

The Examiner.

CHARLOTTETOWN, P. E. I., FEBRUARY 21, 1859

OPENING AND CLOSING OF THE LEGISLATURE—DISSOLUTION OF THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY, AFTER A SESSION OF TWO DAYS WITHOUT A SPEAKER!!!

We are confident that political excitement never ran so high in Charlottetown as it did from Thursday last down to Saturday evening. On the first named day the Houses of Legislature met for the despatch of business. The two parties in the Lower House were alike confident of success. The Liberals contended that they had the majority—the Tories shook their heads knowingly—smiled blandly on each other, and plainly hinted that the majority would be found on their side of the House before the elapse of many hours. At two o'clock on Thursday His Excellency the Lieut. Governor, having attended in his usual state in the Council Chamber, the members of the House of Assembly were summoned by the Usher of the Black Rod to appear at the Bar of that Chamber, and having complied with this summons, they were directed by order of His Excellency to go back into their own House and elect a Speaker. It was then the struggle between the contending parties commenced. The Liberals numbered exactly fifteen; their opponents fourteen. In the morning it was expected that the Liberals would have sixteen members on their side, and had their expectations been realized, it is not unlikely that they would have allowed the Speaker to be chosen from their ranks. But one of their number, Mr. John Ramsay, from Prince-town, refused to take the qualification oath. At the election last Summer he qualified, as the Law allowed him to do, on two kinds of property—leasehold and freehold. He was under the impression that the schedule to which he then swore—combining leasehold and freehold property—would form the basis of his qualification oath before taking his seat in the House; but the form of oath to be taken in the House declares that the qualification must be a leasehold or a freehold. Mr. Ramsay could not conscientiously swear that either one was worth the amount required to be sworn to, although both together were worth considerably more than that amount; and the consequence was, that the seat assigned for him was left unoccupied. We may here observe, en passant, that, in our opinion, no man ever entered the House of Assembly more firmly and honestly attached to the Liberal cause than Mr. John Ramsay; and although his error—which any man might have fallen into—has been the cause of some inconvenience and embarrassment, we consider that he is as fully entitled to the respect and confidence of the Liberal Party as he ever was.

The Liberals now being reduced to fifteen, it was plain that if a Speaker were chosen from their side their position would become not only a very dangerous one, but there was every reason to believe that the Opposition would have the power to reduce their number to ten or twelve. A Speaker being chosen from their side would leave them fourteen to fourteen on the floor of the House; and the Opposition would then commence their work of contesting the seats of Liberal members, against whose return frivolous protests had been entered. There was a protest entered against the return for Georgetown of Mr. A. A. McDonald—a staunch Liberal member. The gentleman who entered the protest, Hon. Roderick McAulay was in Town, waiting to be installed in the seat. There was also a protest against Mr. Cooper's return. The seats of the Hon. Messrs. Coles and Kelly were to be contested. It was understood that the seat of another Liberal member from Tignish, that of Mr. Gaudet, would be challenged, on the assumed but false ground of his having a defective qualification. And the Hon. Mr. Montgomery was in town, ready to claim the seat to which Mr. Ramsay had been elected by an overwhelming majority, because the former gentleman happened to have been the next candidate on the poll. Here, then, were six of the Liberal party who might be thrown out of their seats by the most arbitrary and tyrannical proceedings, if the Tories were once allowed to get a footing in the House. We have shown that the numbers would be equal on both sides if the Liberals consented to let one of their party become Speaker; and as soon as the Speaker had been elected from the Liberal side, the Tories would commence their factious proceedings against one of the contested Liberal seats; and the member whose position would be thus assailed could not vote himself on any question appertaining to his title to the seat, so that the Liberal side would, in the first instance, be reduced down to thirteen, while the fourteen would contend that the member whose seat was thus challenged had no right to it; and thus they would proceed until they had expelled the whole six Liberal members.

