

## Railway Meeting.

On Wednesday afternoon, a Meeting was held at the Temperance Hall, presided over by His Worship, the MAYOR, to give the Canadian Delegates an opportunity of delivering their views on the great subject of the Halifax and Quebec Railway, in the altered position in which it now stands. JAMES THOMPSON, Esq., was chosen as Secretary. The Hon. E. B. CHANDLER from prudential motives was absent. The Hon. Mr. HINCKES's address dealt in explanations, in answers to objections, and in powerful appeals to the sober sense of the audience, urging the acceptance of the present and final proposition of Canada and New Brunswick to Nova Scotia. He hesitated not to say, that if the scheme as now proposed be rejected, all hope of aid from the Imperial Parliament would expire, and the project of a Railroad through the Provinces would not soon, if ever, be realized. The address was well received, and produced quite a sensation. Messrs. YOUNG and TACITE, also, delivered short speeches, recommending the adoption of the proposal of the sister Provinces. From all we can hear, or learn, we believe that the present scheme must be adopted, or all expectation of getting a main trunk line connecting Halifax with St. John and Quebec will be indefinitely postponed. Though it be not all that Nova Scotia might desire, yet, we think it better to adopt this plan than have nothing. We give our opinion free from party considerations, and as such, we hope our readers will receive it.

The weather has been much milder since the great snow storm on Sabbath night and Monday. The roads have been much obstructed by drifts, and travelling has been slow and toilsome.

## Provincial Parliament.

(From City Papers.)

## The Opening of the Session.

On Thursday, Jan. 29th, His Excellency Sir John Harvey came down at 3 o'clock, P. M., with the usual ceremonies, and opened the Session. The Speaker being confined to his house with a sprained ankle, Mr. Henry was chosen as Speaker *pro tem*. without discussion or opposition, and the Members having returned, and the usual approbation being required and granted, His Excellency delivered the following Speech, (For which see last page of our last number.)

The attendance was large, notwithstanding the snow, which fell thick and fast all the afternoon. The Delegates from the Sister Provinces, Messrs. Hincks, Young, Tacite, and Chandler, were present. After drafts of replies in both Branches had been moved, they were allowed to lie over as usual till the following day. The customary Committees were appointed, and the ordinary routine having been gone through, both Houses adjourned early and until the following day, with an understanding that the Railroad discussion should proceed immediately.

There was a pretty full attendance of Members of the Assembly. Only one or two of the country gentlemen belonging to the Upper Branch, however, were present.

Mr. Henry acquitted himself in the discharge of the duties of his novel position as Speaker with much credit. Mr. Young, it is expected, will be able to attend in his place in the course of a week or so.

A. G. Archibald, Esq., then asked leave to introduce a Bill (*pro forma*) for the Abolition of Imprisonment for Debt—leave granted and the Bill read a first time.

L. O'C. Doyle, Esq., moved the ANSWER to His Excellency's speech—seconded by Mr. McLellan.

The Speaker said, unless otherwise instructed by the House, the usual orders would be given to the Post Master General for the FRANKING of Letters.

Friday, 30th, was mostly occupied with presenting replies, from both branches, to His Excellency's speech, and the reading of despatches. Late in the day, the Government laid upon the tables of both Houses the results of their Conference with the Provincial delegates. The substance of them was, a proposition from the whole four

delegates that Nova Scotia should build one third of the whole line by the route of the St. John. This the Executive Government promptly decline, and give their reasons at large. Then follows a proposal from the Canada Delegates, as a final offer, that Nova Scotia should build one fourth instead of one third; that New-Brunswick build five twelfths, and Canada one third, as before. This offer was thereupon referred by the Executive Government immediately to the Legislature, without comment, and is that before the country, and which, we presume, is to be accepted or rejected. No further modifications are likely to occur touching the monetary features of the scheme. Assuming the distance to be the same as that by Major Robinson's line, viz., 635 miles, one fourth would give Nova Scotia 158 and a fraction, or say 160 miles; New Brunswick 265, very nearly; and Canada 212, or thereabouts. At £26,000 currency per mile, our liabilities would be £2,600,000 currency, and the annual interest required at 3½ per cent. £32,600 currency, or about £25,980 sterling. The quantity of public lands available to the purposes of the road will be very much diminished.

