LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY,

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

THURSDAY, April 16.

Mr Bell, from the Committee to whom was referred the petition of George Meggison, of Lot 53, presented to the House the report of said Committee, to the effect, that said Committee had investigated, so far as they possibly could, the claims of the petitioner, and that while they deeply sympathized with him, they regretted that they could not recommend the prayer of the petition.

Mr. Geo Sinclair, Chairman of the Committe of the whole House, on the bill to consolidate and amend the several laws relating to Education, reported said bill agreed to with amendments.

When the House in Committee had gone through the bill, the honorable the Speaker said he could not refrain from saying a few words on the important subject of the bill, before it left Committee. His honor then reviewed the progress of Education in the Colony since the first introduction of the Free School system, and paid a high compliment to the hon Leader of the Government, whom, he said, was the father of that Act, that had given such general satisfaction in the country. The fact that in two years from the passing of the Act, an increase of some 219 Schools and 196 Teachers followed, was proof of its appreciation. He also alluded to the establishment of the Normal School, having for its object the introduction of a uniform system of training Teachers. He, (hon Mr Speaker), then referred to petitions presented to the Legislature some two years after the free system was put in operation, praying for an increase of the Teachers' salaries and some other alterations, which, he said, were, on his motion, referred to a special Committee, of whom the late lamented Hon Mr Haviland, and the then Attorney General, Hon E Palmer, were, among others, efficient members. That said Committee held meetings for several days in the Library, eliciting all the information possible, from old and experienced Teachers, and others interested in the cause of Education. The result of the labors of that Committee, of which he was Chairman, was the introduction of a bill, based on their Resolutions, comprising fifty sections. He alluded to the subsequent change effected by the Conservative party, imposing on the parents the payment of a portion of the salaries of the Teachers, against which complaints arose from all parts of the country, and that by the amendment of last Session, the system was again restored, to the payment of Teachers wholly from the Treasury. The whole laws relating to Education had now, he said, by the bill under consideration, been consolidated, and several important amendments had, he was glad to observe, been agreed to by the Committee; and from the thorough and searching investigation entered into, on every paragraph in the bill, he hoped it would not be necessary to submit the subject to the Legislature again for some years to come. The bill, as amended, he trusted would meet the approval of the public, prove increasingly beneficial to the best educational interests of the Colony, and redown to the credit of the Legislature.

The principal amendments to the Bill, in addition to the changes relative to the Normal School; the appointment of three visitors, two examiners, and other alterations already given in the summary reports of the House, are the following, namely—The salaries of Female Teachers in Charlottetown, are fixed at £49 10s. per annum. Those of said Teachers in Country District Schools, raised to £40. Assistant Male Teachers of City Schools £66. Scales of salaries paid to Male Teachers of ordinary District Schools remain the same as provided for by the act of last Session, with the proviso that the number of Grammar Schools in each County is limited to—three in Prince, three in King's, and five in Queen's County, over and above those Grammar Schools already established in the county towns.

The school vacations are extended from one month to six weeks, namely—three weeks in spring and three weeks in autumn. The School Assessment clauses are, to some extent, changed. The assessment for building school houses, furniture and repairs, will extend to all householders in each School District, the trustees, however, in levying the rate, must have due regard for the circumstances of each.

Several of the foregoing amendments elicited some discussion, though not of a very prolonged nor party character.

It was stated by an hon member, that Trustees of District Schools, refusing to serve, should be visited with a penalty for non-acceptance of office, or for refusal to act; a suggestion, however, which did not find favor with hon members, generally, on both sides. Hon Atty General remarking, in course of discussion, that it had been brought to his knowledge, that office of Trustee was, in some cases, an object of ambition, some Teachers having offered themselves to act in the double capacity of Trustee and Teacher, although such a combination of offices was not legal. In cases where two Districts may be united and formed into a Grammar School, the area of School houses, hereafter, to be erected for such Grammar Schools shall be 600 feet. Ordinary District School houses, same area as before passing this bill, but the height of past between floor and cellar to be raised from 9 ft., as formerly, to 10 feet. In cases where the Board of Education may be dissatisfied with the condition of School Rooms in Charlottetown, they shall have power to receive the School Assessments and rent more suitable, commodious, and well ventilated School Rooms, and to increase the quarterly assessment from 3s to 5s. for each scholar attending such schools, and to exercise such other control over said Charlottetown District Schools as said Board of Education may deem advisable.

Progress was reported on the bill for the relief of unfortunate debtors; and also on the bill to amend the Small Debt Act.

