

# The Examiner

A WEEKLY JOURNAL OF POLITICS, LITERATURE AND NEWS.

EDWARD WHELAN

This is true Liberty, when Free-born Men, having to advise the Public, may speak free.—EURIPIDES.

[EDITOR AND PUBLISHER.]

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## Colonial Legislature.

### HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

THURSDAY, March 20.

The House was occupied in Committee a considerable part of this day in discussing the principles of the Bill sent down by the Legislative Council to prevent fraud by secret Bills of sale of personal chattels—which have been noticed at some length in the report of the Legislative Council proceedings in reference to the said Bill, and published in these columns. Hon. Mr. Palmer introduced a Bill to regulate the public printing by tender. The Bill was read a first time. The Bill to alter and amend the Act to incorporate the Charlottetown Gas Light Company was read a second time—committed to a Committee of the whole House and agreed to therein with some amendments. Ordered to be engrossed under the title of "an Act to increase the stock of the Charlottetown Gas Light Company." House adjourned until Saturday next.

SATURDAY, March 22.

Mr. Clark, in his place, presented the usual Custom House returns for the past year.

Mr. Clark presented a petition from inhabitants of Lot 18 and others, praying for the opening of a road to connect the Ferry and Irishtown settlements, by running on the line dividing lands of George Ramsay and William McKenzie. Referred to the special Committee for opening new roads.

Mr. Clark read in his place a petition of certain inhabitants of St. Eleanor's, praying that an Act may be passed to render the Legislative Council elective; but the Hon. Speaker declined to receive the petition, on the ground that it was a printed one, and contrary to parliamentary practice to entertain such.

Hon. Mr. Whelan presented a petition from inhabitants of King's County, praying for the passing of an Act to regulate the use of streams of water between mills on the same stream, and the overflowing of water by reason of mill-dams. The petition was referred to the following special Committee to report thereon by Bill or otherwise:—Messrs. Whelan, Dingwell, Wightman, Lord, Cooper, Laird, and the Col. Secretary.

The House then went into Committee of the whole on the consideration of Ways and Means (Revenue Bill.) Hon. Col. Treasurer in the chair.

#### FALSE STATEMENTS OF THE ISLANDER.

Some unimportant discussions occurred on several matters connected with the Revenue laws, when—

The Hon. Mr. LORD stated that he observed that the Editor of the *Islander* had stated that the Colony is greatly in debt. Now, Sir, I should like to know how he got the information? If the Chairman of the Committee on Public Accounts did his duty, he would not allow him to examine them. I have seen a certain gentleman going about the rooms, and all I can say is, that if his friends allowed him to examine the accounts, they acted very improperly. He asked some explanations as to the statements in the *Islander*, for according to the old fellow who edited it, the Colony was ruined.

Hon. COL. SECRETARY.—Mr. Chairman, the hon. member, in alluding to the statements which have appeared in the *Islander*, with reference to the financial state of the Colony, has asked for some explanation. Well, Sir, I do not wonder at his being surprised at the strange statements put forth, though by this time one would suppose that nothing appearing in that paper would astonish any one. His wonder as to the source from which the editor obtained his information, is much more natural. How could he obtain it save from the Committee on Public Accounts? Before going into detail on the assertions in the *Islander*, I must observe that the House may be called upon to take action if its official printer should be found guilty of falsifying public documents, for the purpose of deceiving the people. The very fact of the situation being held by the proprietor of the *Islander*, would have the effect of obtaining credence to statements, however false, and however maliciously inserted. I find, Sir, that I am charged with having received £15 for a visit of inspection to Mill River Bridge. Now, Sir, I defy the editor of the *Islander* or any other man to put his finger on a single item in the accounts, to show that I ever received one single farthing for such service. I made three or four visits to the bridge, but all at my own expense, and never made any charge for them. There was a claim made for an amount exceeding the contract, and when the Government refused to pay any thing beyond the sum specified in the agreement, the matter was referred to arbitration, and the contractors were awarded this amount. So much for the truth of that assertion.

