

A Committee was appointed to prepare an address to His Excellency the Lieut. Governor, that he would be pleased to forward to Lord Lyons, the British Ambassador at Washington a copy of the resolution agreed to by the House on Friday last, in order that the same may be communicated to the President. The Committee—Hons. Messrs Longworth, Colos, Pope, Heneley, and Mr McNeill—in a short time presented a draft address which was agreed to.

The House adjourned, and having again met, were summoned by a message from His Excellency the Lieut. Governor to attend at the Bar of the Council Chamber. His Excellency having, in Her Majesty's name, assented to a number of Bills, prorogued the General Assembly until Thursday, the 6th of June next.

D. LAIRD, Reporter.

[Omitted, after Hon. Col. Gray's speech on the Elective Legislative Council Bill, Page 77.]

Hon. Mr THORNTON.—I rise, Mr Speaker, to support the Bill; I am glad to learn it is a Government measure, as it was not so in 1859. If they learn at Home that we are determined to have an alteration in the constitution of the Legislative Council, I think the Royal allowance will not be withheld from the Bill. I am pleased with the alteration in the Bill since '59, in respect to the number of Councillors for each County. Though Queen's County may now have the preponderance over the two other Counties in wealth and population, such may not be the case in the course of twenty or thirty years. They, in the course of that number of years may rise to an equality, in these respects, with Queen's County. I would have liked the Councillors to have run for the whole County. I am not satisfied with the age a man must have attained,—30 years—before he can offer as a candidate. One of the most talented statesmen in England took the helm of State at the age of 21 years. I shall speak to the details of the Bill in Committee.

Mr COOPER said.—Though in favor of the elective principle, still I am opposed to the power being vested in the people; for, if it be, I consider that the Legislative Chamber will only be a second edition of the House of Assembly. Whatever happens to be the popular opinion of the day, however erroneous it may be, still a Councillor will be elected accordingly,—be elected probably to represent their prejudices. I think the Government, in the first instance, should have the nomination of four or five, and that the remainder should be elected by a two-third vote of this House; and, if that would be insufficient, say a three-fourth vote. No Person of extreme views would then stand a chance of being elected; but a man would be likely to be chosen in whom both sides of the House would repose confidence. By having a Council elective in this manner, the members to go out in rotation, I think there would be a balance wheel in the centre of the Government which would keep it working steadily.

Mr. SINCLAIR.—I am one of those who would be willing to dispense with an upper Chamber altogether. I have been listening attentively and have not yet heard any arguments advanced in favor of the second Chamber which would induce me to change my views on this subject. As regards Bills passing through this branch of the Legislature in an imperfect state, and needing revision in a second branch, I may say I have seen small Bills passing this House in an imperfect state, and the other Chamber also, which when they came down to the lower House again were corrected. If there were no such body, the lower House would be more particular and careful in passing measures; for, frequently, Bills are sent up in an imperfect state, to furnish the second Chamber with some work. I think the hon. member who introduced the Bill has not shown any arguments for the necessity of two Chambers. Another reason why I think there is no reason for the upper House is, that we have no less than four branches with whom to contend. We saw last year a Bill sent to the Colonial Minister, which was returned because he would not submit it for the Royal allowance; so I think it would be a sufficient check to have our laws submitted to the Colonial Minister. Another advantage in having no second Chamber would be in point of expense. In a small Colony like this, not many laws now require to be placed on our Statute Book. If, however, we are to have an elective Legislative Council, I would not offer any objection to the present Bill, for I think it is a great improvement on the one submitted before by the hon. gentleman who brought in the present Bill. In my opinion, if the clause was carried out which removes from the Governor the power to dissolve that body, great injury would result. I understood from the Act passed in Canada that a clause

was introduced to provide against this, in the event of the two branches of the Legislature coming to a dead lock. In that event the Governor had power to dissolve the lower House; and if, notwithstanding, the same thing occurred again when in Session, he had power to dissolve the upper House. If, however, we are to have a second Chamber, I am in favor of an elective one. I believe the present is the time to make a change, and the change, I think, which would prove most beneficial, would be not to have any upper Chamber at all. (Laughter.)

Mr DAVIES.—I certainly think, Mr Speaker, Charlottetown should have a representative in the second Chamber. I say this without disparagement to either Georgetown or Summerside. I believe the City is not fairly represented in the House of Assembly; that is, taking wealth and population as the basis of representation. In Committee I shall propose an amendment to the Bill; that will be, to have one member to represent Charlottetown in the Council, which will make 13 Councillors in all. The views of the hon. member from Princetown are certainly novel, and were his suggestions adopted in reference to the Upper Chamber, the change would be something new in the British constitution. I am in favor of an elective Legislative Council, and think the elective principle would prove much more beneficial than the present system.

Mr CONROY expressed himself in favor of the Bill in the few remarks which he made when speaking on the question before the House.

Hon. Mr WHELAN.—I cannot see, Mr Speaker, any reason why I should change my views, heretofore expressed on this subject, as to the propriety or expediency of the proposed change in the constitution of the upper branch of the Legislature. I see not a sufficient reason for changing the constitution of that branch of the Legislature, though the Council as constituted represents the views and feelings of this House,—notwithstanding that the representative of Her Majesty in this Colony, and his advisers, have craved that Council in defiance of the wishes of the people. Five new Councillors were added last year to carry out their measures, yet when asked to give their authority for so doing, they declined. Though the Government have a Council there obedient to their will, that is not a sufficient inducement to cause me to change my views; for, I shall still oppose a change in the upper branch. The hon. member from the East Point expressed my views in a condensed form a few minutes ago, when he said that an elective Legislative Council would be but a second edition of the House of Assembly. I perfectly coincide with him, for I believe it would only be an echo of the House of Assembly. Suppose, for example, the Bill were to come into operation next year, and the Councillors elected were instructed by their constituents to carry out a policy in reference to the Land Commission directly opposed to the policy advocated by the majority in this Assembly, what position would we be in if the Crown had not power to dissolve that body? They would remain there during the term of years for which they were elected. The same class of voters, in both cases, are to elect members for both branches of the Legislature, and the natural inference is that the candidates for both will receive the same instructions from their constituents; and in that event there would be a continual clashing of interests and opinions between them, and it would be found impossible to reconcile existing differences. It is admitted on all hands, that the elective principle signally failed in Canada. In New Brunswick the principle was advocated on both sides of the House for two or three sessions, and after all, set aside as impracticable.

Adjourned till 10 o'clock to-morrow.