Hon Leader of the Government presented Supplementary Estimates extra, for Three Thousand Pounds, to be appropriated equally between the three Counties, for the purpose of aiding poor and destitute settlers to obtain Seed grain.

House adjourned.

FRIDAY, April 17.

House in Committee of the whole on the further consideration of the Bill for the relief of unfortunate Debtors. The necessity of appointing a third Judge, or a Commissioner of Bankruptcy, whose duty it would be to preside over the Court constituted under the bill, elicited considerable discussion, which ended in a provision empowering the Government to appoint a Commissioner of Insolvency, to be paid by fees and not by salary, and also a clerk of such Insolvent Debtors' Court.

The Bill in question does not embrace a general Bankruptcy Law, but applies to the transactions of embarrassed business men in the Colony, who, having assigned their debts proportionally to their creditors, applied for relief. The preferential assignments of absconding debtors, nor any assignment made by parties not seeking the benefits of the bill, are not affected by its provisions. Nor does it enable a Creditor to force his debtor into the Insolvent Court thereby constituted. The Bill was reported agreed to, and ordered to be engrossed.

Hon Mr Kelly, from the Special Committee, to whom was referred every petition praying for the opening of Roads, presented to the House the report of said Committee.

House in Committee of the whole on said Report, the purport of which was that the Committee to whom were referred the petitions alluded to, recommended that inquisition be held under the Act 14th Vic., Cap. 1, for opening the following Roads, viz:—

From McAlister's to Fort Augustus.
From Burnt Hill to Baldwin's Road.
From T. Gardiner's to Hurd's Point Wharf.
West Line Road, Lot 22, to be changed.
From Appin Settlement to Melville Road, to Survey and Report by next Session.
From Wm. Roper's to Winter River.
From Johnston's Mill Road to the Shore, Lot 21.
From Division Line, Lot 16, to Kent's Cross.
From St. Peter's Road to Hillsborough River.
From Neil Shaw's to Angus McMillan's, Cove Head.
From Pleasant Valley to Little Sands.
From Portage, Lot 41, to Naufrage.
From New London to Summerside.

And that the remainder be provided for by the Members for the respective Districts to which Petitions relate.

Mr. Bell, Chairman of the Committee of the whole House, on the above report, reported that the Committee had gone through the same, and after some amendments, agreed thereto.

Ordered, That the Committee who prepared said Report, be appointed to prepare an Address, praying His Excellency to direct that the recommendations contained therein may be carried into effect.

Hon Colonial Secretary presented to the House the return of Mr Green, one of the Members for the Electoral District of Summerside, of money expended under a special grant of the Legislature, for macadamizing roads at Summerside.

House in Committee of Supply. Mr Reilly in the Chair. Reported several Resolutions. The principal one being the grant of £3000.

On motion of Hon Col Secretary, it was ordered that the House go into Committee to-morrow, to take into consideration the Messages of His Excellency, transmitting the various despatches laid on the table during the Session.

Mr McLennan introduced a bill to continue and amend the act relating to the fire department at Summerside, and other matters therein named.

On motion of the hon Mr. Haviland, the Bill from the Legislative Council, to shorten the wording of Sheriff's Deeds, was read a second time, submitted to a Committee, and after some amendments, was reported agreed to; and the rule being suspended relative to the 3rd reading of a bill, it was read a third time and passed.

Hon Col Secretary presented the Custom House returns for the year 1867, showing that the exports of the Colony for that period, including shipping at £6 per ton sterling, exceeded the imports by about £80,000.

The ordinary Resolutions granting the usual renumerations to Members of both branches of the Legislature, were then passed, and supply was closed.

Mr. McLennan having expressed his regret that the petition from Summerside, asking for a grant to aid in erecting a Public Building for a Court House, Post Office, &c., had not been entertained by the Government; and that a small sum had not been voted before closing supply, towards fencing the Drill Shed grounds at Summerside, presented, as Chairman of the Committee on expiring laws, a bill to revive the Act relating to that Town.

House in Committee, resumed the consideration of the bill relating to Small Debt Courts. After some time spent in Committee, progress was reported.

House adjourned.

SATURDAY, April 18.

The Revenue Bill was read a third time and passed.

The Bill to revive and continue the Act relating to the Fire Department at Summerside, was reported agreed to.

House in Committee on the Resolution submitted by the Hon Atty General, granting £10,000 for the purpose of authorizing the Government to purchase lands in the Colony. Said Resolution was agreed to, and a Bill in confirmity therewith was presented. Received and read. Ordered to be read a second time on Monday.

Hon Atty General said that though no proprietory lands were at present offered, hopes were entertained that certain proprietors might yet accept of offers which had been made to them.

