

that glorious institution, would have been totally destroyed. The reports of the tendency of this new bill alarmed the merchants ; and in a meeting held for the purpose of deliberating on what steps were proper and necessary for them to take, on an affair of so much importance to their security, they determined to petition the Council, praying to be heard against the bill, before it was passed into a law. They accordingly drew up a petition to that purpose, and having presented it on the 6th of April, the Council appointed the 14th of that month for hearing the argument. On that day the counsel for the commerce appeared at the bar of the Legislative Council ; and in a speech which lasted six hours, he pointed out in a very clear and satisfactory manner, the evil tendency of the bill then before the legislature ; he shewed the necessity of ascertaining what laws were established for the province by the