COLONIAL LEGISLATURE.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY, March 1853.

Hon. Mr. Colles's Explanation of the conduct of the Government Members of Assembly, with reference to certain matters which had been before the House, in the course of the Session, and a consideration of which affected the official character of the Attorney General, the Hon. Charles Young.

[This explanation was made on Friday, 15th April, the day after Mr. Young had delivered a speech, in the Legislative Council, in defence of his official conduct in connection with the said matters; and on which occasion the Hon. Mr. Colles and several other members of the Assembly were present in the Legislative Council Chamber.]

Hon. Mr. Colles—Mr Speaker, as I may not again before the close of the session, have an opportunity of taking notice of some insinuations and charges, made by the Hon. Charles Young, in the Legislative Council, concerning the debate, in this House, on the Salaries Bill, I crave the indulgence of the House, for a short time, for that purpose. In noticing the remarks of that gentleman, as regards me, as a member of the Government, I am quite free from all ill-feeling towards him on account of any allusion which he made to me, personally, in the course of his remarks. I hope he will shall readily obtain credit with you, sir, and the House generally, for this declaration, when it is remembered how earnestly, I defended him when his official conduct was impugned before this House. I, indeed, feel that, in vindicating him, I could not have gone farther, had he been my brother; and over any intemperate or unjustifiable remark, to which he may, in the heat of mind, he may have given utterance, I am very willing to throw the mantle of charity. But I am very far from being prepared to subscribe to the tenets of the doctrine, that the Hon. gentleman, as to the principles which he professes to think ought to govern the members of the Executive Council, under Responsible Government. In the first place, I cannot agree with him when he says that, let a member of the Executive Council do right or wrong, it is the bounden duty of the rest to support and defend him. Now, sir, this is a new doctrine of Responsible Government; and, so far as I am concerned, I wish it to be distinctly understood that, in accepting the Leadership of the Government, I entered into no such compact, and that neither will I subscribe, nor lend my support to any such doctrine. Of the three deadly shafts which that gentleman says were let fly against him, the first, he says, was the discussion of this House concerning his proceedings under the Land Assessment Act, for the non-payment of the tax. Now, Sir, as I was of opinion that he was sustained, in his proceedings, by the Act, I conceived it to be my duty to vindicate his conduct. I accordingly did so; and, I will take the liberty to add, I think more effectually than he has since done himself; and, at the very time, when, as he says, the members of the Government in this House had forsaken him, I was here contending against two learned members of the Bar, for the constitutionality which he had put upon the Act. Besides, no member of the Government accused him of improper proceedings in that case. It was merely said they thought it would be unwise to amend the Act, so as to remove all doubts, for the future, as to the construction which ought to be put upon it, and the course of legal proceedings which should be taken, under it, by the Attorney General; and a Bill for that purpose was accordingly introduced, and passed with the unanimous consent of the House. With reference to the passing of that Bill, he says he expected better things from the members of the Government in this House. I suppose he means, sir, that we ought to have allowed him to proceed under the old Act, of a solid annually, to the amount of something like one hundred pounds, taken out of the pockets of poor men, instead of six or seven, as charged and received by his predecessor in office. But it strikes me, sir, that if he was really so independent of, and regardless, as he professes to be of the pounds, shillings, and pence, to which his official practice entitles him, he would himself have been the first to seek an amendment of the Act; for, I contend, Sir, that, although the Act may have borne him out in the particular, yet his conduct has brought, and was calculated to bring odium on the Government; not indeed because the Government could justly be held responsible for those proceedings; for, if according to law, it was not in the power of the Government to interfere concerning them. With respect to a word in the preamble of the Bill at which he has taken offered, as considering himself unhandsomely reflected upon by it, I am very sure it was not inserted with any intention to wound his feelings; but I will say that I think that if he had done his duty as the principal Crown Law Officer, he would have drafted the Bill himself; and, had he done so, he might have consulted his own taste and feelings, as to its language, and made it as gentle and pleasant as he pleased. As a proof, however, that the objectionable expression had been unintentionally introduced, no sooner was a suggestion concerning it made by the Council, than the House unanimously agreed to modify it. That, Sir, I think, is a strong presumption, and, I say it was the most deadly of all. Well, Sir, if, through neglect, or from having failed to make himself duly acquainted with his client's case, he has subjected himself to a slight rebuke from this House, its effect, as tending to make him more vigilant, both with respect to his own professional interests and the interests of others as entrusted to him, will, I hope, be, he might prove beneficial both to himself and his clients in future. And, Sir, I believe that, in spite of all the explanations which he has given and the Certificate of Mr. W. H. Pope to boot, this House will continue to think that poor Darnach was very badly used between these two gentlemen; for I will defy any unprejudiced man to say that he has not been much more hard upon poor Darnach than he was upon Mr. Young confessed judgment for upwards of £30. And, as to the forged receipt, as he styles it, respecting which he seems to argue that it should be a sufficient reason to abandon the