

*Resolved*, That it is the opinion of this Committee, in consideration of the present destitute state of a large portion of the Agricultural population of this Island, and of the necessity which exists for encouraging the Fisheries, there shall not be any duty imposed on Molasses imported into this Island from British or Foreign Plantations, previous to the first day of January next.

Mr. D. McDonald, Hon. Mr. Coles, Mr. D. McLean, and one or two others supported the resolution—the rest of the Committee objecting to it on the ground, that while there are so many demands upon the revenue as this year, the discontinuance of the present duty would be a serious loss to the Treasury, and could not be very conveniently sustained.

The resolution was then put and lost, after which the Speaker took the Chair, the Chairman reported progress and asked leave to sit again.

SATURDAY, April 8.

*Boundary Bill*.—The House went into Committee on an engrossed Bill sent down from the Committee, relative to Boundary lines.

A short debate took place, condemnatory of the Legislative Council, for again throwing out a Bill, sent up by the House, to settle the long pending dispute, relative to certain lands to the westward of the Island.

Mr. Thornton moved that all excepting the first word of the Bill, be struck out, and a former Bill of the House substituted in lieu thereof, which passed unanimously.

WAYS AND MEANS.

*Stoves*.—On motion of Mr. F. Longworth, the House again went into Committee on Ways and Means. Mr. LeLacheur in the chair. On the last sitting of the Committee some hon. member suggested that imported stoves should be admitted on a lower duty than at present.

Mr. Palmer remarked upon the usefulness of the Iron Foundry, and the large capital invested in that establishment; but notwithstanding this, and the enterprising spirit of the owner, he did not believe it was a very profitable concern, and he therefore did not think it would be prudent to leave it to compete at present with foreign manufacturers.

Finally, on motion of Mr. Fraser, and by the casting vote of the chairman, Stoves were placed amongst the articles subject to an *ad valorem* duty only.

*Pig Iron*.—On motion of the hon. Speaker, Pig Iron was placed in the list of exempted articles.

*Bar Iron*.—Mr. F. Longworth thought as Ship Building was so advantageous to the colony, it ought to be encouraged by a reduction of the duty on Bar Iron. He therefore moved that it be reduced one half, upon the quantity used for Ship Building. Motion lost.

*Free Trade with New Brunswick*.—Dr. Conroy said the duty on boards almost amounted to a prohibitor, and should be repealed or reduced.

Mr. Montgomery understood that in New Brunswick the Legislature had laid heavy duties on our exports to that colony; but had offered to trade free with any of the sister colonies. He had given his attention to the subject, and was persuaded it would be to our advantage to accept the offer. Subsequently, the hon. member moved a reciprocity resolution as regarded the trade with New Brunswick, in all things except Spirits; which resolution was carried.

*Live Stock free*.—Mr. Thornton moved that Live Stock imported to improve the breed of the Island, be exempt from duty, which passed without division.

*Insolvent Debtors*.—On motion of Mr. Rae, the Bill to amend the Insolvent Debtors Act, by appointing additional Commissioners, was read a second time,—submitted to a Committee of the whole House, reported agreed to, and ordered to be engrossed.

*Fire Engines*.—Mr. Palmer introduced a Bill to compel persons to assist in drawing fire Engines to and from the spot, wherever a fire may break out.—Bill read a first time,—second reading ordered for Monday next.

*Steamer*.—Mr. J. Longworth presented a Petition, from the inhabitants of the South Shore and West River, praying that, in the event of a Steamer being placed on the Charlottetown Ferry, she should be directed to touch at the South Shore. Petition read, and laid on the table.

*Draining the West end of Charlottetown*.—Mr. Palmer presented a Petition from the inhabitants of the West part of Charlottetown praying aid, to assist in draining that part of the Town. On motion it be received, the House divided ayes 8 nays 9; so it passed in the negative.

*Road Service*.—The Scales of appropriation for the Road service in the different Districts, were submitted to a Committee of the whole House, with which the remainder of the day was occupied.

*Treasury*.—Hon. Mr. Coles moved for an extension of time to the Committee appointed to investigate the Treasury affairs; and also that a Message be sent to H. M. Legislative Council requesting them to permit the hon. T. H. Haviland and his Honor the President to be examined before the Committee. Agreed to.

*Post Office*.—Mr. Thornton moved an Address to His Excellency, requesting, him to lay before the House any correspondence that may be in his possession, and

that may have passed between the Post Master and the late Governor. Agreed to.