Hon Mr McAulay would not approve of placing the money indiscriminately into the hands of the Government. Some limits as to price, and restrictions relative to the mode of procedure under the bill, should be laid down, by which to control the Government.

Hon Atty General said that discretionary power such as that contemplated by the bill, had been conceded to former Governments. The specific object in view was the purchasing of proprietory lands on the most advantageous terms possible; and it was not to be presumed that the Government would make an improper use of the money, for which they were held accountable by the House.

House in Committee on Public Accounts.

Hon Mr Kelly, Chairman of the special Committee on said Accounts, presented the report of that Committee, which was reported agreed to without any amendments.

On motion of the Hon Col Secretary, it was ordered that the Resolutions touching the appropriations for seed grain be published in all the newspapers published in Charlottetown.

Hon Col Secretary presented the return of Mr Brecken, showing the manner in which monies received by him, as one of the members of the Electoral District of Charlottetown and Royalty, were expended towards the macadamizing of roads in said District.

House in Committee on the bill to amend the Small Debt Act. The principal amendments contemplated by said bill introduced by Hon Mr Kelly, are to make sittings of Small Debt Courts quarterly, instead of monthly. To compel creditors to sue to the Court nearest the place where goods were sold, or where the cause of action arose. It provides that when a debtor in jail is sued before a Small Debt Court, and wishes to defend the action, he may, on application to any of the Judges of the Supreme Court, obtain an order for the Sheriff to bring him (the said prisoner) to the Court where the suit is pending. The bill also provides for the establishment of a Small Debt Court at Egmont Bay, and the removal of the Court at Cranberry Point to Fort Augustus, and the one at Eldon to Belle Creek.

A lengthy debate followed, the principal question being whether or not a plaintiff it called on as a witness in his own suit, should be allowed mileage. When the question to go into Committee on the bill was put, hon Mr. Laird moved, in amendment, that it be committed that day three months, on which the House divided as follows:—For the amendment—Hons Laird, Haviland, Howlan, McAulay, Henderson, Atty General, Messrs. Bell, Owen, Brecken, Green—10.

Against it—Hons Kelly, Col Secretary, Callbeck, Dr. Jenkins, Messrs. McCormack, Reilly, Kickham, Cameron, McNeill, G. Sinclair, P. Sinclair—11.

House then in Committee.

Hon Atty General submitted a clause, which he moved to be added to the bill, to the effect: that in the event of a Plaintiff or Defendant, or any other person attending as a witness in more than one case at the same time or Court, he should only be allowed one full sett witnesses' fees, to be divided equally between each case allowed by law in Small Debt Courts. Said clause having been agreed to, the Chairman reported the bill as amended. After which Mr G. Sinclair moved, seconded by Mr P. Sinclair, that the bill be recommitted for the purpose of adding a clause to the following effect, viz:

That in no case should the Plaintiff to any suit or action brought in any Court of Commissioners for the recovery of Small Debts, now constituted under any existing act, or to be constituted under the Bill now under consideration, be entitled to any mileage fees for attendance as witness in his own suit. The question was then put on said motion, and negatived on the following division, viz:

Yeas—Hons Col Secretary, Callbeck, Kelly, Messrs G. Sinclair, P. Sinclair, McNeill, Arsenault, Kickham—8.

Nays—Hons Laird, Haviland, McAulay, Henderson, Atty General, Howlan, Messrs. Green, Owen, Brecken, Cameron, McCormack, Reilly, Bell—13.

On motion of Hon Col Secretary, the House went into Committee on the various despatches transmitted by His Excellency during the Session.

The despatch from the Home Government, on the subject of the Lieutenant Governor's salary, was read.

Hon Leader of the Government then remarked, that as it was then past the usual hour of adjournment, he would not detain the Committee by any lengthened remarks on the subject. He presumed a similar course to that adopted in a former Session, would be taken by the Legislature on that question.

MONDAY, April 20.

Hon Mr Speaker read to the House the following telegram, in answer to the Resolution of the House, relative to the assassination of the late Hon. T. D. McGee:—

Ottawa, 15th April, 1868.

To Hon. Joseph Wightman, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, P. E. Island.

I am directed by the Speaker of the House of Commons to acknowledge the receipt of your telegram, containing Resolution of the House of Assembly of Prince Edward Island, expressing condolence on the subject of the lamented death of the late Hon. Thomas D'Arcy McGee, and I am further directed to say that Mr. Speaker had the melancholy satisfaction of reading the same to the House of Commons.

(Signed) GEO. H. MCAULAY,
Speaker's Secretary,
Commons of Canada.