interests of his client, I think he has dwelt upon it only to his own detriment; for he says, Sir, that the Chief Justice declared that the figure has been altered, and that it was a 3 and not a 9. Then, Sir, how could he show that there had been any attempt at forgery, on the part of Darnach? There was, in fact, no such attempt made. No, Sir, this poor man can scarcely even read writing; but knowing that he had paid his rent in 1849, he mistook that receipt for the one which had been actually given in 1849; and, when it required the Chief Justice, the two learned gentlemen and I know not how many more, to make out that the figure was a 3, and not a 9, it is no wonder that the poor illiterate man could not tell the difference. But, Sir, admit that, as Mr. Young states, he acted from a desire to save the man from the infliction of those legal penalties to which he would have subjected himself, had he sworn that the receipt was for 1849, he should not have allowed the principal in the case, the father of the young man, who could neither write nor speak English, to suffer by having judgment entered up against him for ten times the amount he owed. And, Sir, although it may be morbifying to the feelings of the Attorney General to have his professional conduct censured by this House, I cannot agree with him that the members of the Government having seats in it ought to vindicate or defend him, right or wrong. But, Sir, had he confined his remarks to this case, I should not have thought it necessary to notice them as I have done; for, in my opinion, he was a perfect Hibernian, in regard to his official conduct, if he could, even although it should be at the expense of his brother members of the Government. He boasts of his disregard for the pounds, shillings, and pence, derived from the Government; but yet the limitation of his official income, which he denominates Shaft No. 3, appears to have been that which pierced him most deeply. Now, Sir, I think, he must not value the Government money, and can live without it, the prospect of losing it ought not, in any way, to annoy him. It might indeed be almost beneath notice, if it amounted to no more than the amount of fees which was received by the Solicitor General; for it was very well known to Mr. Young that that amount was not a sufficient inducement to cause an attorney to give up his lucrative business; and he, himself, was obliged to bring over, from Nova Scotia, a young lawyer to assist him with the Crown prosecutions, because there was no one to be found in country who had been deeply imbued with liberal principles as to stand against the shafts of tyrannism, and accept of the Solicitorship. That the amount of fees paid to the Solicitor General, by the Government, in no case, could all would admit, particularly when it was considered that' owing to the multiplicity of affairs, not official, in which Mr. Young was engaged, the Government was frequently, had been obliged to call in and consult the Solicitor General, in his stead; and that, on all such occasions his attendance and advice had been given without extraordinary fees. In his dealings with the Government, he had been most moderate, was evident from what had been stated, with reference to them, by the Attorney General in his defence, as well as from what he stated, in his opposing the Salaries Bill, when he said the fees of the Solicitor General amounted to no more than £20 last year. But it ought to be remembered that the Solicitor General, in the Government measure, but was simply a Bill introduced by a member of the House, on his own mere motion; and I cannot see either that there was any necessity for passing the Government measure by calling a Council to consult the Attorney General about it. And, in its result, I cannot see that that gentleman had much cause to complain. He stated, to some members of the Government, that he would be satisfied if he got £400, per annum, in lieu of all fees. Now the House has agreed to fix his Salary at £400, and he has retained the right to retain the land-tax fees, and all fees received by him in the Vice-Admiralty Court, the last of which, I believe, alone amounted to £150 last year. As to the emoluments of that gentleman, in the Government, to which he has alluded, I can safely say that there are other members of the Government who give up ten times as much of their time, as he does, for the furtherance of public business, and yet receive nothing for it. I do not, however, wish that every member of the Government should work for nothing. If the Solicitor General's salary Government allowed £350, and the Solicitor General £100 a-year, the work will be better done; and that, of such an arrangement, neither people nor Attorney General, Mr. Young having declared that he has tendered his resignation, the operation of the Bill will, in all probability, affect not him, but the new Attorney General, who, I presume, would be the party first, what he has to depend upon; and I am persuaded that the Clerk of Crown can have no reason to complain of the allowance which the Bill provides for him. As, in the composition of his own declaration, the Attorney General can no longer be accounted a member of the Executive Council, I shall refrain from taking any further notice of Mr. Young's speech. I cannot, however, yet I can scarcely help saying that he will be very fortunate if all his friends act as faithfully by him, as his brother members of the Government have done, if, in the course of it, I can assure him, would have met with as much indulgence as he has received; and, had he only been as mindful of his own interests, as his brother members have been of his, in promoting them, he would never have had occasion to make such an exhibition of mortified feelings in the Legislative Council as he has done. It is with much regret, I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, that I have had to make this explanation; for I am convinced that no Government, in any country, ever worked more harmoniously than the present Government of Prince Edward Island did, from the time of its formation, up to the commencement of this Session. The only disagreeable occurrence which has arisen to interrupt the harmony, is the explanation, I, that of which it has just been my painful duty to advert: and I trust it will be the last.

