY LIQUOR LICENSES. Dr. Dickson introduced his motion to amend the Liquor License Law in order to allow dealers within three miles of the limits of Victoria to obtain licenses at a lower rate than that paid in the city, viz: \$300 per annum. Outside of this three miles parties only paid \$60 a year, and it was a great hardship to compel those adjoining the city limits to pay out of their small earnings the same tax paid by those doing a large business in the city. He therefore proposed to make the license outside the city limits and within three miles of said limits \$100 per annum. He would wish also to enable parties to sell ale and porter only, at a reduced rate.

COUNTRY LIQUOR LICENSES. Mr. DeCosmos said there was nothing in the motion of the hon. gentleman alluding to Nanaimo, which he supposed was similarly situated in regard to the Liquor License Law. The motion would only affect a few houses between Victoria and Esquimalt, and he thought it too small a matter to necessitate a change in the law.

COUNTRY LIQUOR LICENSES. Dr. Dickson, in answer to Dr. Powell, said there were five houses which would be affected by the change. The question was not, however, one of number, but one of principle and justice.

COUNTRY LIQUOR LICENSES. Dr. Tolmie thought if we tried to alter our laws to make them conform to our ideas of abstract justice we would have a formidable task before us.

COUNTRY LIQUOR LICENSES. Dr. Helmecken said we could not come down to the principal of income tax in this colony; he preferred the system of fixed licenses. We could not well make a man on one side of the boundary line pay \$300 and on another, only a few inches distant, pay only \$100. The liquor license law certainly required alteration. The wholesale liquor dealers should pay a larger license, or else give in the gross returns of their sales, which were now excluded (hear, hear). The dealers in the mining districts should also pay the same license as in the city.

COUNTRY LIQUOR LICENSES. Dr. Dickson's motion was lost.

WILD LAND TAX. Dr. Dickson's motion to levy a tax of three per cent. on all unimproved lands in the colony, came up.

WILD LAND TAX. The hon. mover asked for a postponement of the motion, as he was not prepared for the question. Postponement granted.

POLL TAX FOR THE HOSPITAL. Dr. Dickson's motion to levy a poll-tax of \$1 per head on all persons coming into the colony, in support of the Royal Hospital, was next brought up.

POLL TAX FOR THE HOSPITAL. Dr. Dickson said the necessity of some such provision as this needed no argument. The hospital had hitherto been supported by Government and by private contributions. There was also another hospital which the House had recommended to be united with the Royal Hospital. The great powers of the ladies in raising subscriptions by various means.

POLL TAX FOR THE HOSPITAL. Dr. Helmecken—By lectures? (a laugh).

POLL TAX FOR THE HOSPITAL. Dr. Dickson—By lectures, by bazaars, and by private appeals they would obtain a large subscription, and the contributions to the Royal Hospital would be proportionately less this year than last. He alluded to the necessity for greater accommodation for patients of whom there were now about thirty who could not obtain admission. One dollar a head was levied in British Columbia, and in New York it was \$1 50.

POLL TAX FOR THE HOSPITAL. Dr. Helmecken asked what amount the hon. gentleman expected to raise?

POLL TAX FOR THE HOSPITAL. Dr. Dickson—About \$10,000. The tax would be collected every time a person entered the colony.

POLL TAX FOR THE HOSPITAL. Dr. Helmecken would oppose the tax at the present juncture, as likely to do more harm than good to the colony. To lay a tax on everyone going through this city to New Westminster would have a very prejudicial effect. It would not be advisable to levy any tax on travellers in transitu or on those who merely come to spend the winter. He therefore thought the motion premature. When the two colonies were united it would be time enough. As to the tax raising \$10,000 he could not believe that it would produce any such sum. It was simply preposterous to think of taxing travellers from British Columbia, or Puget Sound, who came here for the purposes of trade (hear, hear). The only remaining travel—that from San Francisco and Portland—was so very small both at present and in prospective, that it could not be looked on as a source of much revenue. There was one thing which would do far more good than twenty hospitals, and that was a dispensary in the city, at which parties could procure medicines gratis. (hear, hear). When the proper time came he was prepared to propose a very different kind of poll tax—but not for the hospital—viz: \$1 per head on cattle, \$1 on horses, 50 cents on sheep and hogs, something on beef, &c.

POLL TAX FOR THE HOSPITAL. Dr. Dickson replied to the last speaker, arguing that \$1 per head of tax would prevent a single person from entering the colony, as it did not at New York or British Columbia.

POLL TAX FOR THE HOSPITAL. Dr. Tolmie said this was certainly of all times the most inopportune to levy a tax of this kind on parties coming into the colony. It was to our obvious good that miners should go to the upper country mines through this colony and British Columbia, and we should avoid as much as possible throwing any obstacles in their way.

POLL TAX FOR THE HOSPITAL. Mr. M'Clure fully concurred with the last speaker. Whatever might have been the feeling of the House in former times now was certainly a bad time to impose a capitation tax. They already had the machinery for collecting revenue, and he did not see the necessity of creating any new machinery, especially where the receipts would be so small.

POLL TAX FOR THE HOSPITAL. The motion was lost.

Mr. DeCosmos said it had been suggested that the colony should borrow the \$60,000 of deficit, which would just meet the sum required to build the Governor's residence. But the colony could not well go home to borrow so small a sum, and if we did we would have to pay 6 per cent. interest, and 4 per cent. for a sinking fund, so that at the end of 20 years we would have paid \$120,000. If the money were got here, we would have to pay 12 per cent. which, with 8 per cent. for a sinking fund, would in ten years amount to the same sum. This evidently showed that borrowing the money would not be a profitable undertaking. He did not believe, either, in raising the deficit by an increased tax on real estate. He would propose to levy an increased trades license, by which taxation would be equalized and every class in the colony would be reached (hear, hear). The total amount of sales during the past year was \$8,842,776; the revenue from which, under the present Trades License Act, was \$19,945, which equalled thirty-four one-hundredths, or close upon one-third of one per cent. Suppose a tax of one per cent. were levied on the gross returns of sales of the past year—\$5,842,776—the revenue would be \$58,427, a gain of \$38,482 over the present system. Taking the Government estimate of Trades Licenses for 1865—\$21,500—the gain under the proposed tax would be within \$1600 of the amount obtained on the basis of last year. The question then was this: if we considered that the only mode of raising the revenue would be to increase the Trades License tax, we would be compelled to levy a rate of one and a-half per cent. to make up the deficit. He thought however that it might be managed by a tax of one per cent. by adopting a judicious mode of taxation to raise the remainder of the deficit, and he could not see a better mode of doing that than by a tax on all stock imported into the colony. (Hear, hear.) He would propose to levy a tax of \$4 per head on cattle, \$10 per head on horses, \$1 50 per head on hogs, and \$1 per head on sheep. The following statistics of imports of stock for the past year would show the revenue obtained from this source:

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