MONDAY, April 10th.

*Embargo question*.—The House met at ten o'clock, when the Journals having been read, Mr. Mooney rose and presented two petitions, praying the House to place an Embargo on Grain and Potatoes. The hon. member spoke at some length on the expediency and necessity of the House adopting the prayer of the Petitioners; it every day becoming more and more evident, that great scarcity and want prevail to an alarming degree. Petitions referred to Committee to report on Destitution.

*Subdivision of Road Money*.—On motion of Mr. Thornton the House went into Committee on the scales of appropriation for the road service. Mr. Montgomery in the Chair.

Mr. Rae moved that no contract of greater value than two pounds be let on the roads by Commissioners; which was agreed to, as was also another motion offered by the hon. Speaker, that no one person be allowed to take more than two contracts.

When the Scale of Subdivision on all matters relating to Roads and Bridges was reported to the House, Mr. Fraser moved the Resolution hereinafter inserted; when it was contended by Messrs. Rae, Montgomery, Clark, and some others, that the Resolution was inadmissible—it being contrary to the Rules of the House to give reasons as the Resolution set forth. Mr. Fraser contended that the Resolution was quite in place, and could show precedents from the Journals, if it was necessary, to justify his procedure; and mentioned as one the Resolution submitted this Session in the case of Dr. Hobkirk, which was only a supposition; whereas the Resolution now submitted related undeniable facts. The Resolution not being seconded, Mr. Fraser then moved that the sum of £40 be deducted from Districts Nos. 4 & 5, and added to District No. 3, and the question being put, the House divided, yeas, Messrs. Fraser and D. McLean; Nays, 17.

*Resolved*, That the money appropriated for Prince County is not fairly divided; and that allowing one half of the money given to the whole County to be expended in Districts Nos. 4 & 5, which consist only of 61.5 Township is not in just or fair proportion to the remaining 17 Townships,—and it is therefore expedient that the Scale of Subdivision, so far as relates to that County, be altered,—and that the sum of £40, abstracted from District No. 3, and added to the two former Districts, be restored and expended in said District No. 3, where most indispensably required.

*Division of Prince County Road Districts Nos. 1 & 2*.—Mr. N. Conroy moved a resolution to divide the above Districts into three, and to appoint an additional Commissioner. After a short debate, on motion of Mr. Montgomery, the resolution was withdrawn.—The Committee then rose.

*Destitution*.—House again in Committee on the report of the special Committee appointed to investigate the causes of the existing Destitution in the Island. The failure in the crops was reported to be the principal cause. In the course of debate, some hon. members contended, that the leasehold tenure ought to be considered one of the principal causes of destitution,—others argued, that most of the distress amongst the tenantry might be fairly attributed to the short leases given them by their landlords, as they would not bestow any great labour or improvement upon farms, of which, in a few years, they would find themselves dispossessed.—The last paragraph of the report recommended the introduction of a Bill next Session, to impose a tax on the estates of the Proprietors,—to be used, when necessity demanded it, in relieving distress amongst the settlers. Mr. Thornton moved to superadd to the report, a paragraph declaring that the practise of leasing lands for short periods of time, contributed to impoverish the holders, inasmuch as no advances would be made to them by private individuals, on the security of a short lease. Several amendments were offered, but did not pass, and Mr. Thornton's motion was finally agreed to.—The Speaker then took the Chair, and the House adjourned.

TUESDAY, April 11.

BILL TO ENCOURAGE THE COD FISHERY.

House in Committee on the above Bill.—Mr. H. McDonald in the Chair. The clause which provides for a Bounty having been read—

Mr. Clark, who was opposed to the Bill and intended to vote against it in all its stages—moved that the Bounty be sixpence per quintal.

Mr. Whelan said that if the House would not legislate in a more liberal spirit on the subject of a Bounty, than the hon. member from Princetown was disposed to do, it would be better that the Bill should never go into operation. He (Mr. W.) would never vote for the paltry bounty offered by the hon. member, nor even would he consider a shilling per quintal any thing like a liberal encouragement to a branch of Trade—which, if once established, on a good footing, would, to a certainty, become the means of adding to the wealth, and giving an impetus to the prosperity, of the country. He trusted the House would bear in mind the very fair inducements held out to speculators in this trade by the Governments of other Countries—the British Government, in the infancy of the trade, in any of the colonies, gave bounties, and encouraged it by relieving from Duty such articles of food and clothing as were