DEBATE ON THE SALARIES BILL.

Hon. Mr. Lord. I am, I must confess, not only as well as any other member, and we to proceed for the establishing of fixed salaries for the Attorney General and the Queen's Printer, but I am also at a loss to know how it can be made to appear that we have not been fully deliberative of any good to the country. If we fix the salaries at the amount of fees and charges claimed by those officers, and actually paid to them, in what way, I ask, will the country be benefited, by serve the country? The same amounts will continue to be paid to them as before; and they will still be paid to them out of the people's money. Besides, if those officers be remunerated, for their services, by fixed salaries, is it not probable that they may become less punctual and careful in the discharge of them? If paid by a fixed salary, the Attorney General, for instance, may become very properly urged by the hon. the Speaker, may unfairly devolve a portion of his own duties upon the Solicitor General. As to establishing a fair and equitable fixed salary, for the Printer, on account of all the work which he may have to perform for the Government in his office, I am of opinion that the proposition is impracticable. It would not be possible to fix it without doing wrong, either to that officer or to the public. But it, besides, altogether at a loss to know for what good reason such a proposition is made with respect to that officer. As regards the charges of the Queen's Printer, I have not been present, and I am convinced I cannot be shewn—that, on a fair average, they are one farthing over those of his predecessor in office. There has, of late, it is very true, been a great increase in the amount paid, by the Government, for public printing, over those for preceding years; but that increase, it has been very satisfactorily shewn, has not been occasioned by an increase in the rates of charging, in the office of the Queen's Printer, but only because increased services have been rendered in it, in consequence of the beneficial changes lately made in the management of public affairs, and through the increased and increasing trade and prosperity of the country. A few days ago, I was in company with the late Queen's Printer, Mr. Haszard, and the conversation turning upon the proposition for allowing a fixed salary to the Queen's Printer, he declared that no person who knew any thing about the business would ever dream of such a thing: it was, he said, perfectly ridiculous, and could never be carried into effect. Now, sir, I am even-handed justice to the printer and the public, I certainly, however, admit that the establishing of an equitable salary, in lieu of fees, for the services of the Attorney General, is quite a feasible project, although I am not satisfied that it will enable us to effect any saving of the public money. If, therefore, the Committee are disposed to agree to the clause for establishing a salary for that office, I shall not oppose it. But, if we do so, we must do it blank, we may then, by a reference to the accounts preferred against the Government by that officer, be enabled to determine at what amount his salary ought to be fixed. I, from a cursory view of those accounts, however, it shall be found that any of his charges are excessive or unwarranted; it will be our duty so to deal with them that they shall not be allowed unduly to swell the average amount of his fees, on which the salary is to be fixed. Some charges which ought not to have been made will be found in the statement of his accounts for his first year, in the office of Queen's Printer. The examination having been carefully made, it will then be easy for us to say whether we can, with due regard to justice, fix the salary at such an amount as will ensure us the services of a competent man; or we may decide accordingly. I may state, for the information of the Committee, that I had a conversation with the Attorney General this morning, in the course of which he told me that he would rather have a salary,—the amount of which should be fairly determined by the average amount of his fees,—than have his accounts taken up, every session, by the House, and commented upon, as they appeared at his pleasure.