The Bill to amend and explain the Act relating to the Celebration of Marriages, so far as relates to the Bible Christian Church, was read a third time and passed.

Hon Col Secretary presented the returns of the state of the Union Bank of P. E. Island, up to 4th March, 1868. Ordered that said returns be laid on the table.

House in Committee on the Despatch of the Secretary of State, relative to the salary of the Lieutenant Governor.

Mr Reilly in the chair.

Hon Atty General remarked on the injustice done to the Colony, by the manner in which the Township lands thereof were originally granted away, and on the compact entered into on the introduction of Responsible Government, among other reasons why the people of the Colony ought not to pay the Governor's salary, and at the close of his speech submitted a Resolution to the following effect:—

That a Committee be appointed to join a Committee of the Legislative Council, to prepare an humble Address to Her Majesty the Queen, praying that Her Majesty will be graciously pleased to re-consider the determination to discontinue the payment of the salary of the Lieut. Governor of this Island, after the present Lieut. Governor shall cease to administer the Government, as communicated in a Despatch to his Excellency George Dundas, Esquire, from his Grace the Duke of Buckingham and Chandos, Her Majesty's principal Secretary of State for the Colonies, dated 12th Oct., 1867; and that Her Majesty would be graciously pleased to recommend the Imperial Parliament to continue, as heretofore, to make provision for the payment of said salary.

Hon members on both sides of the House reiterated the sentiments expressed in the joint address of the Legislature, in answer to the Despatch from the Secretary for the Colonies, in the year 1865, on the same subject. In addition to the fact that the Township lands of the Colony were originally granted to absentees who had claims on the Crown for services to the Nation, either as soldiers, sailors, or statesmen; that at the time of the surrender of the Crown Revenues to the Colony, on the introduction of Responsible Government, provision was not required to be made in the Civil List for the salary of the Lieut. Governor.

That in the Law passed by the Representatives of the people, to give effect to the Civil List Bill—and which duly received Her Majesty's Sanction—the salaries and pensions which the Colony was rendered liable to pay were enumerated; and that in passing that Law, the Legislature of the Colony had no reason to suppose that the Imperial Parliament would withdraw, or even refuse to provide for the salary of the Lieut. Governor; and that in consideration of the great and unmitigated wrong to this Colony, occasioned by the very improvident manner in which the lands of the Island were disposed of as aforesaid, it was but reasonable to expect from the Home Government the small compensation of a salary to a Lieut. Governor, not appointed by the people of this Colony, were among the reasons urged against the payment of the Governor's salary; in addition to which, the fact that the salary of his Excellency's Private Secretary had been recently provided for out of the Local Treasury; also, that as one of the natural fruits arising from that unprecedented act of cruelty perpetrated against the Colony, by granting away its soil, and in addition to the many wide-spread agitations and burdens thereby entailed on the laboring classes, the expenses incurred in sending for a detachment of Her Majesty's Troops, at the time of the recent troubles in the Colony, at a cost to the country of some £20,000, also was submitted in proof of the peculiar hardships endured by the inhabitants of the Island, as the result of alienating its Township lands. The vicissitudes to which the prosperity of the Colony was subject, owing to the uncertain growth of the soil, which—in the absence of mines, minerals and other sources of wealth accessible to the sister Colonies—was the sole support of the people, were also alluded to by hon. members in giving strong expression to their opinions that the Home Government should continue the provision for the salary of the Lieut. Governor of P. E. Island.

During the discussion the Hon Mr Davies said that the accepted opinion of both parties appeared to be that a Court of Escheat had been denied by the Crown, which he thought was questionable. True, Colonial Ministers from time to time stated that insuperable objections to that tribunal existed. He contended, however, that under the provisions of the Civil List Bill that Court was as attainable in this Colony as in Canada, and the other Provinces, which, if established, and thereby had the lands restored to the Colony, the call to provide for the salary of the Lieut. Governor would not be unjust, but as the Colony was deprived of its rights, the demand to pay the salary in question was extremely unjustifiable. On motion of the Hon Atty General, it was then

Ordered, that Hons Atty General, Col Sec'y, Howlan, Laird, Messrs G. Sinclair, and McNeill, be a Committee on the part of the House to prepare said Address.

House adjourned.

TUESDAY, April 21.

When the motion for the third reading of the bill to amend the Small Debt Act was made, Hon Mr. McAulay took exception to the bill, on the grounds of irregularity relative to the mode in which some of the principles of the bill were introduced. The petitions on which the bill was based, he said, had no reference to a principle embodied in one of its clauses, relating to the bringing of prisoners from the Jail of any County to attend Commissioners' Courts. He would therefore move that the bill be read that day three months.

