

'EXAMINER' EXTRA.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 1868.

COLONIAL PARLIAMENT. HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Wednesday, April 8, 1868.

to delay in receiving the copy, the following did not appear in their proper place in the last issue of the "Examiner."—Ed. Ex.]

MR. BRACKEN.—Mr. Speaker, this is a question the answer of which should be approached free from all prejudice or bias, because, Sir, it is one of the most important subjects that can be brought under the deliberation of this hon. House, and the man who can approach its consideration in any other spirit cannot be a fair one.

It is fair to assume that the country, looking at the paragraph in the Speech of His Excellency, at the opening of the Legislature last year, and also at what was said this year, have been naturally led to expect alterations and amendments more important than five pounds in favor of a few French Teachers, and a candidate for a teacher's license might receive the honor of passing a few months in the Normal School.

The late party passed an Act, which imposed a duty upon each district, employing a teacher, making good fifteen pounds of his salary; and when the present Government came into power, it was a question then under consideration in the country, whether the arrangement should or should not be continued; but His Excellency, in his opening speech of last year, said:—"The important question of Education will again be submitted for your consideration, and the view of improving the position of the School Teachers, and otherwise rendering the laws now in force more efficient and more extensively used."

This is what His Excellency then said, to which I have made the following reply:—"That the important question of Education shall receive our deliberation, and the promises made were carried out."

MR. BRACKEN.—The salaries of the teachers have not been wholly from the treasury; but are there no important alterations required to render the benefit of Education more commensurate with the cost to the Colony than the one made last year, and those brought forward now? In opening the Session of the Legislature, His Excellency returned to the subject, and said:—"When I released you from the Legislative Council of last Session, I expressed the hope that you would at your next meeting, take into consideration a degree of efficiency and practical benefit more commensurate with your liberal provision for that service."

Reiterating, for the third time, the opening of the last Session. Do they suppose the country is so stupid that there were no more important alterations suggested when these words were spoken, than what was brought forward? As I told them when they were opened, they are a composite party, and dare not agree upon anything further in caucus. My friend, the Attorney General, said they had the best of all that is good and excellent in the country, and doubted the assertion then and I doubt it still, and the hon. member then, and reiterated the same sentiment now, that what constituted a strong Government, was a combination of gentlemen who, in unity of mind, were agreed upon important principles—an agreement not to be found in the party of the learned Attorney General; but I do not say that this is the opinion of the hon. member, for it is sufficiently well known that his party could not agree upon this question; and I do say that when these hopes were sent forth to the country, they created others from which there has been a wide divergence of opinion by some of the party.

Some days ago we had a memorial brought down by the Government, which had been addressed to His Excellency in Council, wherein His Lordship the R. C. Bishop of Charlottetown, plainly tells the Government that he believed the day was coming when an House of Assembly would do him justice; and, I hesitate not to say that had an influence been brought to bear upon the Government, which might have been, a feeling could have been excited that would not have allowed this Government to have been here to-day. The hon. Attorney General referred to the Bible Question and the agitation created; but I ask why the hon. member and his friends did not, when coming into power, put forward the same they now announce, instead of promulgating the ideas in His Excellency's Speech.

LEADER OF THE GOVERNMENT.—We have put our opinion.

MR. BRACKEN.—And a very vague opinion it is. But the hon. Attorney General, we have not yet heard of the opinions of the hon. the Leader of the Opposition! Sir, the Opposition are the men who, when in power, were opposed to the views of the Thirty-five pound, and are they the men for whose opinion the Government is now so anxiously waiting? Our political opponents told the Thirty-five thousand that they would do more for them than the Tories, but have they done so? They have not, and, therefore, it may be justly said, that they got into power under false pretences, colors which they will not now stand true to.

When hon. Mr. Longworth moved for the third reading of the Prince of Wales College Bill, roughly, Sir, we then handled and treated by our opponents, the hon. member for Fort Augustus brought in a Resolution, which, in substance, demanded what the Bishop has asked for from the Government, and which they now say. That Resolution was strongly supported by the hon. Mr. Coles, who was then the Leader of the Opposition. Messrs. Doyle, Cooper, and others of that party; I believe, that from that day forward, the Catholic friends of the hon. the Leader of the Government believed when he would again come into power that he would prepare to grant them what he that day plead they had a right to. The hon. member says the question of Education is an important one; but how does he face the Bishop's memorial? Taking the Resolution of the hon. member for Fort Augustus, and the speech then made by the hon. the Leader of the Government, in one hand, and the speech to-night, when it comes from the hands of the hon. member, I think they will read differently; and I wonder if he ever told his Catholic friends the course he intended to pursue?

LEADER OF THE GOVERNMENT.—No.