A Special Committee was appointed in the Assembly, to report upon the proposition, who were to meet on Saturday.

On Saturday, 31st, the Hon. Attorney General moved for the appointment of the STANDING COMMITTEES, which were appointed viz.:

*Agriculture*.—Messrs. Hall, Holmes, B. Smith, P. Smyth, Bent, Ryder, and McLellan.

*Education*.—Messrs. Howe, Johnston, Wilkins, Annand, Hugh Munro, S. Campbell, and Archibald.

*Trade and Manufactures*.—Messrs. Fraser, Killam, Josiah Coffin, Cowie, Murray, Whitman, John Munro, Wier, and John Campbell.

Mr. Marshall objected to the Government appointing the Committees. The Hon. Provincial Secretary said, he took it for granted that the object of the Hon. Attorney General was merely to make the Committees as satisfactory as possible to the House. I intended to the Speaker last night that as the Committees were sometimes chosen unsatisfactorily, it might be well for some gentleman to arrange them, rather than leave them to be chosen in the usual haphazard sort of way. It is the interest of every member of the house to have the best men on the Committees.

The Hon. Mr. Johnston, subsequently made some remarks confirmatory of Mr. Marshall's views. Hon. Attorney General explained.

The remaining Committees were appointed.

*Fisheries*.—Messrs. Uniacke, Esson, Locke, Wier, John Campbell, James Coffin, and Jost.

*Navigation*.—Messrs. Killam, Bournout, Mosher, Chipman, McLeod, McKinnon, James Coffin, E. Young, and Bent.

*Post Office*.—Uniacke, Wade, McQueen, Fulton, McLellan, Moore, Freeman, Annand, and Dimmock.

*Penitentiary*.—McLeod, Dimmock, Shaw, Jost, and James Campbell.

*Transient Paupers*.—Thorne, Ryder, Doctor Brown, Comcan, and Mettill.

*Sack Emigrants*.—McLellan, Brown, Hugh Munro, Doyle, and E. Young.

*Indian Affairs*.—Whitman, McKinnon, Creighton, McQueen, and Esson.

*Printing*.—Bent, McLellan, Jost, Dimmock, and McLeod.

*Contingencies*.—S. Campbell, B. Smith, Zwicker, McQueen, and Fulton.

*Mines and Minerals*.—Archibald, E. Young, Hall, Marshall, Brown, Hugh Munro, and Annand.

Mr. McLellan suggested that a Revising Committee should be appointed, to revise all Bills before they were engrossed for a third reading, and gave notice that he would move for such committee.

Monday, 1st of March, was fixed as the LAST DAY OF RECEIVING PRIVATE PETITIONS, with the distinct understanding that no petition should be received after that day.

Hon. Provincial Secretary rose and presented the Report of the Committee appointed on Friday evening to consider the proposition of the Canadian Delegates respecting THE RAILWAY; the Report is signed by all the members of the Committee but one.

## REPORT.

"The Committee appointed to take into consideration the proposition of the Delegates from Canada, for the construction of an inter-colonial Railway, beg leave to report that they are not prepared to recommend to the House to accept that proposition.

JOSEPH HOWE,  
J. W. JOHNSTON,  
THOS. KILLAM,  
M. J. WILKINS,  
JAS. D. FRASER,  
STEPHEN FULTON,  
STEWART CAMPBELL,  
HUGH MUNRO."

Hon. Pro. Secretary moved that the Report lay on the table for further consideration.

