

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

SATURDAY, February 4.

The greater part of this day was spent by the House in Committee of the whole, on the expediency of consolidating and amending the Small Debt Acts—Mr. Fraser in the chair. A Resolution was finally adopted, ordering a Bill to be brought in for that purpose, embracing the principle of extending the jurisdiction of the Commissioners to sums not exceeding Ten Pounds, exclusive of interest, and providing for taking the depositions of witnesses about to leave the Island—to render it obligatory on all Commissioners to appoint Clerks; Clerks not to issue Summonses until the fees are paid. On appeals, unless good cause be shown that witnesses could not be produced in the Court below, no new evidence to be allowed in the Supreme Court. A proposal, that the term of office of the present Commissioners should cease and determine with the existing Laws, was negatived, 11 to 10. Several other amendments of a minor nature were also resolved upon.

Messrs. Thornton, D. Macdonald, Wightman, the Hon. J. S. Macdonald, Messrs. Montgomery, Rae and Longworth, were then appointed a Committee to prepare and bring in a Bill accordingly.

Mr. A. Maclean presented a Petition from the Wood Islands Settlement, praying a grant of £15 towards completing a Road from the Murray Harbour Road to the shore—also, a Petition from the settlers on the Wood Island Road, praying pecuniary aid towards opening a Road from the upper Wood Island Road to the harbour of Pinette—also, a Petition from the inhabitants of Murray Harbour Road Settlement, praying an aid towards the completion of the Road from the said Settlement, on the North side of Montague River, to Georgetown.

Mr. Hudson presented a Petition from divers inhabitants of Lot 28, and others, praying an aid to improve that part of the old Tryon Road on the said Township, between the County Line and the Main Road to Tryon.

Mr. Fraser, from the Committee appointed to wait upon His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor, with the Message, desiring to be informed whether any information had been received as to the opinion of the Crown Officers on the subject of the Fishery Reserves in this Island, reported the delivery thereof, and that His Excellency was pleased to say, that a Despatch had been received, but that it was not sufficiently explicit to warrant him in laying it before the House, as the Crown Officers required to be furnished with copies of the Grants before giving a final opinion on the subject.

MONDAY, February 6.

Mr. Speaker laid before the House, in compliance with a Message of the House to the Lieut. Governor, Returns from the different Small Debt Commissioners throughout the Island, of the number of cases decided in their respective Courts in the year 1842, and the amount of Fees by them received for the same period.

The returns are not quite complete, several of the Commissioners having not yet complied with the requisition sent to them by the Lieutenant Governor. We subjoin a list of those which have been sent in:—

Table with columns: Name, No of Cases tried, Fees received. Includes entries for Charlottetown, Hillsborough, Lot 49, Cherry Valley, Belfast, Rustico, Casumpeque, Egmont Bay, Bedeque, St. Eleanor, Tryon, Georgetown, Murray Harbour, St. Peter's Bay, Souris.

The remainder of the day was spent in Committee on the Bill for consolidating and amending the Statute Labour Laws.

TUESDAY, February 7.

Mr. Wightman, by leave, introduced a Bill to compel persons appointed to the office of Constable, to serve as such. A Bill of a similar nature was passed by the Legislative Council last year, but rejected by the House of Assembly by a large majority.

A motion, that the Bill to amend the Marriage Act be now read for the third time, was negatived—Yeas, 6; Nays, 12. The objections to the Bill were, that in no case where either of the parties desirous of contracting marriage shall be under the age of 21 years, shall a licence be granted without the written consent of the parents or guardians, together with an affidavit in verification of the signatures thereto; and when the parties are above the age of 21 years, a certificate thereof must be produced from the nearest Magistrate or Clergyman, let the age of the parties be what it may. It is not improbable but that the Bill will be again introduced in a new shape.

The Bill to continue the Act relating to the Limits and Rules of the several Jails was returned from the Council, with an amendment, to the effect, that the Prison limits in Charlottetown and Georgetown should not include the Wharves nor Water Lots. The amendment was disagreed to by the House, and a Conference will be held with the Council on the subject thereof.