MR. BRACKEN.—When we were in power we treated the Bishop as we now treat the Government—we dealt with him as political opponents; but it never can be said of us that we promised them when out of power what we were not prepared to grant when in power, or that we shrank from fulfilling our promises. We do not ask to bow to our political shrine, while we will not bow to theirs. I am not going to consider the different systems of Education, as my hon. colleague has done so pretty well; but I believe the system of paying the Teachers from the Treasury is not a good one; but, if in the hands of the Leader of the Government is right, then the hon. member would be called the "Father of Free Education," and it is a system not practical anywhere else. About £10,000 or £18,000 is annually expended in this service, and £150 a year paid to those who have the supervision of our schools. I confess, Sir, that this appears to me like recklessness, and if this is a recommendation of the present party are fully entitled to the honor; but to my mind, it appears like sending a costly ship to sea without compass, cable or anchor—a penny wise and a pound foolish policy. It, Sir, is no answer to the question which has been proposed, for to ask what have they done? for every time His Excellency has taken his seat in the Legislature, since the present party came into power, promises have been made and thrust upon the nation of the country, and their reiteration have led the people to expect more important alterations than those which have been announced. Do they suppose these trifling amendments are going to satisfy all their supporters? They will not. I do not consider it right to go into this House to say much about teachers, and it is to be that the remuneration they receive is inadequate for the service performed; for, I believe that really talented young men cannot be had under £70 a year, or if so, they will be few, and seldom to be found. A teacher's salary is one of the most important that can be named. It would do society, and to his work will the sentence fully apply.

"As the twig is bent,
The tree's inclined."

More useful or otherwise the amendments proposed may be, they will not recommend themselves to the people, because more important ones have been looked for. In Scotland a teacher has to attend the Normal School two years, therein to learn the art of imparting to the knowledge which he himself possess, and it is for a period of Education, in half an hour,

I believe the five pounds to the French Teachers is a little cop which does not amount to anything worth talking about. Every person sees it so, and what every man sees in the same light, cannot be far wrong. We can understand it quite well. But I almost forgot my hon. friend from Tignish, who I see is in his place. I am aware of his sentiments on this subject. I know that the opinions expressed by the hon. Leader of the Government are not in accordance with his wishes. He does not think that his associates in the Government were right in supposing that His Lordship would be satisfied with the answer returned to his memorial; nor does the hon. member believe that His Lordship was not entitled to what he asked for, and yet the Government declines to come down with an opinion on this point.

HON. MR. H. WELAN.—The late party had charge of the subject for eight years, and we are prepared to hear their views.

MR. BRACKEN.—No doubt, Sir, they would like to have our opinions, in order that they might run off with them; but before they ask for our views on this subject, it is the duty of the Government to lay their own before this House. But we have seen so much of this Composite Party, that it is hard to find a name that will suitably apply to them.

HON. LEADER OF THE GOVERNMENT.—What would the hon. member call the party if he would join it?

MR. BRACKEN.—When that takes place, we will see. When the Conservatives were in power, the cry of the Liberals was, that the cause of education had been injured by that party, and now to hear an hon. member of the Government crying out for assistance from a small minority, is amusing in the extreme. When the present party redeem their promises on this subject, and the country place us again in power, it will be quite time enough then for the Conservatives to state their views on this subject.

HON. LEADER OF THE GOVERNMENT.—But you were in power for eight years.

MR. BRACKEN.—The hon. member for Tignish believes in every word contained in the Bishop's memorial, and believes, too, that it is a question we shall yet hear more about, and feels that his Lordship has not been fairly dealt with by his party, yet in caucus he yields against his will. As I before said, this is a great and important question, and yet the Government come down without expressing an opinion upon the hope expressed in that memorial of His Lordship the R. C. Bishop of Charlottetown. The hon. member believes that the request is a reasonable one, now what is he going to do?

HON. LEADER OF THE GOVERNMENT.—It is now coming out.

MR. BRACKEN.—If the hon. member for Tignish will not confine himself to the question, and honestly state whether he intends to support a Government that will not support him in his views on so important a question, then where is the political honesty or consistency of the hon. member? Is there no political question sublime enough to induce him to follow the bent of his judgment, or will he allow the iron heel of oppression to bear upon his head, and continue to lick the hand that crushes him. I am far from thinking that compulsion should be brought to bear upon any man, to make him support a measure he did not approve of. The speech of the hon. Leader of the Government I shall keep before me, and I promise him that it will yet eat into his political heart.