Hon. Mr. Pope. To deliberate concerning the amount of salary which it would be proper to allow the Attorney General, in lieu of fees, would, as we have already resolved, result for the country, be labor lost, unless the salary established would be for and on account of all the public services to be rendered by him. Unless it should be so, the country would gain nothing at all by the change. The hon. member for the second District of King's County (Hon. Mr. Whelan) had strongly insisted upon allowing the Attorney General a liberal salary, (in the event of his fees being commuted for a fixed annual allowance,) in order that he might attain sufficient consideration and dignity in his office, by his style of living. He the Hon. Mr. Pope) was also of opinion that a certain dignity ought to attach to so high and important an office as that of Attorney General; but he thought, the preservation of that dignity was little regarded, when the incumbent thereof was actually engaged in prosecuting, in the very same office, the duties of which he tended his official duties, a multiplicity of other avocations. If the official income of the Attorney General was not sufficient to maintain him, in such a style of comportment as was consistent with the dignity of his office, without his being obliged to eke out that income by engaging in a variety of other non-professional pursuits, it certainly ought to be increased. But, it should not be denied that the necessity of embarking in other concerns, in no way connected with his official or professional business, and the transacting of business, in the same apartment in the office of the Attorney General was a positive degradation of the office. It was true, as the Hon. the Speaker had observed, that the appointment of the Chief Justice, (whose office was the direct stepping-stone to that of Chief Justice; and, therefore, a due regard to the dignity of the office would induce the House, in the event of its commuting the fees, in order to make the established allowance so liberal that the incumbent should not feel himself under any necessity of having recourse to such unprofessional avocations as those to which he had adverted. But, if the fees of the Attorney General should be commuted for a fixed Salary, it would, he thought, be necessary to add a clause to the Bill, providing that he should, either to go on all the circuits himself, or to pay the Solicitor General for doing so, in his stead; and, if at any time, in the event of such a provision being made, the Attorney General should feel himself obliged to devolve any part of his own especial duties upon the Solicitor, it ought to be provided that, for the performance of such services, the Solicitor General should be suitably remunerated. If the Attorney General were allowed a sufficient Salary, the claims of the country and the Government upon him for official services would be much stronger than they were at present; so much so, that it would be the express duty of the Government, with respect to that Officer, to take care and allow no shuffling, or undue postponement, on his part, in the performance of any of his official duties; and, therefore, under such an arrangement, the greatest punctuality and efficiency, in his department, might reasonably be expected. As to the establishing of a Salary for the Queen's Printer, to be in lieu of charges for all work required at his hands, by the Government, for the public service, he (Hon. Mr. Pope) did not think that it would be in effect half so good a proposed commutation upon an equitable basis: they could, it appeared to him, have no sure and direct guidance to the attainment of such an object. It would, therefore, be a view to just data in the matter, which they could make, was, he thought, to the accounts of the Queen's Printers in the other Provinces: the comparison thereof in this case, would, he had no doubt, shew Queen's Printer here, might, perhaps, throw some light upon the question; but still he thought it would be insufficient to enable them to see so clearly as to determine, upon strictly equitable basis, what ought to be the amount of remuneration for work of an indeterminate extent, involving a great, but uncertain outlay of labor and money. He had been, he was very lengthy Report of certain members of Council in Canada, being the result of enquires which had been made by them, with a view to the effecting of a reduction in the expenditure of the several governmental departments. He had examined the statement, in that Report, concerning the charges of the Queen's Printer, and compared them with those of the late and the present Queen's Printer here; and had found that