Such being the aspect of affairs in the House, the Liberals at once concluded that it would be better to let the election of Speaker become the test of power, and with that view the Hon. Col. Secretary proposed John Longworth, Esq., to fill the Speaker's chair. The motion was seconded on the same side of the House; but Mr. Longworth at once declined being put in the Chair. The Hon. Mr. Palmer then made a coaxing speech at the Hon. Mr. Thornton, whose fidelity and integrity and efficiency, and all that, as former Speaker, he praised in the most fulsome terms, and most generously concluded by saying that he would leave the House at once rather than be supposed to offer any opposition to Mr. Thornton's election; and accordingly the generous man made a movement towards the door. But Mr. Thornton was not such a silly bird as to be caught in that manner. He maintained a provoking silence, in spite of Mr. Palmer's efforts to bring him out. But the Hon. Mr. Lord, anxious to give Mr. Thornton an opportunity of declaring his views respecting the high honour intended him, proposed that he—Mr. Thornton—should be the Speaker of the House, which, of course, was seconded; whereupon Mr. Thornton rose, and in a short and pithy speech, expressed his intention to follow Mr. John Longworth's example, and decline the honour. He did not wish, he said, to preside over the deliberations of a House where parties were so nearly equally divided, and when it was probable that he would be placed in the invidious position of having to give the casting vote on questions that would be brought under the notice of the House.

His Excellency the Lieut. Governor was then informed that no Speaker could be elected that day, and His Excellency left the Council Chamber for Government House. Two or three hours of the afternoon were spent in the House in angry speechifying between the contending parties, to the amusement of a large concourse of the public who crowded the galleries and the reserved seats—when the Liberal members, who left their opponents not a leg to stand on in the discussion, retired from the House, and their opponents soon followed their example.

On Friday both parties were in their places about twelve o'clock, when the discussion—embracing numerous irrelevant topics—was resumed, and kept up for two or three hours, and no approach whatever having been made to the choice of a Speaker. The Clerk adjourned the House at nearly three o'clock until four the same afternoon; but the Liberal members not feeling inclined to attend, the Tories were very much disgusted, as they could not form a House to go to business, and nobody before them to abuse. On the evening of that day His Excellency the Lieut. Governor was notified by the Clerk of the House that no Speaker was elected, as he had been notified to the same effect on the previous day.

On Saturday the Opposition met at an early hour in the forenoon—fierce and defiant,—they seemed to think the Government was in great difficulties, because the Liberal members did not appear in their places. Some of the more moderate of the Opposition threw out hints significant of their desire for the formation of a Coalition Government; but the suggestion met no favour from the leading men of the Liberal party, who were fully conscious of their own strength. It was announced, however, that at four o'clock some decided action would be taken by the Government to put an end to the anomalous position in which the popular branch of the Legislature was placed. The Tories imagined, of course, that the Government intended to resign, and their friends and supporters gathered in great strength to witness the downfall of the Liberals. But as the hour of four o'clock drew near it was whispered about, that something more startling than the resignation of the Government was in contemplation—that, in short, a dissolution was resolved upon, and would be almost immediately pronounced. A few minutes after four o'clock, a message was announced from His Excellency the Lieut. Governor; but the Opposition, anticipating the object of the message, furiously opposed the admission of the messenger. It being, however, unparliamentary to refuse admitting a messenger from the Governor before a Speaker is chosen, the clamour of the minority was disregarded, and the messenger was admitted by order of the Clerk of the House. The message was, that the members of the House of Assembly should appear forthwith at the bar of the Council Chamber, by order of His Excellency the Lieut. Governor. The Obstructives or their friends put their backs to the door of the House of Assembly, and attempted to prevent the egress of the Liberal members. But in this insane attempt to carry out their views by physical force, the Tories were again disappointed, for the door was forced open, and the Liberal Members attended at the bar of the Council Chamber in a body, where the House was DISSOLVED by Commission, with the following short address from His Excellency the Lieut. Governor:—

Mr. President and Honorable Gentlemen of the Legislative Council: Gentlemen of the House of Assembly:

It having been notified to me last evening, by the Clerk of the Assembly, that after two days' deliberation, you, Gentlemen of the House of Assembly, had not appointed a Member of the Assembly as your Speaker: I consider, under these circumstances, any longer delay might tend to serious inconvenience and loss to the Public Revenue, and would not lead to any beneficial result. It therefore, becomes my painful duty to release you from further attendance, and to dissolve the present House of Assembly.