The remainder of the day was spent in Committee on the Statute Labour Bill.

WEDNESDAY, Feb. 8.

CALL OF THE HOUSE.

After reading the journal, a call of the House took place this morning, when all the members answered to their names, with the exception of Mr. Yeo, who was absent without leave.

The Order of the Day, for the second reading of the Bill to secure to ejected Settlers, or occupiers of Land, compensation for improvements made at their own cost being read—

Mr. THORNTON said he would be as brief as possible. The Bill had already been before the House ten days, and members would see the necessity of giving compensation to settlers who had cleared land for which there was no ostensible owner. It would be a hard case if they were turned adrift at any period less than forty years' possession, without any remuneration for their time and labour. There was no agent for half of Lot 45; part of Lot 52 was also unclaimed. Three Lots were held by Attorneys, for persons beyond the seas, but they grant no leases. The late agent of Mr. Sullivan was not authorised to grant leases or agree-

ments, with the exception of the last two years that he was in office. Lot 66 was formerly claimed by two proprietors; but the tenants have no leases. On Lots 30 and 12, in the like manner, though long settled, the tenants are tenants at will, and liable to be turned adrift. They get a kind of agreement, but this is no protection. This Bill goes to provide compensation for those who have, by their labour, rendered the land valuable. The only plausible objection he heard advanced against the Bill was, that it was prospective. It might be thought by some that it attacked the rights of property—this was by no means his desire, nor was it the case. It went rather to put down agitation, and those who were real proprietors should encourage it. It went to protect the landlord as well as the tenant. No one can reasonably object to the measure, as no one who has got a valid lease can claim compensation under it. He hoped hon. members would see the justice and necessity of such a measure, and view it in a spirit of calm deliberation. He moved that the Bill be now read a second time.

Mr. COOPER rose to second the motion. His only objection to the Bill was, that though it went to redress the grievances of one class of the people, it brought no remedy to others, who were in as bad a state as squatters. The provisions of the Bill should do equal justice to other tenants, as well as to squatters. It extends indulgence to the Grantees, who promised to pay the Civil List, and neglected to do so, to exact rents. They let their lands at a high rent, and gave short leases, so that tenants are liable to lose their improvements; they are, in fact, only tenants at will, and he contended that by this Bill those on 20 or 40 years' lease would be in a worse state than squatters. Hon. members should make the Bill more general by extending its provisions to tenants under high rents and short leases.

Mr. COOPER said he was in favour of the principle of the Bill. He was desirous to extend protection to the persons named in it. He did not, at the same time, wish to confound resident proprietors with absentees. Cases had occurred, where proprietors put persons on their land, and afterwards refused to give them leases; such landlords should be made to pay for the improvements made by those persons. Poor emigrants arriving from Great Britain and Ireland were ignorant of the tenure of land on the Island, and proprietors' agents sometimes take advantage of this, and exact what terms they please. After this Bill goes into operation, proprietors will be able to eject squatters, on 12 months' notice. He would vote in favour of the Bill.

Mr. DOUSE said he was sorry to hear the hon. member who last spoke make so light of private property. Shall proprietors be put to the expense of ejecting every one who chooses to settle on his land without his permission? He heard one Matthew was owner of half Lot 45, but said he knew not who was the right proprietor of it. He (Mr. Douse) resided there 15 years ago, and believed all the shore front was taken up, and he would consider it a hard case if the present occupants were turned off without any remuneration for their labour. Those proprietors who feel so little interest in their property as not to appoint agents to look after it, he did not mean to defend. Such lands should have been re-vested in the Crown long ago, and he wondered the Crown Officers did not see to it. He agreed that those who improved the land at their own expense should have compensation given them; but he was not prepared to follow all the visionary schemes of the agitators. Lot 52 was little regarded by its owners, and the persons settled on it should be protected. Lot 30 belongs to Mr. Stewart; the title was in dispute, but part of it was settled with tenants of 60 years, at one-shilling rent. He did not know if the agents had full power to grant leases. He knew the agents were particular in their choice of tenants; persons from the South of Scotland, and the North of England, were preferred, and that was the reason, perhaps, for the refusal to grant leases to those of a different description. Proprietors do wrong where they do not grant leases. Escheat was now happily done away with, and he would wish, with all his heart, to see the country settled, and would go every length for that purpose. But he believed the present Bill was a sort of second Escheat Bill. As far as unclaimed land was concerned, he would go, but no farther; but by this Bill, if a fellow wishes to leave the country, to go to Van Dieman's Land, for instance, he has only to give the landlord notice, and he gets compensation. All the tenant has to do is to leave it to arbitration, so that if this Bill pass, there would be no end to disputes.