the charges here were lower than similar ones in the other Provinces. He (Hon. Mr. Pope) thought, in fact, almost convinced him of the correctness of the opinion which he had, long before, been more than half-inclined to entertain, that the money raised against the amount of the charges made by the Queen's Printer was not a reasonable one. Influenced, perhaps, in some measure by that outcry, he had himself often said, concerning the emoluments of the Queen's Printer. Mr. Haszard, however indeed, he felt certain, to himself than to others—that he had a good office. But he was now convinced that, in saying so he had intended to convey more by his simple declaration, than he had, concerning the profits of that office, them facts, had they been known to him, would have warranted. Of those facts, however, a hasty glance at them had been effected, by the gentleman, for himself, during his long tenure of office, would, he thought, be quite sufficient to give the House something like an accurate conception. The office, he said, had been held by Mr. Hazard for the long period of nearly thirty years; and, in connection with it, he had also carried on, throughout the whole of that period, the business of a bookseller and stationer. Mr. Hazard, it was very well known, was not a man who had ever been slothful in business. He was, on the contrary, a man who had devoted himself to the discharge of all the duties of his official and private business; and, out of both, he had, no doubt fairly realised as much as efficient management, diligence, and economy could have enabled them to derive from them. Besides the profits arising from bissuccessful prosecution of his official and private business, he had also been fortunate enough to make a very good speculation in the purchasing of lands. But, on his now retiring from business, after having held the office of Queen's Printer for nearly thirty years, and having also had the charge of carrying on his business, for the greater part of that time, unexposed to, and undamaged by, competition in the trade, what is the great fortune which he has realized? It may, indeed, be said to be very moderate—comparatively rich; but so far is his wealth from affording undeniable evidence of the facilities which the office of Queen's Printer afforded him to amass property, that the Queen's Printer, a tailor or shoemaker, in any country town in England, having a fair run of business for the same number of years, if, like him a private man would be able to retire from business a wealthier man than he has done. In endeavoring to take a fair and impartial view of the question concerning the establishing of a salary for the Queen's Printer, it might not to be borne in mind that, on coming into the office, the incumbent was subjected to a very heavy outlay, in providing presses, types, and other necessary materials for carrying on the business of it, whilst all that any other public officer had to do, on his induction, was simply to take possession of the furnished office-room assigned him; and, that the Government of Canada, a monopoly for some years and handsome profits could sustain and reimburse him for the expenditure of capital at the outset. If any arrangement commutable for charges of the Queen's Printer should be determined upon by the House, either in the way of establishing a scale of charges, or in fixing a salary in lieu of charges, it should be so adjusted as to be lower than that of the other Colonies, or the average beneath that afforded by the aggregate of their general charges. Living might be a little cheaper here than in the other Provinces, but it was not so much cheaper as to afford the House a reason for taking a lower scale of charges than theirs. We just contemplating, he had been asked, what required public servants should, with respect to their salaries or other mode of remuneration for their services, be ground down to the lowest farthing. It would certainly be wrong, strictly to revise the charges or fees of any public officer whose emoluments of office it was, in any way, proposed to regulate anew; and it should be found, that, in the course of such revise, any excessive charges had been made, care should be taken that from such improprieties they should reap no future benefit. The hon. gentleman then concluded by saying, that he had done at the commencement of his speech, that, although he was of opinion that the proposition for establishing a certain salary, in lieu of charges, for the Queen's Printer, would be found impracticable, yet he thought the fees of office of the Attorney General might, very easily, and with due regard to justice, be commuted for a fixed salary.