Hon Leader of the Opposition doubted that the question to read the bill could be put to the House, from the fact that it levied a tax upon the subject, and therefore involved a principle which should have originated in a Committee of the whole House.

Hon Atty General did not consider the provision for the tax alluded to was of such a nature as to call forth any serious objection to the course adopted.

Mr G. Sinclair could not support the objections to the bill which, in his opinion were not based on sound principles.

Hon Mr Laird said the bill was founded on three different petitions asking for several amendments to the Act, relative to the changing and establishing of Small Debt Courts, but there were other clauses in the bill, which, in his opinion, would not be found to work favorably.

Hon Leader of the Government said the fee chargeable by the bill was not of the nature of a tax payable to the Treasury, and did not therefore come under the rules alluded to.

Hon Mr Davies said it might be necessary to pay due regard to rule, but did not feel bound to oppose the bill because of any technical objections which hon members might choose to offer.

Mr Bell said if the bill would cause as much confusion and give rise to the same diversity of opinion throughout the country as it had done in that House, the sooner it was thrown out the better.

Mr McNeill said the bill merited some consideration, the changes sought for were no doubt required in the localities to which they referred.

Mr Arsenault regretted that hon members appeared determined to strangle the bill. Some of its provisions were loudly called for in those parts of the country to which they related.

Hon Mr Kelly replied to the objections offered to the bill by the Hon Mr McAulay, and said that all the force of speech that hon member could employ would not change his views relative to the principles of the bill. He (Hon Mr Kelly) and the district which he had the honor to represent, could do without Commissioners' Courts as well as any section of the Colony. He could not, however, but express his disapproval of the course hon members in opposition to the bill had taken to defeat it.

Hon Mr Henderson commented on the importance of adhering to the established rules of the House, and said that all matters affecting the interests of the subject, should be submitted in a constitutional manner.

Mr McLennan would support those clauses in the bill which provided for the establishment and changing of Small Debt Courts, but was opposed to its provision relative to those matters not prayed for by the petitions on which the bill was founded.

Mr P. Sinclair feared that some of the clauses in the bill would give rise to trouble in the country. He was especially opposed to the provision made for allowing Plaintiffs mileage fees in their own suits, and would not therefore support the bill.

The question was then put on the motion to read the bill that day three months, and carried on the following division, viz:

Yeas—Hons McAulay, Laird, Howlan, Henderson, Haviland, Messrs. P. Sinclair, Bell, Cameron, Owen, Brecken, Green, McLennan—12.

Nays—Hons Kelly, Col Sec'y, Atty General, Callbeck, Davies, Messrs. G. Sinclair, Arsenault, McNeill, Reilly, Kickham, McCormack—11.

The Bill was accordingly lost.

The Bill placing at the disposal of the Government £10,000 to purchase proprietory Lands was read a second time, committed and reported agreed to.

Mr P. Sinclair asked the Government what action, if any, they proposed taking relative to a petition accompanied by a subscription list from the people of New London, for a Bridge across the South West River, at Graham's Wharf.

Hon Leader of the Government replied and said, the petition alluded to was laid before the Government, accompanied too by a very handsome subscription list, in aid of the contemplated work, but as it would involve a large expenditure, the Government did not feel prepared to entertain, for the present, the prayer of the petitioners.

On motion, the following gentlemen were appointed a Committee on the Contingent Accounts of the House, for the present Session, viz: Hons Howlan, Callbeck, and Mr Owen.

House in Committee resumed the consideration of Despatches, when the Despatch from the Secretary of State to His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor, announcing the Royal Proclamation, declaring the Provinces of Canada, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick, to be one Dominion, was read, it called forth from several hon members on both sides of the House, strong expressions of congratulation, that P. E. Island was not included in the Union of the Provinces named, and of sympathy towards the people of Nova Scotia, because of the unconstitutional manner in which they were forced into that Union, for the repeal of which they were now struggling.

Allusion was made to the apparent reaction that had recently been manifested in New Brunswick, relative to Confederation, the manufacturing interests of which Colony were said to be seriously affected by the policy of the Dominion Government.

Papers relating to Colonial Office list were then read.

Hon Mr Haviland directed the attention of the House to the neglected condition of the Legislative Library, the Books and Periodicals of which were taken and used all over the City, as if they belonged to some trifling circulating Library. He hoped the Joint Committee of the Legislature, to whom were entrusted the interest of the Library, would do their duty, and adopt rules by which to govern the Librarian in the management thereof.