Mr. WIGHTMAN said he felt inadequate to express himself on the subject. He knew large tracts of land without a proprietor. Poor people emigrating to this country retired to the wilderness, and after subduing the forest, and expecting a lease, after 15 or 20 years labour, the proprietor may send them off about their business, if they do not submit to what terms he pleases, or he gives them an agreement, and says "now you are my tenant, you must pay me two shillings an acre for a 40 years' lease." This is a hard case, and such persons ought to have compensation.

"What is friendship but a name,
A charm that lulls to sleep;
A shade that follows wealth and fame,
And leaves the wretch to weep!"

The poor man should be required for his improvements. He should get a long lease on moderate terms, and the produce of the country taken in the rent.

Mr. D. MACLEAN wished to know who the right owners were. Why had they not registered their names? He was convinced all the land in the Island was liable to be escheated. Laws opposed to common sense should and would be repealed. The tenants suffer from the impositions of the claimants of land, who ought to be punished. Some hon. members thought the Escheat an end; but he assured them it was not. It would be very hard to prove who was the right owner.

The Hon. Mr. PALMER said the present Bill involved the great question of right between landlord and tenant that had so long agitated the country, and should meet the serious consideration of the House. Many measures were proposed in the late House, for the purpose of giving relief to the settler from the state of the tenure, but they have all failed, in consequence of the excesses and violent measures of the majority of the late House, which, by this means, lost that political influence which it should everywhere carry with it. He hoped the present House would go a great way to redeem the lost character and influence of the late one. Any measure, having regard to the constitutional right of property, that proposed a practical remedy to those worthy of consideration, he would willingly concur in. There was certainly more force in the reasoning of the hon. member for Georgetown (Mr. Thornton) than in the language of his bill. There was a kind of fourth estate acknowledged to exist in the mother country, who associate, and naturally enough, for mutual protection, to oppose the spoliation of property. The lands of many of the proprietors are fully settled by long leases and at moderate rents. And why introduce such a measure as to include these? Reason would tell us we could not interfere with the rights of property situated as these; he therefore considered some of the observations that fell from hon. members uncalled for. He allowed that cases of hardship existed—for instance, squatters who were willing to take leases, but could not, for want of knowing whom they should pay; he considered it hard to turn such away without compensation, and in such cases he would go heart and hand to provide a remedy. Again, a proprietor who laid by, and suffered his land to remain unsettled and unrepresented, until it was rendered valuable at the expense of others, and who would pay nothing for the improvements of the honest settler, he would not wish to see screened; he would willingly intercept his avarice; he would reply to him, "you shall not eject without first offering compensation;" but he would not go the length of the Bill, as now worded. It was hastily penned. If it go into operation, as now worded, it would have a sweeping effect, and tend to violate every principle of law, and introduce confusion into the affairs of the Island. In its present state, it would not obtain his approbation. [Here the hon. gentleman read extracts from the Bill.] If the provisions of the Bill extend to persons who were not settled, they also extend to those who were. If one enters under an agreement, notwithstanding it will operate on that. He would go so far with the Bill as it did not interfere with private rights. He had no desire to maintain a conflict with the other branches of the legislature, by erecting experimental courts of enquiry, such as three arbitrators to decide on titles to estate. Let us leave them to the decision of the judicial tribunals already established, and in the usual manner, by a jury of the country. The persons so circumstanced as described in the Bill should first prove he tendered a fair compensation, or a lease at a reasonable rent; so far he would admit the principle of the Bill, and to such parties he would allow it. Some agents induced persons to sign memorandums of agreement, and then made the settler attend, and compelled him to comply with his terms, though no length of lease was mentioned. He would redress any fraudulent agreement, and would go the length to allow a lease for a reasonable term and reasonable rent. But if we wish the Bill to become law, we must be careful how we pass it. Let us allow just principles first—though limited—and then extend its provisions afterwards, if confirmed. It should be so guarded as not to trench on the rights of property. It was an acknowledged principle, that "there was no wrong without a remedy." The law is competent to give damages for any breach of agreement in a Court of Law; and in a Court of Equity, the fulfilment of the agreement can be enforced wherever clear agreements exist. If it be said that law courts are too expensive, it would follow that there was one law for the rich and another for the poor. Circumspection is required, if we wish to see it passed. When the Bill comes before the Committee, he would offer such amendments as the case required.