Hon. Mr. LONGWORTH.—Mr. Chairman, we are in Committee of Ways and Means, and it certainly appears to me that it is out of order to discuss articles appearing in newspapers.

Hon. COL. SECRETARY.—It is quite proper, Mr. Chairman, the hon. member, Mr. Lord, having called attention to the statements in this paper. The next item is, £130 to the Clerk of the Council, over his stated allowance of £120. Now, Sir, the Government have nothing to do with that, the Council may pay what they please from their contingent fund; and whatever the officer alluded to receives, I believe he earns. Next we have £20 to the Assistant Clerk of the Legislative Council, and £10 to the Assistant Clerk of the Executive. Well, Sir, I contend that those amounts are very moderate for the work performed. The article continues with £100 to the Road Correspondent, being £60 more than was paid by the *ancien regime*. Now, Sir, under the old system, the Road Correspondent's office was united with that of Provincial Secretary, and it was proved here last year that it was absolutely necessary to separate them; and hon. members generally concurred in the propriety of appointing a Road Correspondent, who should also be Assistant Clerk to the Councils. The Tory party, when they last held the reins of office, decided on the appointment of an Assistant Clerk to the Councils, and also that he should receive £100 a year. This shows conclusively, as far as they are concerned, that the present Government is not liable to the charge of extravagance in respect to this office, more especially when it is borne in mind that the officer unites in his own person the functions of Assistant Clerk of the Council and those of Road Correspondent. Formerly not more than £2000 annually passed through the Road Correspondent's hands; now that officer disburses some £9000 or £10,000; and it was found impossible that his duties could be performed in the Secretary's office. Next we have £10 for indexing the laws; in this item there is no change from previous years. £100 to Mr. Daly, junior, as Private Secretary. That vote, Sir, was generally adopted by this House. The next charge is, £75 instead of £50 to the Superintendent of Public Works, and £22 10s. for travelling charges to the same officer. Now, Sir, the duties of that officer have much increased, and besides that, the Superintendent now furnishes plans without charging for them, as has formerly been the case. But the item contained in the next item will show the spirit and intention of the writer—he says £10 was paid to the Superintendent for the plan of a new market house, because he was a useful political agent. Now, it so happens, that it was not paid to Mr. Barnard at all, but, on the contrary, to one of the supporters of the Tory party, Mr. Henry Smith, who, for