D. DALY, Lieutenant Governor. Government House, 19th February, 1859.

On the members and the Clerk returning to the House a scene of the wildest excitement ensued. All order and authority were set at defiance. Two or three members of the Tory party were on their legs, all at the same time attempting to harangue the audience, to the utmost power of their lungs—screaming, roaring and gesticulating like madmen; while the people in the gallery and on the red benches were yelling, hissing, cheering and groaning by turns. After a fearful hurricane, which lasted nearly ten minutes, the Clerk was allowed to read the Governor's Speech, above given, and as he pronounced the last words, sending forth the fiat of dissolution, three cheers were proposed from the Liberal side of the House, which were repeated over and over again, in the midst of which the Liberal members in a body left the House. Then the Tories, thinking they might as well rejoice, or pretend to rejoice at the dissolution as well as their opponents, commenced to indulge in a little cheering on their own account; but it was evident to every body that they had no heart in the business. And as they cheered, the strangers and lookers on hissed at them, when they desisted from their hypocritical display; and the Hon. Mr. Palmer then rushed across the House, as if seized with a sudden fit—held violent hands on the Hon. Donald Montgomery, who had got within the body of the House, and hustled and pushed him into the Speaker's chair, converting the House at once into the arena of a public meeting. Mr. Montgomery, of course, made a speech, which it would be exceedingly difficult for any one to report,—it was, however, a fierce attack upon the Government for dissolving the House. Mr. Palmer, Mr. Heath Haviland, Mr. J. Longworth, Mr. J. C. Pope, Mr. T. Owen, and Mr. R. McAulay, followed pretty much in the same strain—all anathematizing the Governor and his Council for doing the very thing over which they pretended to rejoice only a few moments before, and which they had acknowledged, during the two or three preceding days, to be an inevitable event. After the gentlemen of the Opposition had had their say out, and spent their fury, to the infinite delight of the gallery people, who laughed and hissed at them most unmercifully—Mr. Abercrombie Willock came forward—thinking he had as good a right to be there as the rest of them;—but as the distinguished orator did not betray any sympathetic feeling for one of the contending parties more than the other, the Tories and their friends left the House, apparently much disgusted, without coming to any resolutions; and the uproarious fun of the day was then brought to a peaceful termination.

Never was a political faction so checkmated and disappointed as the Obstructives during the short session which has closed so ingloriously for them. Since the election it was their frequent boast that the Government would be left in a minority in the new House. It is now, however, an indisputable fact, that the Opposition could number only fourteen in a House of thirty members. This majority on the Government side was, however, too small to enable them to carry on the administration, and there was no alternative but a dissolution. The fourteen gentlemen in the minority could certainly form no Government; and supposing the party in power had tendered their resignations, as their opponents wanted and expected them to do, we should not have been brought any nearer to a solution of our difficulty with respect to the choice of a Speaker, because the fifteen on the Liberal side would have opposed the election of any candidate proposed by the fourteen. The Tories admitted as well as the Liberals that a dissolution was

unavoidable; but the former are enraged because the latter did not at once resign the Government, and give them the chance of having the management of the elections in their own hands. The Tory party are still more chagrined because they failed to corrupt or influence, after the most strenuous efforts, any one of the fifteen Liberal members who gallantly stood to their posts, determined to resist at all hazards the designs and encroachments of the Obstructive faction. Every man of those fifteen will again present himself to his late constituents for re-election, and we are confident that each and all will not only be triumphantly returned, but that their hands will be strengthened by the election of several others to advocate in the new House the principles of the Liberal Party. As their names are well worthy of being remembered, we shall keep them before the public until the termination of the struggle now about to commence:—

THE LIBERAL MAJORITY OF THE LATE HOUSE. The Hon. George Coles, James Warburton, W. W. Lord, Joseph Wightman, S. F. Perry, Edward Whelan, Edward Thornton, Francis Kelly, William Cooper, John Knight, Joseph Dingwell, George Harris, A. A. McDonald, Mr. Gaudet, George Sinclair.

The new Elections will commence with the nomination of candidates on the 12th of March next; the elections will therefore take place on the 19th; and it is believed the new House will meet on or about the fifth of April, which will afford sufficient time to pass not only the Revenue Bill, but all other measures that may be requisite, before the 1st of May.

