

The order of last session, relative to the postage of Members' letters, was then renewed, and the House adjourned until 3 o'clock to-morrow.

WEDNESDAY, March 1.

Mr Brecken, Chairman of the Committee appointed to prepare an address in answer to His Excellency's Speech, submitted a draft Address—received and read.

Ordered, that said Address be referred to a Committee of the whole House to-morrow.

Hon. Mr. Coles suggested the propriety of procuring for the information of Hon. members copies of the Royal Gazette, containing the Despatch relative to the Militia Law.

Hon. Mr. Longworth, Chairman of the Committee on expiring Laws, submitted a Report; ordered to be committed to a Committee of the whole House to-morrow. The Hon. gentleman then stated that as several Committees were then busily employed, preparing Reports, he would, therefore, move that the House do now adjourn till 10 o'clock to-morrow. House accordingly adjourned.

THURSDAY, March 2.

The Colonial Secretary, Chairman of the Committee to receive tenders for printing the Parliamentary Reporter, submitted the Report of the Committee—Messrs. Ings, Hughes, and G. T. Hazard, had tendered. That of the latter, being the lowest, was accepted.

Hon. Leader of the Government submitted the annual Report of Dr. Mackieson, Superintendent of the Lunatic Asylum—received and read. House adjourned till 3 o'clock, p. m.

AFTERNOON.

Hon. Mr. DAVIES, Chairman of Committee to receive tenders for printing the Journals of the Session, reported that tenders had been received from Messrs. Hazard, Ings, and Hughes, and recommended that the tender of Mr. Hughes, being the lowest, be accepted.

Ordered that the Report of the Committee be adopted

DEBATE ON THE ADDRESS IN ANSWER TO HIS EXCELLENCY'S SPEECH.

On motion of Mr. Brecken the House went into the order of the day, viz, Committee of the whole on the Draft Address in answer to His Excellency's speech. Mr. Yeo in the chair.

The Chairman first read the whole Draft Address, which is as follows:

To His Excellency George Dundas, Esquire, Lieutenant Governor and Commander in-Chief in and over Her Majesty's Island Prince Edward and the Territories thereunto belonging, Chancellor, Vice Admiral, and Ordinary of the same, &c., &c.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY:—

1. We, Her Majesty's faithful subjects, the House of Assembly of Prince Edward Island, beg respectfully to tender our thanks for the Speech with which your Excellency was pleased to open the present Session.

2. The general prosperity of this Island, the abundant harvest, and the many blessings bestowed upon the people of this Colony during the past year, demand our grateful acknowledgments to Almighty God.

3. We thank your Excellency for having, in compliance with the Resolution passed last Session, appointed Delegates to confer with Delegates appointed by the Governments of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, respectively, for the purpose of discussing the expediency of a Legislative Union of the Maritime Provinces, and we shall be happy to receive the Correspondence on this subject, together with the Report of the Delegates.

4. We shall be pleased to learn the origin of the second

Conference held at Quebec, to consider the wider question of general Union of the British North American Provinces, to attend which, your Excellency, on the invitation of the Governor General, appointed Delegates selected, as were the Delegates to the former Conference, from each of the political parties in the Legislature.

5. We beg to assure Your Excellency that we shall not fail to give our most earnest consideration to the Resolutions adopted at the Quebec Conference, upon the momentous subject of a General Union of the Provinces, and also to the Despatches from Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonial Department, relative thereto.

6. It is gratifying to us to learn that the Volunteer movement which has arisen in this Colony has received the approbation of the Colonial Minister, and we will give our careful attention to any measure which may be proposed to us with the object of remedying the defects in the Law relating to the Militia of the Colony, characterized by Mr. Cardwell as having no parallel in British North America.

7. It is with pleasure we learn that the Revenue for the past year exceeds that of any previous year, and that it is considerably in excess of the Expenditure; and we thank Your Excellency for the assurance that the Public Accounts for the past year, and the Estimates for the present, will be laid before us.

8. The great importance to this Island of Agriculture, commends it especially to our notice, and we shall attentively consider the expediency of giving some further encouragement to the promotion of the scientific culture of the Soil, and to the improvement of Stock.

The first four paragraphs of the Address having been again read, were agreed to without discussion. When the adoption of the 5th paragraph was moved, Hon Mr COLES addressed the Committee to the following effect:—

There is no doubt, Mr Chairman, that this House will give due attention to the subject of the paragraph which has just been read, and I wish that the Government had done likewise. They have received the Report of the Conference held at Quebec, and, that being the case, they should have met the Legislature with a decided declaration of opinion on the subject of the Union of the Colonies. On a question of such importance—the most momentous that ever was submitted to the consideration of the Legislature of the Island—a question involving the interests of all the North American Colonies—I assert that the Government should have given a decided expression of opinion, and I am sorry that they have not taken the responsibility of declaring their policy; instead of doing so, they have brought the subject before us as being non-political. While I admire the man who maintains an opinion of his own, and admit that, in political parties, the several members must often yield their individual views, yet, when a great general principle is involved, as in the present question, the people have the right to know what are the opinions of the Government which they placed in power. When that great supporter of the Conservative party in England, Sir Robert Peel, differed from his colleagues on a great public question, he took his own ground, and was respected by men of all parties for his independent spirit. It may be said that under this scheme of Confederation, the principles of Responsible Government are maintained, but the people will view it with caution, if not satisfied with the terms. One gentleman has published the statement that a majority of the Government is opposed to the Union; but if that be a faithful expression of opinion, their acts are inconsistent with it; no Government takes its opponents into its confidence. In New Brunswick a member of the Executive resigned his seat and office, rather than remain to listen to the plans of a policy he did not agree with. We have a similar case nearer home, and no man of honor will consent to act as a spy. Here we have the Government putting into the situation of their only legal adviser a red hot opponent. I mean to convey no imputation on that gentleman; but I blame the Government for professing one set of opinions and appointing to so important an