HON. MR. LATRO.—Mr. Speaker, it has been often said, that gentlemen of the legal profession earn their bread and butter by incessant talking, but so far I have earned mine by the labor of my hands. I listened with attention to the hon. member for Charlottetown, but failed to perceive that he noticed even one point of error in the Education Bill, as submitted now by the Government. He referred to the speeches of His Excellency, but entirely failed in proving that the promises therein made have not been fulfilled by the Government. The learned and hon. member drew attention to the salaries of the School Visitors and said their salaries were too low. The Conservatives were in power for eight years, they had the Education Act under consideration, and introduced some alterations, but left the sum for this service at £300 a year. The present Government have increased this allowance to £450, which according to the hon. member's own showing, is an important improvement, and as to what he said further, I cannot find a single remark that bears upon the subject. I like to listen to oratory as well as any man, but I like argument also, and when a question is introduced, and fault is found with it, I expect to hear objections more definite than those brought forward by the hon. member for Charlottetown. He objected to the Bill, and yet has not even suggested an idea of which he himself approves, but finds fault, and no one knows what with. I am not aware of any promises made by the Government which they have not performed, but I know the education question has been more in the words than in the actions of the late party, who were in power for eight years; and I ask how many more children were in school when they went out of office, than when they came in? I challenge them, from the hon. Leader of the Opposition, down to the last of their party, to prove that the cause of education improved under the late Government. I might ask how many more schools were in operation three years ago, than there were in 1860, or was the indifference of the late party the cause of so many private and sectarian schools being established? A Report has lately fallen into my hands which shows the impracticability of a Government attempting to establish sectarian schools, it is that of Her Majesty's Commissioners on elementary schools, which by command of Her Majesty was laid before the Imperial Parliament last year, the impartial nature of which may be learned from the character of the Commission, which consisted of four Scottish Peers, three Ex-Lords Advocates, three or four members of Parliament, several large landed Proprietors connected with various Districts, and one leading layman belonging to each of the three largest denominations in the country. In Scotland they have a division system, just such as the hon. member would like the Government to introduce here; of these the report goes on to say:—"In Scotland as we have already explained, there are several, and in some respects rival systems; and the chief difficulty is to introduce some sort of symmetry into this chaos, and to set up a regular frame work, into which the irregular and loose material may be gradually fitted." Now, I ask if the neglect of the late party has not caused such schools to spring up in this Island, and if the measure now brought down is not calculated to extend even-handed justice to all? Had the late Government done their duty, we would not to-day have been called upon to cut off support from any school. A good deal has been said about the want of unity in the present Government, but the better way to judge of a party is by their acts, and in the matter of education, Teachers have been better paid, and schools are rapidly increasing since the present Government came into power; but the reverse was the fact under the late administration.

MR. MACNEILL.—This is perhaps the most important matter that can engage the attention of our Legislature, and one that we must agree to differ in our opinions upon. I am aware some think that the State should provide a religious education—which means with us, a sectarian education—for the children of the State. I hold that this is a duty which the parent cannot divest himself of, or transfer to another. A religious education the parent is himself bound to impart, and the State, I contend, has only to provide secular instruction. I know some think otherwise, but wherever a different plan has been adopted, the result has been far from satisfactory. I look upon our present system as the best that can be adopted for this Island, and have no wish to see it abandoned, for a system which has only produced discord wherever it has been tried. I have listened to the hon. member (Mr. Bracken) very attentively, but could hardly believe it was the hon. and learned member who was speaking; it seemed to me as if some one was delivering a muck speech. Does he really feel so much for the Bishop, and is he grieved that the prayer of his petition was not complied with? Sir, we have not forgotten the time when peace and quietness reigned in the old Academy, from whence some of the best teachers we ever had in the country came. At that time there was no disputes between Catholics and Protestants. The party of the hon. member, then, as a now, were in the cool shades of opposition, got up a religious cry about the Bible not being read in the public schools. Has a new ray of light dawned upon the hon. member? The late R. C. Bishop, as was said by the hon. Attorney General, published a letter, in which he stated that a secular education was all that the Catholic population wanted; in this letter the term "Godless" was used, and the noise it created will not soon be forgotten; and much indignity was thrust upon that gentleman in which I re-joice, for his many charitable acts. You, Mr. Speaker, are a very liberal Protestant in the Island, were repaid at that time for holding on to their principles, and the hon. member for this city is now trying the same game over again; but it will not do. The Catholics and the liberal Protestants have not forgotten the abuse heaped upon them, nor the "Donnybrooke Fair" meeting, when the people were brought together in this city, and arrayed against each other. If ever the Troops were required it was then; when one half of the population were placed, as it were, against the other; and if I had the Parliamentary Reporter, I could shew some of the vile language used in this hon. House by the late Colonial Secretary, which brought about the state of matters that produced so much ill feeling, and it ill becomes the hon. member to speak to

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