A SHORT ANSWER TO A PERSON WHO DOESN'T DESERVE A LONG ONE.

Mr. William Sterns, postmaster at St. Peter's, has written a letter to the last Islander, in which he asserts that the late public meeting at the Head of St. Peter's Bay was unfavourable to the Government and the Liberal party. We tell Mr. Sterns that a more scandalous falsehood could not be penned; but it is only another proof his unworthiness of the position which the forbearance of the members for the District in which he resides has permitted him to hold. That forbearance will not endure much longer. But as we have no time to banly words in the newspapers with such a person as Mr. Sterns, we shall prove, in a few days, within a gun shot of his own door, by the testimony of his own neighbours, that he has asserted a deliberate LIE with respect to the meeting referred to.

NEWS FROM ENGLAND.

The British, Foreign and Colonial Mails arrived here on Thursday evening last. The subjoined extracts from our latest papers contain nearly all the news worth noting.

THE QUESTION OF WAR.

The Paris correspondent of the Herald, writing on the night of the 27th, says:—"The opinion is now almost universal in Paris that a crisis has arrived in the affairs of Europe more momentous than any which has arisen since the wars of the first empire. A small party, however, belonging chiefly to the middle interest, still fondly cling to the hope that war may be averted, and that the warning voice of Lord Derby's cabinet will succeed in persuading the three powers now preparing for the fight to abandon their dangerous course. Among the lower classes the war feeling, stimulated by La Presse and the Siecle, is growing daily more intense. This feeling is further promoted by the present uncertainty which depresses trade, and consequently the labor market."

The Independence says, the British Cabinet neglect no effort to prevent war, but if the Derby Ministry should be overthrown by a Palmerston administration the Independence ventures to assert that the probability of war would be greatly increased, and it pretends that the solution of the question of peace or war rests with England.

The Paris correspondent of the Times, in a despatch dated the night of the 27th, says:—"Contradictory facts and contradictory rumours are still the order of the day. There are reports that it is on the political attitude of England that war is in reality dependent. There is also a report that M. de Persigny is likely to go to England once more as ambassador. His re-appointment would be regarded as a sign of peace. So great is the uncertainty as to the future that ministers themselves probably do not know what will come out of the present crisis."

According to the Paris correspondent of the Times and Herald, the project of warding off hostilities by convoking a congress is nugatory. The Vienna correspondent of the Times is positive that Austria would never consent to the Italian question being settled by an European Congress.

In the Vienna correspondent of the Times it is reported that Austria and Russia appear to be on better terms, and it is related that a letter from the Emperor Alexander to the Emperor Francis Joseph has been received, which the latter considered extremely satisfactory. The pretensions of the Emperor Napoleon to play the part of European arbitrator begins, it is supposed, to be regarded at St. Petersburg as somewhat dangerous.

INDIA AND CHINA.

DEFEAT OF FERZE SHAH—SUFFRICATION OF THE MISCREANT NENA SAHIB FOR CLEMENCY.

The Calcutta and Hong Kong journals have arrived, with dates from Calcutta to Dec. 23; Madras, 28; Galle, 31; Hong Kong, 15; Shanghai, 16; and Aden, Jan. 8.

Ferze Shah was defeated with much slaughter by General Napier, on the 17th December, at Ranode, and pursued for eight miles; his force was again dispersed on the 23rd by troops from Pooneh.

Nena Sahib was reported at Churah, in Oude, with 1,500 men. Two rajahs with him have solicited Government for protection when they may be able to escape. The messenger appeals on behalf of the Nena himself for clemency to his family.

The Governor-General has made up his mind to return to the Presidency, and his establishments have received orders to hold themselves in readiness. His lordship is expected to arrive in Calcutta by the 14th of next month, and will then resume the office of President in Council, which he so very ably held by the Hon. John Peter Grant. The Lieutenant Governor is still in the districts on his official tour, but will probably return by the end of this month. A private letter from Allahabad says that Lord Canning, it is reported, will leave that city for the Presidency shortly.

The Rajah of Shahguri has been pardoned by Government. The same letter also says that the magistrate of Purruckshah has imposed a fine on certain villagers for not opposing the progress of a fugitive Rajah of Mysore. Government has presented a gold watch and chain to Jummatt Ally, Gonaista of the opium factory at Chawnpore, for his loyalty, and in recognition of the services rendered by him to the State in protecting the Government treasure when the factory was threatened with an attack by the rebels.