Hon Mr Coles also complained of the manner in which Books were taken out of the Library. Volumes, the said, disappeared and could not be traced.

Mr Geo. Sinclair expressed his disapproval of allowing Books to be taken indiscriminately out of the Library. During the Session, he wished to refer, on several occasions, to Reviews and other records which should be found in the Library, but were not forthcoming.

Mr Brecken said he hoped renewed interest would be taken in that institution, and would willingly assist in placing it in better condition.

After which progress was reported and the House adjourned.

WEDNESDAY, April 22nd.

On motion that the Bill authorizing the Government to appropriate Ten thousand Pounds towards purchasing Proprietory Lands, be read a third time.

Hon Leader of the Opposition commented on the contrast between the principles of that Bill, and the compulsory measure sought for by the Minutes of Council, transmitted by the Government to the Secretary of State, with the view of obtaining the sanction of the Home Government to a Bill compelling Proprietors to sell their Estates.

The speech of the hon Leader of the Opposition, on the policy of the Government, relative to that question, gave rise to a considerable discussion.

A Joint Address of the Legislature was adopted in reply to the Despatch from the Home Office, on the subject of His Excellency's Salary. Said Address expresses the unanimous opinion of the Legislature, touching the injustice of calling on the Colony to pay the Salary in question.

Hon Mr Henderson from the Committee to whom was referrd certain petitions, relating to the right to collect and appropriate Sea Weed on the sea shore of this Island, presented the Report of said Committee, to the effect, that they are not prepared to recommend any Legislative action upon the question. That any measure must necessarily—in order to meet the views of some of the Petitioners—make an inroad upon well defined and long established principles of Law, and that such a measure should never be adopted without careful and protracted consideration, which the Committee had not, as yet, been able to give the questions raised by the Petitions referred to in said Report.

House resumed the third reading of the Bill authorizing the Government to appropriate £10,000 to purchase lands.

Hon Leader of the Opposition contrasted the principles of the Bill under consideration, and which had received the sanction of both Houses, with the coercive measure contemplated by the Minute of Council, forwarded to the Colonial Office, with the view of obtaining the consent of the Home Government to a Bill to compel Proprietors to sell their Estates. The reply, however, of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, was, he said, conclusive in refusing to adopt a different policy to that hitherto pursued, and endorsed the policy of former Colonial Ministers on the question. It would appear that the Government had abandoned their compulsory policy, and was now prepared to purchase lands in the usual manner. He condemned the course pursued by the Government in applying to the Colonial Office for permission to submit a Bill, which, if a constitutional and just measure, should have been introduced on the floor of the House, and proceeded with in the ordinary way. He glanced at the early history of the Colony, relative to its Land Tenures, showing that had the Escheat party acted properly they might have succeeded in Escheating some nine Townships. He then submitted a tabular statement from the census taken in the year 1827, showing that on Lot 3, there were but 30 settlers; on Lot 4, 92 do.; on Lot 7, 59 do.; on Lot 8, 39 do.; on Lot 9, 26 do.; on Lot 10, 43 do.; on Lot 51, 12 do.; on Lot 54, 64 do.; on Lot 66, 4 do; and on Lot 67, not even one settler, in the year above named. At that time there might be some reason in the Escheat argument, but now it was too late to entertain the question. He alluded to the views expressed, relative to the Land Tenures in Ireland, by Mr. Bright, the Representative man of the Liberal Party in England, and in conclusion, said he was prepared to support the 3rd reading of the Bill.

Hon Atty General said the arguments used by the hon member who had just sat down, were not in strict accordance with the actual state of the case. His Excellency's Despatch, which accompanied the Minute of Council alluded to, did not infer that the Government had abandoned the policy of the Land Purchase Bill. There was no desire to depart from the usual mode of purchasing, provided the owners of Estates consented to sell on fair and equitable terms. The Bill in question was necessary, in order to enable the Government to purchase any settled Townships, such as Lord Melville's, that might be offered; but regarding the purchase of which, the Government would be powerless without the provisions of that Bill as it could not be expected that improved Township Lands could be bought at the limited price fixed by the Land Purchase Act. He then proceeded to show that the Conservative party had pursued a similar course, relative to the Fifteen Years' Purchase Bill, when they sought to ascertain, not only the views of the Home Government, but also the consent of the Proprietors on that question. He then read extracts to show that the Conservative party had taken steps to ascertain the terms which would receive the sanction of the Imperial Government, and the assent of the Proprietors, stating, as they did, that they had no guarantee that any measure that they might pass would be sanctioned by the Home Government, as their Legislation was liable to be frustrated, from the fact that they were dealing with the vested and acknowledged rights of others; and, also, shewing that in urging the acceptance, by the Proprietors, of certain propositions, the statutory confirmation of Proprietory titles would necessarily have the effect of increasing the value of the Proprietory Estates. Thus, he, (hon Atty General) contended that the course pursued by the present Government in seeking the consent and approval of the Home Government to a compulsory measure, was not novel, nor without a precedent. The object was to try, by fair compensation, to cause private interests to yield, to some extent, to the public good. He alluded to the Land Tenures in Ireland, and said that ere long he believed the question would receive due consideration from the British Parliament.