Mr. MACAULAY observed, that it was extremely unfortunate for

P. E. Island that such a Bill as the present had not been passed long ago; it would secure to the honest settler a remuneration for his labour and improvements. This Bill takes a medium course between two extremes. It has truth and justice for its support. It is a necessary measure to protect those who were made merchandise of by those who were imposing upon poor settlers, and go to secure to the tenant the benefit of his industry, whether he hold by lease or purchase, from those who had no title, and it would be very improper for the legislature to pass over such things. There are always two parties to an agreement, and the landlord should be left to its operation; but he should extend mercy to a poor worthy tenant. Those who have good titles need not fear the effects of the Bill; but nominal proprietors may tremble for their property and integrity; and if their titles be not legal, why should we support their illegality? The Bill may be improved in Committee. Some inaccuracies may exist, but he would go with the principle of the Bill.

Mr. THORNTON was glad to hear the principle of the Bill admitted. He did not think it necessary to reply to the wild, visionary objections of some members; but he feared the Hon. member for Charlottetown will submit some improvements when in Committee that may injure the Bill. He wished to adopt what could be carried. We are not going to interfere between good landlords and tenants; it was far from his intention. A member for Queen's County (Mr. Douse) said, if a tenant was going to leave the country, he must receive compensation. The Bill does not contemplate that. He need not be afraid; we are not going to attack the property of the Earl of Selkirk. He felt surprised at such a misconstruction of the clauses of the Bill. If some party at home fancy he sees by writing, &c., he has a claim to half lot 45, or pretends a claim, he writes to some one to act as his agent, who tells the settler to attend to him; he is obliged to succumb, or abide the consequences. Such leases given by persons who had no authority, are those which the Act contemplates the remedy of, and such are the persons that would be compelled to pay compensation. He considered arbitration better than an appeal to law Courts. The poor man generally suffers in them. He would be glad to hear what other hon. members had to say.

Mr. MACINTOSH said he was happy to hear it acknowledged that something was wrong on the Island. He never felt any desire for extreme measures, but was opposed to them. (Hear!) He wanted to see security given to those who cleared the land, instead of allowing it to remain over-run with "clumpets" of trees. He was glad to see honest people coming forward to advocate the popular cause; for himself, he was hardly allowed to be honest in what he advocated (a laugh). Still, he was of the same opinion. He would do justice to all parties, and he knew justice was not done to those who improved the land. He could hardly tell whether the inhabitants of Lots 41 and 42 are squatters or tenants. They hold by agreements of 40 years' lease, at two shillings an acre; they have no other title to it, except possession itself. From Government the settler gets possession by paying the fees only. We are unfortunately situated, compared with other countries. If the conditions of the Grants were complied with, proprietors would have a valid claim; but they were not, and when the land is rendered valuable, by the labour of the industrious settler, then they set up their claims. How can any one say Escheat is done with? It is part of the constitution, and the people have as good a right to it as ever; and it never will be done away with until justice is done. He hoped to live long enough to see the whole Island escheated. He hoped they would do practical justice to the people. He would support the Bill.

The Bill was thereupon read a second time.—Adjourned until 3 o'clock.

