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THE FIRST SESSION OF THE FIRST REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NEW SOUTH WALES.

(From the Australian.)

The Session of the Legislative Council which closed on Thursday last, presents subject-matter for most serious contemplation on the part, not only of the colonists of New South Wales, but of every individual who may be directly or indirectly interested in the progress of British colonization. The New Council entered upon its functions at a time when the peculiar exigencies of the colony called for more than ordinary consideration and remedial enactment, and when the introduction of popular representation into the constitution, was regarded by all parties with almost extravagant hope. The general election had, on the whole, proved auspicious to the cause of Conservative principles. The two or three democratic leaders, who upraised their standards, made but few proselytes, and the real character of their high-sounding professions and warm aspirations was quickly understood. With the exception of a small minority, whose opinions tended to violent extremes, the bulk of the elective members were rational, though firm and decided, friends of political improvement—men determined to promote, temperately but strenuously, such changes in our system as the acknowledged difficulty of the period, and the alarming state of the colony, demanded. And any apprehension that the non-elective portion of the House would prove a barrier to improvement, or check in any degree the progress of useful legislation, was at once dissipated, by reason of the high character and independence of the Nobles of the Crown, both official and unofficial. From a Legislative Council thus constituted, everything was to be hoped; nor were they to blame, perhaps, who hoped all things, and believed all things, and who imagined, somewhat too sanguinely, that all they had a good right to hope would be at once effected.

We fear that the prevailing sentiments of the community at the close of the Session are exceedingly different from those with which they regarded its opening; and that feelings of disappointment have succeeded the warm expectations which so many of us entertained in August last. But how are we to reconcile the political anomalies which the past Session presents? What has been the cause of our Legislative idleness? Why will the Statute book of the council be comprised in its comparatively moderate space? Debate after debate has arisen on a variety of questions: the state of commerce and agriculture; the monetary confusion arising out of our excessive speculations; the working of our currency and banking systems; amendments of the common law; and other numerous and important points, have afforded ample field for long and elaborate discussions. Yet what improvements, immediately bearing upon the general interests of the community, have the council effected? To this question we can only reply that, as a Legislative Assembly, it will ever be honourably distinguished for one great measure of public policy and enlightened humanity—THE ABOLITION OF IMPRISONMENT FOR DEBT—but that, with the exception of this solitary effort, it can boast no other statute to mark its existence. We must distinctly state that we are not complaining of the moderate bulk of the Statute book, except as we had hoped for enactments which the emergency of the times demanded, or which should sweep away some of the rubbish of past legislation. And in enumerating the measures which have obtained the final sanction of the Legislature, our objections have reference not to their fewness, but to their comparative ineptitude.

From the opening of the Session, on the 1st of August last, to its prorogation, on the 28th ult., the House sat 86 days; or, to descend to nicer computation, we will observe that its sittings occupied 437 hours; and the following are the actual legislative measures which have been completed during that time:—

1. Australian Auction Company Act (Act for continuing).
2. Slaughtering Cattle Act (Act to amend).
3. Preferable Lien Act.
4. Solvent Debtors Act.
5. Committed Felons' Discharge Act.
6. Publicans Licensing Act (Act to amend).
7. Savings' Bank Act (Act to amend).
8. Distillation Laws (Act to amend and explain).

9. Maintenance of Light Houses Act.
10. Friendly Societies Act.
11. City Rates Act.
12. Ports and Harbours Act (Act to amend).
13. Sheriff Act.
14. Lunatic Act.
15. Campbelltown District Act.
16. Registry Act (Act to amend).
17. Magistrates of Sydney and Melbourne Jurisdiction Act.
18. Insolvent Act (Act to amend, and to provide for the Abolition of Imprisonment for Debt).
19. Ad Valorem Duties Act.
20. Appropriation Act.
21. Water Police Act (Act to amend).
22. Doubly Convicted Offenders Act.