most generally used by fisherman.—France gave her trade in fish an impetus by bounties, which he believed was without example; and he hoped that the Legislature of this colony—small as its resources were—would give that just consideration to the measure to which its great importance entitled it. One clause in the Bill provided that a bounty be given to persons who would export not less than 500 quintals each to the West Indies, or to any foreign country; and he (Mr. W.) thought that a bounty of four shillings would not be an extravagant appropriation of the public money, and only such a one as would be sufficient to stimulate merchants to prosecute the trade with zeal and enterprise; because it is not to be supposed that they would commence such a trade upon a small capital—attended by risk and delay—without some fair prospect of success: For every quintal he exported, the merchant would be compelled to pay about five shillings as a freight charge; and if the Government of the Colony allowed him four, he would still have many heavy expenses to bear. It is idle, he said, to suppose that the country would sustain any loss by the granting of such a bounty: on the contrary, a direct gain would ensue, for exporters would lay out the money which they would receive for their fish, in the purchase of West Indian produce, the duties upon which would more than counterbalance the amounts given as bounties. It might be said, that few persons could procure full cargoes of fish; but the smaller merchants, would, no doubt, be ready to put their ventures together, as to do so would not be contrary to the meaning or spirit of the act, and the bounty could be claimed by one of the party. If (he continued) it would not at all times be convenient to procure full cargoes of fish, Island agricultural produce, lathwood and shingles, would always find a ready market in the West Indies; and many persons, who could not give to the merchants potatoes or grain in payment of their debts, could supply them with the other articles mentioned, and which were often shipped by Halifax and other merchants to the West Indies. He concluded by moving that four shillings per quintal be inserted in the clause.

Mr. Thornton was convinced of the importance of establishing a trade with the West Indies; and if a bounty were to be given at all, he thought it should be one calculated to effect that object, and enable the fishermen to share in it. He was opposed to a small bounty, which hitherto had gone into the pocket of the merchant, and not to the person who caught the fish: and if a bounty was at all admissible, it ought to be to such an extent as to encourage a trade with the West Indies or other parts. He would therefore support Mr. Whelan's motion.

Mr. F. Longworth thought two shillings would be a fair bounty, and observed that 20 years ago, it was one shilling and sixpence, leaving to the exporter the privilege of shipping it wherever he pleased.

Mr. Whelan agreed with the hon. member from Murray Harbour (Mr. Thornton) that the fishermen ought to derive some benefit from the bounty; and if the House agreed to a liberal bounty, the Merchant would thereby be enabled to give the catcher a better price for his fish. This the merchant could not do, unless, a bounty of four or five shillings were given.

Mr. McIntosh would support the Bill. Had its operation, however, not been deferred till next year, he would have felt himself compelled to oppose it, because there were so many other demands upon the revenue. Besides, it being deferred until next year, merchants would be better able to complete their preparations to enter extensively upon the trade which the Bill was calculated to encourage.

Mr. Rae was of opinion that unless a bounty be given upon the catch, a sure and profitable trade could never be established. He questioned the propriety of restricting the merchant to the West Indies. He did not despair of a trade being established: for it required no extraordinary ingenuity; and one of the great advantages which would result from its establishment, would be the increase of food for the inhabitants of the Island. It could not be supposed that this Island was in a position to compete with the fishermen of Newfoundland or Nova Scotia; but, notwithstanding all our disadvantages—the absence of capital, and the want of men adapted, by long practice, to the trade,—still he thought that something might be done; and it was therefore expedient and wise to encourage the trade. He considered that if a bounty were given to the fisherman who caught 20 or 30 quintals, the fishery would be more extensively carried on, than if the bounty were given to the exporter. He suggested that it ought to be compulsory on the exporter who would claim the bounty to bring a return cargo,—for unless he did, no essential benefit would result to the Island from his exportation.

Mr. Whelan replied at some length. With reference to his hon. friend's suggestion, that a bounty be given to the catcher, he was not unfavourable to it; but having learned that a majority of the House did not agree with him in this respect, he, therefore, thought it useless to introduce a clause into the Bill providing for such a bounty.

Mr. LeLacheur would not agree to a higher bounty than 1s. 6d. per quintal, and he was certain that the revenue this year was too small to give more. He was sorry for this; but still he thought the bounty last proposed would be an encouragement, and he had no doubt that merchants would readily avail themselves of it.

The hon. Speaker did not think that all the bounties ever given for the fishery trade, were worth one farthing