Mr. Fraser moved that a Committee be appointed to see to the completion of the printing of the REVISED STATUTES; and that the Committee appointed last session be continued—Messrs. Fraser, Fulton, Freeman, Archibald, and Chipman. Agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Johnston asked leave to introduce a Bill for extending the ELECTIVE PRINCIPLE TO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL OF NOVA SCOTIA, and said, I do not consider it necessary to go fully into the subject. On two previous sessions it was largely considered. Resolutions were introduced, but they failed to meet with the assent of the House. I fairly assume that the House will at once direct its attention to the details of this Bill without again discussing the principle. At all events all sides of the House will admit that it is a step in the right direction—something to give us Freedom—really, as well as in name—a step towards giving the people of Nova Scotia what they want, and what they are constantly told they possess—that is, self government.

The Bill was read a first time.

Hon. Provincial Secretary said, I will not forestall the debate on this Bill; but I may say that I am glad that the hon. and learned member has taken the mode he has to bring the subject fully before the house, by presenting all the details in a Bill, instead of moving a bald resolution. My own opinion on this matter remains unchanged. I think an Elective Legislative Council would be incompatible with our present institutions. If we are going to make an entire change in those institutions, why let us discuss it gradually.

Mr. Marshall said—Now that this great scheme on paper is at an end, I wish to ask the Hon. Provincial Secretary whether the Government will have any grave State objections to the introduction of an act of incorporation and facility bill for constructing a Railway from Whitehaven towards New Brunswick?

Hon. Provincial Secretary replied—I gave notice last session, that there would be no objection on the part of the Government to grant an act of incorporation without other assistance to a Company, to construct a line to connect Whitehaven with the Main Trunk Line. We can have no objection to the inhabitants of the Province engaging in such improvements. If the hon. gentleman means to ask whether the Government would be willing to surrender the main trunk line to a company, I am not prepared to answer, but I think it would be in the negative.

On Monday, Feb. 2nd, the Hon. Speaker announced to the House that the returns from Colchester with reference to the CONTESTED ELECTIONS had been transmitted by the Sheriff, and were ready for the action of the Committees.

Hon. Provincial Secretary rose to present the Report of the Superintendent of Education for 1851. He moved that 1000 or 1500 copies be printed.

Martin J. Wilkins, Esq., by leave, presented a petition from Mr. B. H. Norton, praying for aid in establishing a line of Steamers between Quebec and Pictou. Referred to a select Committee.

The Report on lighting the coasts with Kerosene Gas was received and referred to a select Committee, composed of Messrs. Fraser, Marshall, Killam, Cowie, T. Coffin, and John Munro.

Hon. Provincial Secretary by Command of His Excellency laid on the table of the House the report of the Commissioners appointed to expend the sum voted by the house as a Mackerel Bounty. The report stated that 107 vessels were entered for the fishery; aggregate tonnage, 4783 tons manned with 1012 men;—seventy-five of which vessels had completed their certificates and were paid.

Hon. Provincial Secretary. By command of His Excellency laid on the table of the House certain papers connected with the subject of the Currency.

Hon. Provincial Secretary rose to inform the House, that since Saturday, some further communication had been received from the DELEGATES, which were in the hands of the printer, and would probably be laid on the table in an hour.

Hon. Provincial Secretary subsequently said that, before laying on the table certain additional correspondence from the DELEGATES, he would premise that the Report of the Committee presented on Saturday, had been misunderstood—it was thought by many that it rejected the Canada proposition, whereas it only stated that the house were not prepared to accept of it at present. It was obvious that the gentlemen who had come here from the other provinces could not be called to the Bar of the House to give their explanations. It was equally clear that these gentlemen could have no free communication with the whole house as a body. Therefore, when I moved for a Committee, it was with the desire to give them an opportunity of having a free Conference between the Delegates and its members. The object of the Committee was attained; and it would be seen by this correspondence, that they had acted wisely in saying that we were not prepared to assent to that proposition; because several points on which we had no previous information, have been cleared up by these letters.

The Hon. Provincial Secretary subsequently stated, on Committee on the General State of the Province, that, although Nova Scotia would not derive as much advantage by the present proposed route, as by the former, he would afford the motion for the adoption of the proposition made by the Delegates his support, and therefore moved the acceptance of the proposition.