Hon. the Speaker referred to the statement of the Attorney General's Accounts, in the Journal of 1852, to shew that he (the Attorney General) had repeatedly charged for his services respecting Treasury Bonds; and read some items of charges on account thereof.

Hon. Mr. Whelan explained that the Attorney General had told him, although he was in the habit of receiving and paying over sums of money, to the Treasurer, on account of Treasury Bonds, he made no charge for such services. He (Hon. Mr. Whelan) had not meant that the Attorney General made no charges for his professional services, when he had to sue parties on such Bonds.

Hon. Mr. Thornton. It was very glad that a proposition for paying the Attorney General for his professional services, by a fixed Salary, in lieu of Fees, had been brought forward. In order to be in a position to do his duties in a work upon, he would state what amount of Fees had been paid, by the Government, to the Attorney General last year. The hon. gentleman then proceeded to read, from the Journal, the Attorney General's accounts, that there had been paid to him, out of the Treasury, on account of his official service for the year 1852, to the amount of £487; of which £300 was his salary, the rest being fees. Besides this amount, it was however to be remembered, said the hon. gentleman, that the Attorney General had pocketed £168 by his proceedings for the collection of assessment taxes. He (Hon. Mr. Thornton) had never been an advocate of that mistaken economy which dictated the tying down of public servants to the discharge of the duties for the very lowest amount of remuneration, in consideration of which any person would engage for their performance. The adoption of so niggardly a policy was never productive of good results. It, on the contrary, it was frequently attended by great detriment, in different ways, to the public service. Enough, however, he thought, had been brought to light, in the very lengthy Report, to convince the necessity of prescribing a just limitation to the disbursements, from the public treasury, on account of the official services of the Attorney General. The Report, he thought, was very doing so which was afforded, to the House, by the bringing in of the Bill before the Committee would not be allowed to pass away without the positive adopting of such a limitation. There was, besides, much, he thought, connected with the management of the Attorney General's office which required amendment or correction; and he had listened with considerable satisfaction to the masterly exposure of the glaring impropriety of the Attorney General's attending to a multiplicity of private avocations, in the office assigned to him for the transaction of business in his official capacities only. That gentleman was in possession of two splendid offices; but, on entering the one or the other, you would not always find him engaged therein, either as the Attorney General, or as the Judge of Probate. On the contrary, it was very likely that, at the time of your entrance to see him in the one or the other, he would be found, that he had shut up in his inner office, engaged in the transaction of particular business, as a private banker. Now could or would any one say that the opportunity afforded, by clerking in a private banker, or money-lender, in his public offices, was not highly improper, and derogatory to that official dignity with which it was held to be invested? His accountantship of office, in his capacity of Attorney General and Judge of Probate, were not so insignificant or limited in their amounts, that he could urge necessity as a plea for so glaring impropriety. On the contrary, if the gross amount of his official income, as derived from different sources, were to be compared with that of either the Chief Justice or Attorney General, it would be found that, in a pecuniary point of view, his own appointments were the best and most desirable. In position, he was the third in law officer, but he was the first in respect to income, he was the first: and it would surely not be looking for too much self-denial at his hands, to expect him to pay so much regard to official propriety and decency, as to refrain from erecting his official apartments into a private banker's counting-room. He (Hon. Mr. Thornton) had strongly stated the amount of the official income of the Attorney General for the last year, but that amount ought not to be taken as a criterion of what it ought to be, by the Committee, in establishing a salary for that officer in lieu of Fees; for it was in his power, to make it, ought to have been, and the amount had been swelled, not only by an overstrained interpretation of the Land, Assessment Act, but by items which ought never to have been inserted in his accounts. In taking the average amount of the fees of office of the Attorney General, with a view to making it a guide in their endeavours equitably to commute those fees for a fixed salary, he had hoped the Committee would perceive the propriety of well considering whether it would not be right, in taking that average, to make considerable allowances on the score of questionable items. It was, perhaps, not so well known to some hon. members, as to himself, at the expense of how little breath, on the part of a lawyer, particularly when engaged in some particular public prosecution, considerable additions were made to their Bills of Costs; for, having held the office of Deputy Clerk of, the Crown in King's County for those years, he had acquired some little insight into the mysteries of the Law. He would just instance the making of a "*motion*" in the Supreme Court, for which a lawyer charged 10s. sterling; and the Clerk of Crown, in his capacity of the Attorney General, then before him, he found that there were four *motions* in it; and for each of them he had charged the Government 10s sterling. Now, he would ask, if "motions" cost the Attorney General any more exertion, or any greater expenditure of breath, than he (Hon. Mr Thornton) subjected himself in the Court of Chancery, when he said that House, such as "Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now go into the Order of the day;" and yet he was paid £2 sterling, by the Government, for the same. Now, if the accuracy of such items in the Bills of Costs of the Attorney General ought not, he thought, to be allowed to weigh, equally with charges for more laborious and extensive services, in his Report, as respected the amount of salary for which his fees should be commuted. The hon. gentleman then concluded by saying, that he thought it would be well to add a clause, to the Bill, the clause of the Bill which affected the Attorney General, to add another for the purpose of giving a fixed salary, in lieu of fees, to the Solicitor General also. The Solicitor General, was then the Law officer of the House, and he would take the liberty to hint that the making of that officer, *ex officio*, the Law officer of the House always, might be a very good arrangement.