The House met at 3 o'clock, pursuant to adjournment, and resolved itself into a Committee of the whole, on the Bill to secure to ejected settlers or occupiers of Land compensation for improvements made at their own cost—Mr. Beaisiro in the chair.

Mr. COOPER said he understood the provisions of the Bill were intended to relieve the settlers on half Lot 45, Lots 30 and 66, but not the tenantry of other Lots. Some were of opinion it could not refer to other tenants. He would state what had transpired between the Government and House of Assembly. A Mr. Young, of Halifax, proposed, in the name of certain proprietors, terms to the tenantry. From the tenor of certain despatches from the home Government, it is certain an amicable adjustment of the disputes between landlord and tenant was intended. (Here the hon. gentleman read from the Journals the following extracts):

From Lord Glenelg's Despatch, August, 1838—"You will, of course, understand that Her Majesty's Government have not directed Sir Charles Augustus Fitz Roy to interfere in any authoritative manner between the proprietors and their tenants, but have merely sanctioned such a mediation, on his part, as may appear most likely to restore harmony between all parties, and to promote the peace and welfare of the Island."

Extract from Lord John Russell's Despatch, of Sept. 17th, 1839—"With reference to the third proposal, viz: a heavy penal tax on wilderness land, I should be unwilling to adopt it at the moment, so soon after the imposition of a tax of the same description, and until it had been clearly proved that no remedy was to be expected from the influence of that tax, and from the disposition of the proprietors to come to an equitable arrangement with the tenantry. I regret to find that from the slow progress which has hitherto been made, there is so much reason to doubt the willingness of the proprietors, in regard to a conventional settlement of the question. I had hoped, from a statement contained in a letter which has been lately received from an extensive proprietor, Mr. Canard, that the proprietary body generally participated in the earnest desire felt by that gentleman himself to meet the wishes of the Government."

It was clear from this that Government contemplated a conventional settlement of the question, but this Bill will leave the business as it was before. The tenantry were oppressed, and it was for us, as a new House, to see if we can carry out any thing for the good of the country that would meet the views of the gentlemen in the other end of the building. He would propose an amendment that would include tenants paying heavy rents: he wanted to see them protected also. He thought the leaving it to arbitration contrary to the constitution (hear). Trial by Jury was the bulwark of the people's rights. He had amendments, in short, a new Bill, to propose. If the House would permit, he wished the gentleman who had copied his amendments to read them to the Committee. Whereupon Mr. D. Macdonald read the amendments, which were of such a nature as to entirely supersede the original Bill.

Mr. D. MACDONALD said such a Bill as he had read should pass. Let us go into the question. The former Bill would serve those on Lot 45—there might be 70 or 80 on that half-Township, and it might be of great service to them; but we ought to go the whole length; we should not lose sight of those tenants by whose labour the Island was improved. He would second the amendments.

Mr. DOUSE thought the hon. member (Mr. Cooper) was determined to "go the whole hog;" he thought, as he was going to make such a clear sweep, he should provide for the agents; it was the most ridiculous Bill imaginable.

Mr. MACINTOSH observed, that there was no fear that Agents would not provide for themselves, wherever they were, or let what would happen. He gave the hon. member (Mr. Douse) credit for taking good care of himself.

Hon. Mr. PALMER said, those who wish to carry this measure into effect never will submit to the amendments. Such a measure would sweep away every contract between the landlords and the tenants. He was sorry Mr. Cooper would not support a Bill that would pass the Legislature. Let us keep within the bounds of the Bill as it is. He approved of that part of it that relieved the tenants. He would not suffer to see tenants ejected cease leases, or compensation for the improvements they might have made. But he could recognize many things in the Bill highly objectionable, which will not be carried through the House. The Bill applies to three classes, viz: Squatters, those who were induced to take leases from pretending claimants, and tenants at will. Now, we cannot adjudicate about tenants at will. We are able to decide according to the laws of the country. Neither does the Bill state what quantity of land should fall under the operation of the Bill—whether 100 or 500 acres. It makes no distinction between proper and improper agents, nor between those who are the real proprietors, and those who are not. It cannot be put into operation, unless the tenant demands compensation. He said he had a draft of a Bill that would meet the wants and exigencies of the country, and would be approved of by the other branches of the Legislature. It prescribes that the landlord should tender a lease, which, if the tenant refuse, he is not to be entitled to remuneration at law. He would read it to the House, and hoped the House would adhere to moderate principles. The House lost its influence—it was degraded—by the acts of the late House. How are our acts received at home? Let us do good to the country, if ever so little. The prosperity of the Island depends upon our exertions. We shall then redeem our character. We will lose our power at home if we follow the course of the former House. The hon. member then read his Bill, and said it was only hastily drawn up. He did not give it particular Townships. By it we would shake off the oppression of the proprietors. The wolves would then be picked out. If such