In addition to these Acts, three other measures, namely, the Sydney Dispensary Bill, the Monetary Confidence Bill, and the Tariff Bill, passed the council, and were reserved by the Governor for the signification of her Majesty's pleasure; whilst, independent of various matters of an initiatory nature on which the attention of the council was necessarily directed during their Maiden Session, the foundations were laid for many beneficial changes both in our laws and institutions, which, it is to be hoped, the next Session will see accomplished.

It may be urged, probably, that, under every circumstance, the above is a favourable result; that, under the extravagant expectations raised at the commencement of their labours, whatever was done by the House must needs fall short of the wished for point, and that any thing, how great soever that could be done, would have left the constituencies at liberty to say it was too little, because they had expected much more; not to mention, that, by a well known law of our nature, what we want is ever far more prized than all we have obtained. And lastly, it may be urged, that the necessity of occupying a large portion of the first Session with matters of an initiatory nature, affords a reason, some will call it an excuse, for the various sins of omission with which our legislators are chargeable.

With every wish to avoid the idle clamour with which Legislatures are usually assailed at the close of their Sessions, we are afraid we cannot suffer our representatives to plead any of the above excuses in justification of the unprofitable issue of their labours. We are not about to indulge in the hackneyed phrases which are often used, till the grumblers become the dupes of their own outcry, and perhaps carry others away with the charms of "Do-nothing legislators"—"Inefficient members"—"Want of vigour"—"Interested motives"—"Vacillation," &c., &c.; but when we enter into an impartial examination of the Legislative labours of the past Session, we must admit that the result is discouraging and unsatisfactory. And so far from seeing in the foregoing long list of measures any subject of praise to the House, or consolation to the colony, we regard them as convulsions of weakness, and behold in this busy and feverish restlessness, the surest symptoms of weakness and disorder.

During the most valuable part of the Session, the whole time of the members was engrossed by wild and fanciful theories, which were brought forward as extraordinary remedies for the extraordinary emergency of the times; and sufficient pains were certainly taken by the learned propounders of those schemes, to overload the lengthy discussions with the greatest possible quantity of extraneous and ornamental matter, and to disguise the poverty of their arguments by ringing almost endless changes on the half dozen ideas involved in their view of the state of the country. The artificial excitement kept up by these tirades prevented any really useful subject from being fairly canvassed; the whole current of practical legislation was diverted or dammed up; and the orators of the assembly, tinged by the prevailing opinions and passions of the hour, exhibited in their nightly speeches, the influence of that spirit of innovation by whose impulses they were swayed, and by whose power they were actuated. "A spirit of innovation," said Mr. Burke, "is generally the result of a selfish temper and confused views," and the truth of this axiom has been fully proved by some of our innovating legislators, who, like weak men, in private life, in perplexity, have tried all topics, multiplied projects and shifts, and flown about to every expedient, without calculating how they were hereafter to find time or power to fashion them to any useful purpose. How much valuable time was wasted in discussing those useless chimeras, the Solvent Debtors Act, the Preferable Lien Act, the Usury Bill, and the Monetary Confidence Bill; and to what useful purpose will the two former measures be fashioned now that they have passed into law, or how will our legislators find time to consider the varied suggestions arising from the elaborate details with which the latter questions were entangled during their discussion in the House?

Reductions and other economical arrangements in the establishments and the revenue, have also occupied a large proportion of the time of the Council, and the consideration of the Estimates of Expenditure was an order of the day which appeared an immovable fixture on the paper. The elective members take their stand on the question of finance, and point with much com-

placency to the said economical arrangements, but as far we can understand the details of many of the late reductions in the public departments, they appear to have proceeded on a very doubtful principle. The leaders in the attack upon the Estimates of the Government were guided by one idea only. Their whole idea of finance, as Mr. Therry observed, seemed to be embodied in two words—*reduction or abolition*—and when they had abolished the offices of nearly all the Police Magistrates of the territory, and exhibited in almost every other department of the public service, a numerical diminution of present expenditure, they really fancied they had done all that the Colony could ask from enlightened financiers.