ought I know, may be as useful a political agent as the other. £946 for the Colonial Building, of which we are told £14 was paid for a pole and flag on the building. No doubt the gentleman from New London, who penned this article, was astonished to see the flag of England waving over the building. The next item is £1516 10s. 6d. for Government House. That, Sir, was a legacy left us by the old Government, and about £400 went for furniture, which had to be obtained, the former not having been replaced since Sir Alexander's time. Then £300 for land near Government House. Hon. members all know why that was expended, as the propriety of the purchase was generally admitted by both sides of the House last session. £26 2s. 6d., additional to the amount provided by statute, for completing the census returns. That statement is false. It is for making an abstract of the returns. Mr. Cundall performed the former duty; Mr. McNeill the latter. The next matter refers to the pay of the Queen's Printer. As that gentleman is not in his place, I shall content myself by passing it over, and allow him to make his own observations. Then follows, £100 to Sir Alexander Bannerman for dissolving the late House of Assembly. Sir, the writer of this knew, when he penned it, that he was penning a gross falsehood. Even, were it true, it would be money well spent, as the country has derived great benefit from the dissolution. We all know that it was voted to reimburse Sir Alexander money he had advanced to Mr. Stark. The matter will be found, as the writer well knows, in the debates of last session, when it was well discussed. £300 to Mr. Stark, School Visitor, for not delivering lectures on agricultural chemistry. Now, Mr. Chairman, it has been found that the great number of schools has occupied so fully that gentleman's time, that he cannot pay the proper visits of inspection if he has to deliver those lectures. £300 for Commissioner of Crown Lands. Well, Sir, at that he is not better, and I doubt if as well, paid as certain land agents who have made fortunes from the properties entrusted to their management. £250 salary to the Surveyor General. Now, Mr. Chairman, without following the writer through the tissue of lies accompanying this item in his paper, I may say that I believe that the principle of fixed salaries is a good one; but I can assure the writer, of what he probably was well aware, that no fees are received by that officer for the many plans he has to furnish, and for each of which the fee is five shillings. This goes into the Treasury, and consequently is an offset to the amount of the salary, so far as the public chest is concerned. The next is, £37 2s. for travelling to Lot 11, to crack a bottle of wine with my friend, the Hon. Col. Treasurer. Well, Sir, I do not know how many bottles were used, but I hope that they had a good time of it. We have next, £475 12s. 10d. cost of the so-called "Ragged Regiment." Well, Sir, as the gallant Major is present, he might give us any information we might require; but I may briefly state that £1000 was placed at the disposal of the Government, by the House last session, to provide a force; and the Rent Roll Tax Bill having passed here, it was necessary that some effective protection should be provided in case of any serious disturbance; and the troops were sent to us by the British Government, which afterwards, at the instigation of the very party which make these charges, disallowed the Bill. The next item is £209 11s. 11d., Land-writer's fees. As to the comments on this and the sympathy the writer expresses for Messrs. McKinnon and LePage, I can tell him that these officers received more than any others on the Island. Now we have £9 10s. for an alleged pleasure trip of the Hon. Col. Treasurer to Halifax, to purchase a bill of exchange. Well, Sir, I hope he had a pleasant trip, but he was sent because a bill for the amount of the Patriotic Fund vote could not be obtained here. £24 10s. 2d. law costs incurred by a snatcher road overseer. Sir, it is frequently the duty of every Government to protect officers acting honestly in their official capacities, according to the circumstances of the particular case, which, in this instance, fully justified the action adopted by the Government. I have now gone through the several items, and must call the attention of the Committee to the observations which follow:—

"And what shall we say about His Excellency signing warrants for payments which he knows to be unlawful? Just this, that Governor Daly, in public honesty and decency, is no better than his Snatcher councillors, that he has obtained nearly £2000 of public plunder for his 'comforts,' and that his servants may do with the balance of the revenue as they list. That neither Mr. Daly nor any other Governor cares a straw if the top of our highest hill was forty fathoms under water, if the Island serve him for a stepping stone to a better office, and he safely floated off in another ark."

Now, Mr. Chairman, I ask any member of this Committee where is the proof that His Excellency ever received one penny of what is here termed "public plunder?" The charge is so glaringly absurd that it is hardly worth while to brand it as a gross and most malicious falsehood. If the writer supposed that he can induce the people of the Island to believe that the Governor is pocketing the public money, he has made a great mistake. Even His Excellency's fees are paid into the Treasury. Such vile slanders reflect discredit on the party which supports a paper capable of making such statements against any person holding the situation of His Excellency. As to myself, I have become so case-hardened to what appears in the *Islander* respecting myself, that I care nothing about it. I am glad to have had an opportunity of reviewing those statements, more particularly as they appear in a paper which officially publishes the debates of the House. The natural inference from their publication in this journal would be, to many minds, that they are correct. They were intended, as all the original articles of the *Islander* are, to injure the Liberal party, but misrepresentation always defeats its own objects.

Hon. Mr. LORD.—Mr. Chairman, I merely wished to elicit discussion, and I must say that it is most unfair that statements of this nature should go abroad to the public before the Committee have reported, and before the members of the Government and of this House have had an opportunity of seeing the accounts. They certainly were entitled to have a sight of them before they found their way into print. I am much surprised. It is very certain that there has been improper conduct somewhere. Hon. members may laugh, but I can tell the Chairman and members of the Committee of Public Accounts, that this matter reflects no credit on them.

Mr. McDONALD.—Mr. Chairman, as I have been alluded to by the hon. member, as being Chairman of the Committee of Public Accounts, I can tell him, that I have been unfairly charged. I have held no communication, with reference to those accounts, with any but members of the Committee. I cannot, of course, be responsible for the conduct of others.