a Bill as Mr. Cooper's were passed, owing to its sweeping character the proprietors would rally, and thwart its passing. Those who gave leases need not fear. Let the guilty fight the law, and let them defend themselves. He knew several Townships where the inhabitants endured many hardships, and he would give length, warranted by the consideration of the rights of property to grant them redress. Juries naturally lean to the side of the tenant—he need not, therefore, fear to go to Court with his landlord—neither need landlords fear the tribunals of the country. Persons who attend without terms in writing are tenants at will; but we cannot meddle with leases, for that would be to meddle on private property; but parties have a remedy at law, and in private terms is mentioned by the agent, but the rent is prescribed the term of years, and no more.

(The remainder of the Debate will be given in our next.)

DREADFUL ACCIDENT AT CALCUTTA.—One of the most dreadful accidents that has ever been known in Calcutta occurred in the old China Bazaar, in the month of October last. Mr. Hudson, son of Mr. N. Hudson, of the Supreme Court, had gone to a shop a little beyond the place where hats are sold, and just at the north-west end of the street which runs into Doomtollah, for the purchase of gunpowder. Mr. Hudson was in a buggy accompanied by two other gentlemen, who remained in the vehicle at the shop door, while Mr. Hudson entered to bargain for the article. The surviving witness of the transaction is a boy belonging to the opposite shop, who could from his position look into the shop where Mr. Hudson was, and who saw some powder shown to him by the powder vender. He saw Mr. Hudson thrust his hand into what he believed to have been an open barrel of gunpowder, and take out a handful of its contents. Mr. Hudson was then seen to raise his hand, as if to examine what he had taken out, and immediately the boy saw a small blaze produced, and immediately the explosion of the powder in Mr. Hudson's hand, by contact with the lighted end of a cigar which he was smoking. It is believed, that as the powder in his hand blazed, Mr. Hudson jerked his hand instinctively, and thus communicated the fire to the barrel which stood near him. In an instant the entire shop, with one or two other shops on each side adjoining, were blown up into the air, and masses of masonry, rubbish and timbers flew in all directions. All the number of the shops were buried in the ruins, together with a number of passengers in the street, who were seriously injured, many of them mortally injured, and have since died. Mr. Hudson perished among the rest, and from the position in which he was found, which was near the entrance of the ill-fated shop, his body being completely demolished, with his face on his boots, it is believed that, notwithstanding the blast from the powder, he made an effort to get to the street, but was intercepted by the fall of ruins over him. The unfortunate young man's apparel was almost destroyed by the blaze, and the only things found on him were his boots, a prayer-book, which was in one of his pockets, and a pen-knife and keys. The parts of his person which escaped disfigurement were his face and feet. The remains of Mr. Hudson were interred the next day by his friends, though much to the subsequent displeasure of the coroner, whose warrant for removal had not been obtained. Immediately after the occurrence, the police, headed by Messrs. Alsop and Nacanna, were on the spot, and with the assistance of coolies and some European seamen, succeeded in clearing away a great portion of the ruins, and extracting several bodies. There were no less than thirty-five persons injured by this most dreadful occurrence, twelve of whom were found dead on the spot. There was one poor man found buried alive among the ruins, with only his head above. He was extricated and removed to the hospital, and is expected to survive. A native woman who was passing the street at the same time, got her leg so seriously fractured by one of the timbers thrown up by the explosion, that she required the amputation of that limb. The majority of the injured were scorched by the blaze. Of these no less than twenty-two, inclusive of Mr. Hudson, are dead; among the remaining thirteen, out of thirty-five in the hospital, several were in a precarious state up to Saturday evening. The agonies of some of these unfortunate creatures, who were dreadfully scorched, were pitiful indeed, to many of the death has indeed been a deliverance from pain. A lady and a child who were passing that way at the time, are believed to have been thrown out of their pliancy by the shock, and are believed to have suffered serious injury; but they have been unable to learn who they were, or the extent of their misfortune. The shock produced by the explosion was great, as not only to have been felt in all the surrounding buildings, but in many at a distance. Some of the houses in Rada Bazaar and Olive-street (that are said to have experienced it very severely). It ought to be stated, that the companions of Mr. Hudson most providentially escaped. The buggy horse at the first flash of the powder took fright, and ran away, and thus put those in the buggy beyond the danger which otherwise they must have shared. An officer was held by the corner, and the jury repaired to the College to inspect the bodies, where few juries could behold a sight more painfully revolting than they there beheld. There were twenty-one stiff and scorched up corpses lying side by side, some of them presenting the most shocking appearance of disfigurement.—Bombay Times.