Mr P. Sinclair said the question before the House was the third reading of the Bill, giving discretionary power to the Government to purchase Proprietory Estates to the amount of £10,000. He approved of the Bill, because there were Township Lands on the Island that could not be purchased under any of the Acts now in operation. Small Proprietors whose Estates were all settled, would not sell for the prices limited by the provisions of the Land Purchase Act, and the tenantry on such Estates would not purchase under the Fifteen Years' Purchase Act. It was therefore necessary, he said, to give discretionary power to the Government to purchase such Estates as Lord Melville's, and others that might be offered. The Tenantry, in many instances, were, he said, anxious to purchase at a higher figure than the Land Purchase Act would allow them, though not willing to pay at the rate of the Fifteen Years' Purchase Bill. Cultivated Estates which are all settled, if purchased at about ten shillings an acre, could be resold by the Government to the Tenantry at as low a price as were the Estates purchased under the Land Purchase Act, on the settled portions of such Estates. Hon members might say—that they considered it great inconsistency on the part of the Government to pass the Bill, after requesting the Secretary for the Colonies to sanction a coercive measure. The object of the Minute of Council alluded to, was to compel Proprietors to sell their Estates at a price proportionate to their value, and the Bill enabled the Government to accept the offer of those that would voluntarily consent to do so. The action of the Government appeared to him to be in both cases perfectly consistent.

A great portion of the day was occupied in Conferences with the Legislative Council.

[The continuation of this day's Debate to be furnished in our next number.]

THURSDAY, April 23.

The greater portion of the day was occupied in Conferences with the Legislative Council, relative to the amendments made by that Body to the Unfortunate Debtors' Act. The House in Committee received the Report of the Committee on Contingent Expenses, the discussion on which took place with closed doors.

[*For Friday's proceedings, see* HERALD *of the 29th April.*]

News by Telegraph.

OTTAWA, April 22.—Baptiste Langlin Lacroix, the French Canadian who saw the murder committed, was taken to jail this morning to see whether he could identify among the prisoners the man who fired the shot. All the prisoners were brought out together, Whelan having previously been dressed in the cap, dark coat and light pants which he is believed to have worn on the night of the murder, and which had been described with great accuracy by Lacroix. As soon as Lacroix was admitted to where the prisoners were, he ran his eye along them, and as soon as it rested upon Whelan, he pointed to him and said, "He was the man." There is no reason to doubt the truth of Lacroix's story about witnessing the murder. His statement that he had been visiting an uncle named Marquette, at Le Breton's Flats, on the night of the murder, has been confirmed, and also the statement that after informing the authorities of what he had seen he had left the city, in consequence of threats made against him by Irishmen living near him on the flats. Last night Mr. O'Reilly took him to the scene of the murder, where he gave a circumstantial account of what he had seen. He said he had reached the second door from O'Connor street on the side of Sparks street, when he saw a man with a hat and carrying a cane passing westward on the opposite side. The man whom Lacroix to-day identified as Whelan, came out of the arch-way next McCormack's store and going on the sidewalk, into the street rapidly followed the first man. On reaching Mr. Trotter's, the first man bent over as if to open the door, when Whelan who was then opposite the door, but not on the sidewalk, raised his arm, and Lacroix saw a puff of smoke and heard the report of a pistol. The man who was fired at fell into the doorway. Whelan then turned and ran back toward the archway, still on the street. After running fifteen or twenty yards he made for the sidewalk and ran against a low kitchen post. As he struck it he cried "Jesus," paused a moment, and then continued running to the arch-way, where he disappeared. Lacroix crouched down to escape observation, fearing he himself might be shot. After Whelan disappeared he went along Sparks street, over the Sapper's Bridge to Lower Town, where his family were then living. He is an ignorant Frenchman, who speaks English imperfectly and seems to have thought little of the occurrence, for he made no mention of it until Thursday or Friday, when he made a statement to the police. They, however, did not attach much importance to what he said, because he was unable to make himself well understood, and he went away. At this time Mr. O'Reilly was absent in Kingston. When he returned and heard about Lacroix he directed the police to procure him, but he was not to be found, having left town because of the threats against his life. It was not till yesterday that he was discovered. Sergt-Mj. Cummins finding him at work nine miles from the city. He was a good deal alarmed lest he should be detained in custody, and was only anxious to go back to his work. He gave a very straightforward story to Mr. O'Reilly last night in the presence of a number of gentlemen, the whole air of the man indicated that he was speaking the truth. It appears that when he witnessed the murder, he must have stood at the door of a vacant house nearly opposite Trotter's. The story is, that Whelan after firing the shot, ran towards this door, but seeing the man standing there turned towards McCormack's archway, and in the eagerness of his flight failed to see the post against which he stumbled. It is supposed he turned into the arch-way until Lacroix went away, and darted across the street to the vacant house. This would account for his presence on Wellington and Elgin streets a few minutes after the murder, and his reaching the Russell House by that route; but it is just as likely he continued down the arch-way, jumped the fence at the end of the yard, and thus got into Queen street, when a couple of minutes' walk would have brought him into Wellington street.—A report of another very important confirmation of Lacroix's evidence is afloat. It is stated that in consequence of his statement respecting the man he saw firing the shot strike himself against a post in running away, it was determined to examine the prisoner to ascertain if there were any mark on his person, and the appearance of a recent blow on his chest was at once discovered. If this statement be correct, this is another very important link in the chain of evidence surrounding Whelan.