After a short time, the Hon. Mr. Whelan was in his place, when the Hon. Mr. LORD asked an explanation of the amount alleged by the *Islander* as having been received by him. It amounted to £1035 7s. 8d., including more than £100 for stationery. It seemed a very large item, and it was but right that the public should have every information, as the charge appeared in one of the public prints.

Mr. WHELAN.—I am much obliged to my hon. friend for calling my attention to the observations which have appeared in the *Islander* with respect to myself. I need not state, I think, that so far as I am personally concerned, the misrepresentations of the paper alluded to never give me the slightest annoyance—indeed if I have any feeling at all about such a small matter, it is, that I should much rather be censured and belied than praised by such a print. But as I understand that the Hon. Col. Secretary has refuted the calumnies contained in the last No. of the *Islander*, with the exception of the paragraph relating to the Queen's Printer's accounts, which he left for me, I will content myself by stating briefly but emphatically as my command of language will allow, that there is not one single sentence referring to me in the observations alluded to, which is other than an absolute falsehood or gross perversion of facts. By what means the writer obtained possession of the figures which are so strangely misapplied, I know not; but as

the subject of the public printing will, as I perceive by the Order Book, shortly come before the House, I will take an opportunity, perhaps, when that subject comes up for discussion, to enter somewhat into detail as to the actual cost to the Colony of its public printing. It appears that I am charged with having received last year over a thousand pounds for the service alluded to; but that is wholly untrue. The whole amount of the Queen's Printer's accounts for last year was £832 16s. I need not inform the Committee that that amount does not go into the pocket of the Queen's Printer, in the same way as the salary of a public officer, but is subject to very heavy deductions for labour, paper, printing materials, and a hundred other expenses. The Queen's Printer has nothing more for his services than the profit which he can make on the work turned out of his office, in the same manner as a merchant might make profit on a bale of goods for which he had paid a heavy price in the Colonial or English market. There is no doubt that the sum mentioned by the *Islander*, as being the cost of the public printing last year, includes the charges for printing the Journals of the two branches of the Legislature; but as those journals are contract works, and can be taken by any printer who will do them at the lowest price, it is exceedingly unfair and untrue to state that they form part of the emoluments of the Queen's Printer. But, Sir, there is another statement in the paragraph relating to myself, which is a very novel one. It is this, that I received £100 for supplying the Government with stationery last year. Now, Sir, I never had stationery to sell, and I defy any one to prove that I have ever yet made a charge against the Government for stationery to the value of one sixpence. But if the very ingenious person who supplied the editor of the *Islander* with his curious statistics, would take the trouble to examine the detailed public accounts, he would find that a very large proportion of the demand for stationery was incurred by the Tory party while in power under the name of the Hon. and Palmer Government, and probably the person who gave the information to the *Islander* was a member of that Government himself.

The Committee having risen, the Chairman reported the following resolution, as agreed to in Committee, and it was adopted by the House.

"Resolved, that the several rates and duties imposed and levied under the Act 18th Vic., cap. 35, be continued and amended for one year, from and after the first day of May next."

Messrs. Clark, Warburton and Wightman were appointed a Committee to prepare and bring in a Bill pursuant to the foregoing resolution.

The Bill to increase the Stock of the Charlottetown Gas Light Company was read a third time and passed. The House then adjourned.

MONDAY, March 24.

The Bill to incorporate the trustees of St. David's Church at Georgetown was read a second time, committed to a Committee of the whole House, and agreed to therein without amendment. Ordered to be engrossed.

The Hon. Col. Treasurer, from the Committee appointed therefor, presented a Bill for raising a revenue, which was read a first time.

In the afternoon sitting the Hon. Col. Secretary presented by message from His Excellency the Lieut. Governor the first report of the Royal Commissioners of the Patriotic Fund to the Queen; and also a despatch from the Secretary of State for the Colonies, relating to certain Acts of the last Session of the Provincial Legislature, submitted for Her Majesty's confirmation.