ABOLITION OF PEWS IN ST. MARGARET'S CHURCH, Ipswich.—The Suffolk Chronicle contains an interesting report of the proceedings of a vestry meeting, held in St. Margaret's Church, Ipswich, for the purpose of abolishing the propriety of removing the pews of the church, and substituting open benches in their stead, with a view to the expressed by the originator of the meeting, W. C. F. Esq., of throwing down all distinction between rich and poor among the parishioners, and destroying assumptions of property in pews held by faculty, prescriptive right, or tenure." The meeting was fully attended; the incumbent of the parish took the chair; and the proposition was carried unanimously, and the incumbent, who, by making himself "teetered" to "give up, for general purposes, the pew in the church which had been in his family for five generations, and for upwards of a century," was adopted by a very large majority. The doors of the pews are to be forthwith removed, and the church will be open to all. The proposition on this change was put by its proposer upon its true merits. All private property in a church is an abuse. It is the property of the people for the service of religion. It is the sacredness of equality. When the churches were Roman Catholic they were free, and so should they be under the Protestantism which succeeded to their possession. The present church, which did not build them, can afford to keep them open. The theology expect entirely to escape that desire for redress, which, notwithstanding the checks and restraints which it endures, still characterizes the present age. The proposition was well put by Mr. Fonnereau in the conclusion of his successful appeal to the parishioners. There was some dissent, but a sort of opposition which may be expected from the prevailing foible of the national character. Not every one can part with his own spiritual peculium in so public a manner, and truly christian a manner as Mr. Fonnereau has done. Longing, lingering looks were cast upon the distinguished Lieut. Thacker, R. N. was sorely grieved at the proposition with "certain little conveniences," as he described them, without which he feared he could not do his duty. He said, as well as heretofore, "I have," said he, pathetically, "written for my books, but under the new system I shall have to give up my books to a schoolboy, for I must carry a bag of my books to and from the church." Does the Lieut. Thacker fear that Heaven will take him for a schoolboy, and forget that he has the honour of holding the post of a clergyman's commission? Has he any lurking apprehensions of danger to his soul in looking like a lawyer's clerk? Or is the profession is not altogether immaculate; but yet not being mistaken for the lawyer himself might be deemed perilous. A comparison with the military might be deemed invidious. Or would, as we suspect, the Lieut. Thacker, to the humble station of the lawyer's clerk? He thinks the officer should have the "outward and visible sign" of being a gentleman, even when he repairs to the church of his Common Father. We hope he will not see the necessity of a church, as he threatens to do, until, side by side with the honest artisan, he has heard the clergyman of St. Margaret's expound how "the rich and the poor meet together, and the Lord is the Maker of them all."—Morning Chronicle.