[The remainder of this Debate will be given, *in a summary manner*, in the next issue of *Haszard's Gazette*. The reporter being now abolished but unless he can contrive to curtail his Reports, the columns of this paper which have hitherto so freely kept open for their publications, must be closed against them.]

R. B. Irving, Reporter.

GLEANINGS FROM LATE PAPERS.

The Swiss Government seems resolved to maintain its independence, as much as it can, against the incessant machinations of Austria. The *Tessin Gazette* says that the federal frontier guard received orders to turn back, from the Gaudia line towards Lake Lugano, an Austrian patrol, consisting of two soldiers, two guards, and a non-commissioned officer. After it had been ascertained that the territory was accidentally violated, the party were set at liberty. These unpleasant affairs are of constant recurrence, and Austria seems to provoke the Swiss, by repeated violations of their soil, so as to cause some act which shall serve as a pretext for the occupation of Tessin. But whilst the London journals give out, that Austria and Prussia have come to an agreement, not to seize upon Tessin, and the other upon Neufchatel, we must take leave to remind our contemporaries that such measures would be in the highest degree contrary to Austrian policy, and not likely to be carried into effect, unless those German powers have made up their minds to go to war, which they certainly have not.

The Hyde Family.—*Important Documents.* We learn from an authentic source, says the Ct. Jahrb. N. Z. Zeitung, that some valuable documents, comprising wills, letters, and genealogical data, have recently been found at Annapolis Royal, Nova Scotia, which will establish the claims of several families in Nova Scotia and in this Province, to the very large Hyde Estates in England, which have been lying so long for want of proper heirs, and amounting to several millions of pounds sterling. Extraordinary as these claims have been published in the American and English papers for the last fifty years, without success. Thomas Hyde, the person believed to be the rightful heir, came from Scotland in 1716, and died at Annapolis, where he was buried 103 years ago.

A meeting summoned by the mayor had been held at Newcastle, calling on the government to aid Turkey against the designs of Russia and Austria. It was numerously attended.