The Bill for raising a Revenue was then read a second time—committed to a committee of the whole House, and progress reported thereon.

[The discussions on this Bill, in the course of its progress through Committee, had principally reference to the establishment of Bonded Warehouses, first in Charlottetown and secondly in those other considerable ports of the Island where the Governor and Council might deem a bonded warehouse necessary. Considerable debate also occurred on the proposition to lessen, in connection with the establishment of bonded warehouses, the length of credit to be given on bonds.

The provisions of the Bill relating to bonded warehouses were ultimately agreed to.]

Mr. H. HAVILAND, by leave, presented a Bill for barring estates tail, which was read a first time. House adjourned.

TUESDAY, March 25.

Mr. Munro presented a petition from inhabitants of Lot 50, setting forth that petitioners are tenants residing on those parts of said Township known as fishery reserves, and praying for the adoption of measures to secure them the undisturbed use and occupation of such reserves, until required for the purposes for which they were originally intended. Referred to a Special Committee to report thereon by Bill or otherwise.

The Act to facilitate the performance of the duties of Justices of the Peace, &c., was read a third time and passed.

Mr. Douse, from the special Committee appointed therefor, presented a Bill to alter and amend the Act incorporating the Minister and Elders of St. John's Church, Belfast, which was read a first time, and referred to the Private Bill Committee.

The Bill for barring Estates Tail was read a second time, committed to a Committee of the whole House, and progress reported thereon.

The Private Bill Committee having reported on the St. John's Church Bill, it was read a second time, committed to a Committee of the whole House, and progress thereon reported.

The Bill for raising a revenue was again committed to a Committee of the whole House, and progress reported.

Conferences were then held with the Legislative Council on the Licence Act.

The Hon. Col. Secretary, from the Committee appointed to report by Bill or otherwise on the expediency of making a provision for Schoolmasters under the Free Education Act, when obliged from continued sickness or old age to discontinue teaching, presented to the House the report of the said Committee, which report being again read, was agreed to as follows:—

"Your Committee appointed to report on the expediency of making provision for sick or aged teachers appointed under the Free Education Act, have to report—that they are of opinion if a provision could be made it would tend to encourage teachers to greater exertions to provide permanent residences, and would be an inducement to them to continue teaching in the Island.

"Your Committee are not aware of any method whereby to provide retiring allowances for teachers, other than by their paying a small annual sum, say one or two pounds, into the Treasury, for a certain number of years, previous to the individual making application for such retirement, and then by producing a certificate of incapacity to teach, from the Board of Education, to the Government, he or she should be entitled to receive a sum not exceeding twenty pounds per annum; but as the Free Education Act will expire next year, your Committee recommend that the further consideration of the subject be deferred until the next session."

The Legislative Council sent down an Act which they had passed, relating to the Indians of this Island, which was read a first time.

The Bill to incorporate the Trustees of St. David's Church, Georgetown, was read a third time and passed.

The Legislative Council sent down, agreed to, with one amendment, the Bill intitled "an Act to facilitate the performance of the duties of Justices of the Peace in this Island, with respect to persons charged with indictable offences." The amendment was agreed to, and the Bill sent back to the Council. House adjourned.

#### BONDED WAREHOUSES.

In the afternoon sitting the House resumed the consideration of the Revenue Bill, when the subject of the establishment of Bonded Warehouses came on for discussion. Our Reporter was not present during the whole of the debate, but when he took his seat—

The Hon. Mr. PALMER was expressing his opinion in favor of Bonded Warehouses. He considered that the means to be adopted to remedy the inconvenience at present experienced should be discretionary with the Government. The absence of such warehouses had long been a reproach to the large mercantile community of Charlottetown. As had been observed by the Hon. Col. Secretary, parties selling on commission had the opportunity of turning their money twice before they need pay the duties; and it was but false economy to make the cost an objection to so great an improvement.

Hon. Mr. LONGWORTH considered that the Warehouse would probably be a source of revenue, as the only current expense would be the salary of the keeper; whose duty it would be to receive the rents. Great benefits had been found to result from such places of deposit in Halifax and other places, and such would probably be the case here, where only seven-eighths of the duty were allowed on goods exported. This he considered a hardship.