The following summary of events since the departure of the last mail is given by the Calcutta Englishman, a journal which has for some time exhibited a disposition to view Indian events through a dismal medium:—"The intelligence we have to forward by the present opportunity is not of a cheering character, but it will not take by surprise those of our readers who have paid attention to the repeated remarks we have offered regarding the manner in which military operations have been carried on for several months past. In our last paper we adverted to the peculiar tactics pursued by the Commander-in-Chief, which consisted in nothing but marching and countermarching, and in crossing and recrossing rivers; and the same movements appear to have continued. From the disposition of the various columns, and their constant movements, the public were led to believe that the rebels were completely encircled, and their

retreat rendered impossible—in fact, that they had no alternative but to surrender or fight it out. To us, however, these representations appeared deceptive, because we could not help noticing that, while an immense force was being concentrated within Oude, several districts bordering on that kingdom were actually denuded of European troops, so that in that direction; at all events, no adequate force could be opposed to the progress of the rebels should they manage to escape the attacking columns, and we regret to say that our apprehensions have been fully realised. No battle has been fought, no action has taken place, not even a skirmish has occurred, but the rebels, almost coming up to the muzzles of our guns, have once more made their escape, and in derision of our military tactics fired a sort of feu de joie in crossing the river, which the marching and countermarching of our troops were particularly intended to prevent. Tanta Topee has thus once more escaped, and the Nena, who suddenly turned up again, has, with all his followers, for the twentieth time, eluded pursuit; nay, it is even asserted that en passant he stopped at Bithoor, his former residence, to dig up and carry away with him the treasure buried there. Other rebels have escaped with equal success, and thus the necessity of marching and countermarching occurs afresh again. It is impossible to steel our minds against the belief that the rebels understand stratagems of war better than a general of the Commander-in-Chief's experience, and we therefore can come to the only conclusion that it was a part of the policy pursued by the Governor-General purposely to allow the rebels another loop-hole of escape, in the hope that they might still avail themselves of the proffered amnesty.

From private letters received from the camp it would appear that the real object of the Government was not to cut up the rebels, but to coerce them into an acceptance of the promised amnesty, for it has been asserted that our troops have received positive instructions not to fire on the enemy, but patiently wait till he fired first. The result of all this is, that the several columns are now again in pursuit of the fugitive rebels, and it is only to be hoped that on coming up with them our generals will act upon their own responsibility, and do their duty. While writing this we learn that General Napier overtook the force under Ferzeshah at Ranod, and defeated it with great slaughter, thus clearly proving that as soon as the direct influence of the Commander-in-Chief ceases, and generals act upon their own judgment, a great and crowning victory is the result.

ALLAHABAD, DEC. 20.—On the 16th Brigadier Macdoff pursued and drove from their position some 200 or 300 rebels under Binjone Singh, who were plundering a village in the vicinity of the Scindia river; a great of the rebels were killed and wounded. Next prevented the Brigadier from following the rebels further. They fled into the dense jungles in their rear. A force has been sent from Goranah, by Captain Mayne, towards Deeghaur, the rebels under Ferzeshah being reported to be at Senoey eight miles north of that place. His Highness from Gwalior states that on the 17th Sir Robert Napier's force, near, and pursued with slaughter, for eight miles, the rebels under Ferzeshah. Captain(?) Munro, with 11 Dragoons, captured six elephants. Captain Pouty had 11 Dragoons, wounded, besides eight or ten men; none killed.

CLEARANCE OF JUNGLES.—We hear that the clearance of the Jhadesore jungle is progressing satisfactorily. 2,000 workmen are now employed in cutting and removing the trees, and nearly 2,500 acres, or one-twelfth part of the jungles, have already been cut down. The work has been undertaken by the contractor on condition that the jungle is to be cut down at his own expense, the Government granting him the whole of the lands rent free for a period of 99 years. The jungles of Jhadesore have formed the refuge of the rebels for months past, and it is from these retreats that Kooer Singh's followers have given so much trouble. There are several jungles, tracts of uncultivated land in the upper provinces, which might be given away to enterprising speculators rent free for limited periods. The Sunderland grants cannot have failed to convince the Government how much of the woods, the abundant dens of wild beasts, can be converted into fertile soils. The grant and appropriation of wild and uncultivated lands to those who are willing to undertake their cultivation on liberal terms must tend to develop the resources of the country.