Hon. Mr. Johnston spoke against it on various grounds—Mr. Wier in its favour.

Mr. M. J. Wilkins gave notice of moving a resolution, calling on New Brunswick to adopt similar Bills as had passed in Nova Scotia and Canada, for both lines, and that the three Governments should then earnestly crave Her Majesty's assent to those Bills, all founded on the agreements at Toronto.

TUESDAY, Feb. 3.—Mr. Zwicker presented a petition from the inhabitants of New Dublin, for a Way Office. Referred to Post Office Committee.

Also a petition from a large number of his constituents praying for the lands on the route of the SHUBENACADIE CANAL, with the object of forming a company to complete the work. Referred to Messrs. Wier, Hall, B. Smith, Bent, Marshall, Killam, and Esson.

Mr. Fraser introduced a Bill for the incorporation of a KEROSENE GAS COMPANY at Windsor, referred to Messrs. Wilkins, S. Campbell and Dimmock.

Hon. Provincial Secretary rose to lay on the table the RETURN of the number of MAGISTRATES in different Counties of the Province, called for by resolution of the House in January, 1851.

Hon. Provincial Secretary said it would be in the recollection of the house that several gentlemen had moved on the subject of CONSUL FEES. Last session the house voted £100 to procure returns and receipts from the officers in the different Ports, to show what sums were paid to the Consuls in American Ports, and the result was the huge pile of papers which were now laid on the table, and which he would move to be referred to a special committee to report upon. The documents were referred to Messrs. Fraser, Killam, and Whitman.

Hon. J. W. Johnston said the House had ordered RETURNS OF THE BUSINESS done before the MAGISTRATES through the country; and he rose for the purpose of moving that they be referred to a select committee, in order that they might be examined with a view to see whether the system of administering justice in small cases was satisfactory. Referred to Hon. Mr. Johnston, Messrs. S. Campbell, Hall, Holmes, and Hugh Munro.

Mr. Marshall in giving notice of his intention to introduce a Bill on the subject of a RAILWAY, not designed to interfere with the one under discussion, said—I feel the time has come for me to place my own views before the house, and I am going to propose measures for making 130 miles of railway in Nova Scotia, from our boundary to the sea. Let no gentleman suppose this to be a Whitehaven railway; for I propose that it shall come to the best place on the sea shore. I propose that this company shall be incorporated for a million of money—that the province shall take stock to the amount of £400,000. It may be asked where are we to get the money? A very proper question; and I may answer that there is plenty of money lying in your banks not making 3 per cent. which would be forthcoming on the Provincial Guarantees. That Halifax shall take stock to the amount of £100,000, leaving £500,000, for private capitalists. I propose that the Province shall have four directors—Halifax one, and the other stockholders five. Let the Railway run wherever they shall choose, and I have no objection that the President should be in the Government as head of the Board of Works. I propose that the Province shall guarantee 5 per cent on the stock, and that it shall be limited to 6 per cent, and the Province shall have the option of purchasing the Railway at an advance of 8 per cent. I call upon the hon. gentlemen to give this bill their attention, after all that has been said about Railways and the unsuccessful measures that have been introduced;—the province presenting the sorry picture of the wagoner stuck in the mud and calling upon Hercules to help him out. Notice laid on the table.

Mr. Wilkins asked and obtained leave to introduce a Bill to regulate BANKRUPTCY, and for the relief of honest debtors. Referred to Messrs. Wilkins, Chipman, Stewart Campbell, Esson, and Howe.

The House went into Committee on the Railway proposition.—Hon. Provincial Secretary understood Mr. Marshall's proposition as a last resort in case of the present miscarrying. Mr. McLellan argued that the proposition before the House was unfair to Nova Scotia. Mr. Hall spoke in favour of it.—Hon. Mr. Johnston against it.—Hon. Prov. Secretary justified the Report of the Committee, as it did not reject the Canadian proposition, but left it open to the House, and he had moved to accept of it, as a *dernier resort*, when every thing else had apparently failed.