The Hon. the SPEAKER said, that the real question was whether it was desirable to shorten the period of credit at present allowed to importers. Though in favour of the Warehouse system, he would not abbreviate the present term of credit. True, that the practice in other countries was different, but money was more abundant in them than with us. Our present credit was not too long. We allowed twelve months without, and three months with interest, making fifteen months in all.

Hon. COL. SECRETARY thought nine months without and three with interest sufficient on all sums over £100. The present extended credit might operate unfairly to sureties. He considered that it would be better to give three, six and nine months credit on all sums under £100.

Hon. Mr. WIGHTMAN considered the time at present allowed was well adapted to the circumstances of the country. A person importing goods to the value of £1000 is frequently unable to realize a sale and profit on those goods within twelve months. True, that there were numerous warehouses in Halifax, but these were rendered necessary by the fact of Halifax being a great depot for West India produce, intended for exportation. The case was different here, where all the importations were intended for home consumption. He was in favour of establishing warehouses, as the system would enable an importer to go round and make bargains for the sale of his goods. There would be an additional expense, but he thought that the sooner we had warehouses the better.

Mr. H. HAVILAND could not consider the Government entitled to the appellation of a happy family. The Hon. Mr. Lord, whom he might consider as an honorary member, was opposed to Warehouses. The Hon. Colonial Secretary was favourable to Warehouses and short credits, while the Hon. Mr. Wightman was in favour of Warehouses and long credits. Had we had Bonded Warehouses years ago, we would have been in a much more prosperous condition now. The Island would have been a depot for the supply of the small traders in the ports in the Gulf, who now draw their supplies from Halifax, and who would find this a more convenient resort than the distant port of Halifax. He was surprised at this being an open question. The leader of the Government should have called his supporters together and got their opinions, instead of coming to the House for votes from among the ranks of his own supporters, the opposition and the "loose-fish."

Hon. COL. SECRETARY said that the Hon. Mr. Wightman had commenced by arguing as though he were opposed to the introduction of the Warehouse system. No man on the Island was better able to pay for his importations than that gentleman. Warehouses would give us a large proportion of the Canadian trade, as it would diminish the risk of the long voyage from Halifax to Canada. The produce of the fisheries and lumber were sent to Halifax and the West Indies, and the returns were made in the West India produce shipped to Halifax, because that place had Bonded Warehouses. At present Canada received a large portion of its supplies via Portland. The Warehouse system would save a large amount of money and encourage the trade of the Island. Under the present system, at the opening of the navigation, it may be reported that prices of West India produce are rising in Halifax, and are likely to rise; the consequence is, that orders to a large extent are given, a glut ensues, and the importer may be ruined. Such contingencies would be to a certain degree prevented by the establishment of Warehouses.

Mr. YEO saw no benefit from Warehouses. He had never listened to greater nonsense than had been urged in favour of them. The only good would arise to the man who should be paid for looking after them. Could not a man buy goods and deposit them in his cellar? The circumstances of Halifax and St. John were different from those of the Island. Here we could not lay in a stock of goods from November to May.

Hon. Mr. WIGHTMAN was surprised at the opposition of the hon. member. The Hon. Col. Secretary had mistaken his meaning. He had not argued against Warehouses, but merely intended to shew that the benefits to be derived here would not equal those enjoyed in Halifax, from the different nature of the business carried on by individual merchants.

Mr. McDONALD thought the present system, by which an importer of goods, the duties on which amount to £10, received the same credit as he who imported property liable to £49 duty, required alteration.

Mr. CLARK was surprised that hon. members should not recognize the necessity of shortening the present period of credit. A man may be perfectly good for the amount of duties at the time he executes the bond, but in fifteen months may be ruined. It was hard for the Collector to know a man's position. He was in favour of doing away with £10 bonds, as merchants import just enough to make the duties come to £10, in order to get the credit. He would reduce the time from twelve to nine months.