CHINA.

Since the Earl of Elgin left Shanghai on a trip up the Yangtze-Kiang, nothing authentic has been heard of the expedition; and as his lordship has been absent about a week when the steamer was despatched, intelligence is looked for hourly.

At Canton matters are progressing steadily, though Major-General Sir C. T. Van Straubenzee's policy of keeping the garrison closely confined within the walls, is loudly decried.

A rather striking fire broke out in the centre of Hong-Kong on the 5th December, and only by the most extraordinary exertions were the premises of the Oriental Bank Corporation kept from destruction. One fine building, the residence and godown of Messrs. Schenker and Co., merchants, and offices of H. J. Tarrant, selector, was totally destroyed, together with four other houses of the style "compradoric."

The North China Herald (Shanghai paper), of December the 4th, reports concerning the civil war:—"The hostile attitude of the Tong-sean people and the Taoutai's party is still maintained; they have occasional encounters, in which either side have men killed or captured and then decapitated. In the last fight the Taoutai lost sixteen men and the Tongsean people twelve. A few heads, in red pails hung on bamboo poles, are seen on the bridge of boats—not a very pleasing spectacle.

A foreigner visiting Ningpo started to return to Shanghai overland one day last week. When a short distance past the city of Yun-yaw, he was stopped, his boat was searched, and he was told that he could not proceed, or return to Ningpo, but must remain there some days. A Chinaman, however, who spoke a little English, finding that the foreigner was only travelling for pleasure, induced the people to let him return. It has been ascertained that a Chinaman of wealth, who had a feud with some of the country people, has had agents in Ningpo buying fire-arms and ammunition, and a boat laden with them had been seized a day or two before, and twelve Cantonese and one foreigner, supposed to be a Manila man or a Portuguese, who were in the boat, were decapitated, and no boats were permitted to pass through the district.

NOVA SCOTIA LEGISLATURE.

The House of Assembly, after ten days' debate, came to a division on Monday night. We listened for a while, on Monday, to the speech of the Hon. Mr. Young, and Mr. Henry's address in reply. The galleries were crowded, and excellent order maintained, particularly while the former gentleman was speaking. We regret exceedingly the waste of time that has occurred in the late debate,—but it will, doubtless, have the effect intended in the country. The false statements which have appeared in some of our contemporaries in reference to the tone and style of the debate are not justifiable. Looking on as we do, without taking a very decided part on either side, the public in the city and country who have not themselves listened to the debate, may rely on us when we say, that, with the exception of the ebullition of feeling displayed a few days since between a supporter of the government and a member of the opposition, the whole debate has been free from many of the displays of ill-feeling which have characterized our political arena in other years. Many of the speeches, on both sides, this session, have been characterized by manliness, eloquence, and power, which we have rarely heard equalled. Take, for instance, the first speeches of the Provincial Secretary and the Attorney General, in this debate, and the truly eloquent addresses of Mr. Howe on Saturday, and Mr. Young on Monday.—there were statements in each of these we would not wish to endorse, yet there were so many fine passages, nobly spoken, that they were admired on all sides. The debate may or may not have the effect of changing materially the relative strength of parties,—one thing appears by the decision of Monday night, that the government have not increased their numbers. Messrs. Wilkins and Fuller declined voting on either side. When the division took place the numbers stood thus:—

For the Amendment.—Messrs. Esson, Reinhard, Wier, McDonald, B. Smith, Davidson, McKenzie, Bailey, Goldart, Locke, Parker, McLellan, Morrison, Chipman, Chambers, Young, Webster, Annaud, Robertson, Archibald, Munro, Howe.—22.

Against.—Messrs. Churchill, Moses, Wade, Killam, Bent, Caldwell, Bournceuf, Bill, McLearn, C. Campbell, McFarlane, Shaw, Brown, Ryder, Hon. Atty. General, Hon. Fin-