We are somewhat at issue with our ultra-economists on this point. We admit, to the fullest extent, that the business of a country, like the business of an individual, should be conducted in the most economical manner; but by economy we do not mean a delusive and temporary parsimony, but a comprehensive system which has reference, not only to present necessary retrenchments, but also to future contingencies, to eventual wants, to solid, permanent, and prospective savings and security. It is no economy in a settler to reduce his stockmen and labourers to a scale below the duties they may have to perform—or to risk, for example, his sheep in economising the number and wages of his shepherds. It is no economy to save the expense of the superintendent or storekeeper, who checks the expenditure of the station, or directs the issues of the supplies. Such economy makes a present saving, but it ever produces ultimate ruin; and sincerely do we trust that it may not turn out to be the kind of economy that our Legislative financiers have been practising.

We have observed that during the Session, the foundations were laid for many beneficial changes both in our laws and our institutions, which it is to be hoped the next Session will see accomplished, and we should do the Council great injustice did we refuse to praise for the able discussions, the judicious reports, and the valuable mass of evidence brought forward on the important subjects of National Education, Immigration, Monetary and Commercial state of the colony, Land Regulations, &c. The vast amount of labour bestowed on these subjects ought not to be passed over in silence, and to the Chairmen and Members of the Select Committees, is the colony deeply indebted for the unwearied assiduity with which they have laid the foundation of enlarged plans of improvement, and laboured at those necessary preliminaries, the merits of which are not at once intelligible to those, who, for the proceedings of their representatives, look at the reports of the debates alone.

This retrospect of acts accomplished and labours performed, concise though it be, may bear to our succeeding labours the same useful relation as a preamble proven to an Act of Council, and it may be useful to those superficial observers, to whom coming events cast no shadow before. We have studiously refrained from alluding to individual members, and have confined ourselves to the actual results of their sittings, but in closing these remarks we must observe that nothing in the whole demeanour of the first Representative Assembly of New South Wales was more to be admired, than the high tone of courtesy, and the gentlemanly feeling, which marked the discussions, and pervaded the minutest proceedings of the Session. For ourselves, we have many thanks to offer for valuable assistance and polite attentions cordially given to us in the discharge of our duties as journalists; and to the Speaker, to each and every honorable Member, and to the various *attachés* of the Chamber, we, on the part of the Press, return our sincere acknowledgments.

A MUSICAL PADLOCK.—A certain old lady in Lancaster, whenever she hires a servant, asks him if he can whistle? On being requested to explain the cause of such a singular question, she replied, that when her servant went down to draw ale, she always made him whistle until he returned, by which means she insured his sobriety.

DEATH FROM KRESOTE.—Dr. Boardman, of Hartford, U.S., lost his life from using this dangerous nostrum for the tooth-ache. A particle of it got into his throat, and caused such an inflammation as to stop the breathing passage.

TOO GOOD BY HALF!—A poor law commissioner at Bath has discovered a system by which he can make out of a pint of water a quart of milk, and have enough left to make cream for the commissioner's tea!—*Punch.*

An elderly gentleman, travelling in a stage coach, was amused by the constant fire of words kept up between two ladies. One of them at last kindly inquired if their conversation did not make his head ache. To which he replied, "No, Ma'am; I've been married eight-and-twenty years."

Profane swearing is properly a superfluity of naughtiness, and can only be considered as a sort of pepper-corn rent in acknowledgment of the devil's right of superiority.—*Robert Hall.*

The British Association has, since its establishment, expended £83,000 in scientific investigations.

—Scotch apparel is all the rage everywhere in Paris with ladies and gentlemen, and the plaid is seen in every street.