OTTAWA, April 25.—Detective Cullen overheard in the cells a conversation between Whelan and Doyle. Whelan told Doyle the whole story of the murder of Mr. McGee. He rested his hopes of escape on a Fenian jury. The whole account is published, and causes a great sensation. Doyle has been committed for trial as an accessory before the fact. Buckley is also implicated.—Nearly all the members of the Senate and House of Commons have subscribed five dollars each to the fund for discharging Mr. McGee's liabilities.—Sanford Fleming has returned from his intercolonial exploration. He reports that he has discovered a more favorable passage over the mountains on the central route.

MONTREAL, April 30.—The nomination for a member to serve in Parliament for Montreal West, vacant by the death of the Hon. D'Arcy McGee, took place to-day, and M. P. Ryan, Esq., an Irish Roman Catholic Merchant of this city, was elected by acclamation.

OTTAWA, April 30.—Debate on Mr. McDonald's resolution, lasted till two o'clock this morning. Holton moved amendment affirming expediency of House going into committee of Nova Scotia grievances. Cartier, McDonald, Antigonishe, Campbell, McLellan, McKenzie, Forbes, Dorion, Sir John and others, took part in debate which excited great interest. Holton's amendment lost, yeas 39, nays 41. Morris' amendment affirming that maintenance of Union was for interest of Empire as well as all Provinces, carried, yeas 110, nays 16. Expected Parliament will be prorogued about middle of May.

LONDON, April 24, eve.—Further particulars of the attempted assassination of Prince Alfred have been received. The culprit was an Irishman named Farrell, who is known to be connected with the Fenian organization. Farrell shot the Prince in the back on the 28th March at Sydney, Australia. The ball was not extracted from the wound until two days afterwards. The wound was dangerous and painful, but the Prince is doing well beyond even the hopes of his physicians. His recovery will necessarily be slow, according to the advices received from his medical attendant. The Prince has sailed for England. The attempted assassination of Prince Alfred has produced the most profound excitement throughout the nation. The press teems with denunciations of the assassin.

LONDON, April 25, eve.—Despatches have been received from Abyssinia, which give the following gratifying and important intelligence:—A battle was fought on Good Friday before Magdala, between the British troops, commanded by Gen. Napier, and the Abyssinian forces under the command of their King in person. The latter were defeated and retreated into the town. Their loss in killed and wounded was very heavy. On the Monday following, all his preparations having been completed, Gen. Napier ordered an assault upon Magdala, and the town and citadel were carried by storm. King Theodore was slain. A large number of warriors were killed, wounded and taken prisoners, and the entire capital remained in possession of the British forces. All the captives were found in the city alive and well, and were set free.

LONDON, April 27.—Details of the Abyssinian news report that the enemies' works were carried after a vigorous resistance. Theodorus lost, during the engagement, sixty men killed and two hundred wounded. The English had fifteen rank and file wounded, after the works were completely carried. Theodorus was found dead by the English soldiers in the centre of his stronghold, he had been shot through the head. Some say he was killed during one of the battles, others incline to the opinion that he committed suicide when he