—There are scores of persons who would never dream of walking into a tailor's shop and asking for the gift of a waistcoat, or into a hatter's and begging to be favoured free gratis with a hat, yet can see no impropriety in calling upon the publisher of a newspaper for the gratuitous announcement of a course of lectures, or a patent fly trap, or any other notion, in the bringing of which before the public they happen to have an interest.—*Nantucket Inquirer.*

How to Govern Ministers.—Salaries are a never-ending theme for you: officials shouldn't be paid at all; the honour is enough for 'em; a patriot serves his country for nothing'. Take some big salary text, and treat in this way:—says you, there's John Doe's salary; it is £730 a-year—that is £3 a-day. Now, says you, that is sixteen common labourers' pay at 2s. 6d. each per day; shall it be said that our great marmouth official is worth sixteen free citizens, who toil harder and are worse than he does? Then take his income for ten years; he has received the enormous sum of £7500; then run over all the things £7500 would effect on roads, bridges, schools, and charge him with havin' been the means of robbin' the country of all these blessin's: call 'em blessings, pampered minions, bloated leeches.—*Star-Stick.*

—A model filter invented by Mr. Stuckey, has been exhibited in the presence of Lord Brougham and others, which, although only five feet square, filtered thoroughly the New River water at the rate of upwards of two millions of gallons per day. His Lordship has strongly recommended it to the Government and to the committee on the health of large towns. Mr. Professor Phillips gave evidence of the efficacy of the filtration, which has the rare merit of getting rid of the dirt which accumulating, produces malaria, and occasions great expense in all other systems of filtration.

THE BANKRUPT LAWS: AN IMPORTANT CLAUSE.—The new Act contains a clause to the effect that any person adjudicated a bankrupt after its passing who shall refuse to surrender himself, or to disclose all his property, or to state when he sold, assigned or transferred any part of it, or to give up all his books and papers; or any one removing, concealing, or embezzling any part of his estate to the value of £10, shall be deemed guilty of felony, and be liable to be transported for life, or for no less than seven years; or shall be liable to be imprisoned, with or without hard labour, in any common goal, penitentiary, or house of correction, for any term not exceeding seven years.

EXPORT OF HORSES.

To the Editors of the Sydney Morning Herald.

GENTLEMEN,—As an inducement to some of our large stud proprietors to export horses to Madras and Calcutta, I beg to forward you the account sales of a batch of horses sent from Normanby, and sold in Calcutta, by Messrs. Mackenzie, Lyall, and Co., on the 4th of March last.

Lot.	Height.	Ages.	Price.
1. Bay gelding	15 2 1/2	5 yrs.	1150 rs.
2. Bay ditto	15 2 1/2	5 "	630
3. Bright bay ditto	16 1	5 "	1500
4. Bay ditto	16 1	5 "	off 1450
5. Brown ditto	15 1	4 "	off 650
6. Ditto ditto	15 1 1/2	4 "	590
7. Bay ditto	15 3 1/2	5 "	480
8. Bay ditto	15 3	5 "	400
9. Dark bay ditto	15 3	rising 5	610
10. Ditto ditto	15 1	5 yrs.	660
11. Brown mare	16 0 1/2	5 "	off 910
12. Ditto ditto	15 3 1/2	5 "	off 680
13. Bay gelding, lame, not sold			
14. Bay gelding	16 0	5 "	730
15. Dapple grey ditto	14 3	rising 5	900
16. Ditto ditto gelding	15 0	4 "	off 810
17. Dark grey ditto	15 0 1/2	6 "	950
18. Light grey ditto	15 0 1/2	6 "	off 680
19. Chestnut ditto	15 1	5 "	800
20. Bright bay ditto	15 3	4 "	off 710
21. Brown gelding	16 0	5 "	off 750
22. Chestnut ditto	15 3	5 "	610
23. Ditto ditto	15 0 1/2	4 "	off 550
24. Bay ditto	15 3	5 "	off 630
25. Bay ditto	15 2	4 "	off 680
26. Bay ditto	15 3	5 "	off 1030
27. Bay ditto	15 2	4 "	off 920
28. Dark grey ditto	15 1	5 "	1200
29. Chestnut, sick, not sold.			

Total amount realised 21,690 rs.
Or rather better than £80 each.

It appears from lots 11 and 12, that mares are as valuable as geldings. The ages ought to be a hint to our exporters, as it stands to reason that animals whose joints are firmly knit, and muscles fully developed, can stand a voyage better, and be landed in finer condition, than growing animals; and, after all, good condition is everything in selling.

Yours, obediently,

J. C. WHITE.

Pickering, Hunter River, Jan. 1.