

THE SEAT OF GOVERNMENT.

THE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION—AMERICA AND QUEBEC RAILWAY—THE HANSARD BEET SUGAR EXEMPTION—COMMITTEE OF SUPPLIES—ELEVATOR AT HALIFAX AND LAKE SUPERIOR DEBT—CREDIT FONCIER BILLS—THE SUPREME COURT—NATURALIZATION etc., etc.

(From Our Special Correspondent.)

OTTAWA, March 12th, 1881.

The report of the Civil Service Commissioners has appeared during the week, and its leading features have been published by the newspapers. It contains some practical suggestions of detail which may be useful in some of the departments. It really could not do less from the strong manner in which the Civil Service is represented in the Commission. But its leading feature, and the single point of the report which at all calls for serious discussion is a proposal to make a radical change in the mode of admissions to, and promotions in, the civil service. It proposes to do away altogether with the present mode of admissions and promotions, and to substitute in the place of the Government a Board of three members, to be composed of men holding an independent position and capable of commanding general confidence; one member of the Board to be a French Canadian; and all to be appointed in the same manner and to hold office on the same tenure as the judges. The estimated cost of such Board is \$25,500 per annum and it would hold periodical sittings at Halifax, Charlottetown, St. John, Montreal, Ottawa, London, Victoria, and Winnipeg. It is somewhat naively intimated that this Board would be as free from political influences as the judges. It is stated in the report that this proposal is supported by the evidence taken by the commission; but I am informed that some of the ablest men who were examined gave evidence the very reverse. There is a note appended to the report that Mr. Filton, one of the Commissioners, signed the report subject to his opinions expressed in a minority report on certain points, and that Dr. Tâche, a man of great ability and long experience, declined to sign the report at all, intimating his intention of presenting a minority report, so soon as his department duties will permit him to do so.

There can be no doubt that the well regulating of the Civil Service is one of the most important functions of a Government, and that in its absence the wheels will not run smoothly. But I think there will be great doubt in the mind of any man who is not a mere tyro in political studies and experience, whether the substitution of a practically irresponsible bureaucracy of three, will be any improvement on the responsibility of ministers to Parliament, which is always open to sharp criticism and check from the opposition. To my mind the reverse would be the case, and instead of progress we should have a decidedly retrograde step. We obtained our principle of the responsibility of ministers after a long and hard struggle. It has on the whole worked well; and it would be folly to sacrifice a very large and also essential portion of it to meet the views of a few doctrinaires who, however great may be their ability and experience in their own pursuits, are not men from whose hands one would be willing to take a change of this sort. I think, moreover, the supposition that such a bureau could be free from political influence is an absurdity. This bureau would probably find it more difficult to satisfy the party which did not appoint it, than the deputy heads of departments have done at least in some cases the parties who did not appoint them.

Another feature of this report is the substitution of competitive examination for the present mode of appointments, together with probation. The latter which is already provided for would be an unmixed benefit, if effectively carried out, out, and of the former, a good deal may be said on both sides.

On Monday, the Ontario and Quebec Railway Bill was finally passed by the House of Commons, the friends of the Toronto and Ottawa Railway having fought it to the very end. This project appears to have been taken up on a supposition that the Toronto and Ottawa, whatever it might ostensibly appear to be, was in the Grand Trunk interests. At any rate, two such rival roads as allowed by these two charters, could not run together, and it seems to me that granting the new charter, is, to a larger degree, to destroy property in the old.

There was also a debate on the Hansard question. Sir John Macdonald spoke strongly in favour of its being kept up in order to preserve a record of parliamentary speeches. Probably, this is the only way in which such a record could be adequately preserved. There have been undoubtedly many able and elaborate speeches well worth preserving; but *per contra*, we have had reams of mere repetition and rubbish. The vote of the House was in favour of maintaining the Hansard.

On Tuesday, an important resolution was passed by the House of Commons after a good deal of discussion, to exempt from excise duty for a period of eight years from 1st July next all beet root sugar manufactured in Canada. A resolution of this nature is certainly in accord with the national policy; but if made a solemn act of the Parliament of Canada, it may move a hearing upon the revenue, which is not fully appreciated. It may be found that Canada is well adapted to the growth of the Sugar Beet and its manufacture into sugar, and if this can be done with facility and without paying excise

duties, Parliament may be called upon to provide in some other way for the large revenue now derived from imported sugar. It is found that in France and Germany, the excise duties on the saccharine products of the beet furnish a large revenue. This may come in Canada, and such an industry would imply very important agricultural improvement; but then, there is the drawback of its hurting to a large extent the trade in raw sugar with the West Indies, in exchange for our dried fish and other northern products, a trade which it is of the highest importance for Canada to foster. Mr. Colby, who is the able promoter of this beet root sugar enterprise, tried to get a resolution passed also, to have the machinery and implements used in the manufacture admitted duty free. But the majority felt that this was asking too much, Sir John Macdonald refusing to consent to such a reversal of the National Policy, and the amendment was negatived.

On Wednesday there was a good deal of sharp debating in the Committee of the Whole on some items of the Supply Bill; on one item of \$15,000 for salary and expenses for some arbitrators on some Intercolonial Railway claims, Mr. Anglin intimated that some members of the Government were interested in having these claims settled in this manner, referring to the Minister of Justice having, before he took office, acted as counsel for some of the claimants. Nothing was made out, and the Minister of Justice retorted sharply upon Mr. Anglin. The item passed, but nothing tends more to lower the character of the House than unsubstantiated personal reflections of this nature. There was a large item of \$133,000 for the erection of an elevator at Halifax, for the purpose of promoting winter trade in grain over the Intercolonial Railway. The possession of the railway by the Government probably justified a vote of this nature, which otherwise would be open to question, especially in view of the jealousy there is of spending any Dominion money for the promoting the trade or other interests of any of the towns or Provinces. On this point I may mention there has been a delegation here during the week, trying to get the Government to assume the Lake St. Peter debt. They have, however, found there has been great difficulty, and what they have obtained appears in a resolution of Sir Leonard Tilley to amend the Act so as to reduce the rate of interest from five to four per cent., and to repeal the provision providing for the formation of a sinking fund. This, while not assumption, is a reduction of 20 per cent. on the regular charges, in addition to the charges for the sinking fund; and, of course, in that far is a great relief. But that work ought never to have been taken out of the hands of the Government in the first place, it being simply and purely one of the great cauls of the Dominion.

Two other measures of very great importance were finally passed on Wednesday night—viz., the Credit Foncier bills. These will be the means of introducing a large amount of French capital into the country, which will cheapen the rate of interest and very probably add a stimulus to industries, especially in the Province of Quebec. Mr. Coursol doubted the competence of the Dominion Parliament to give charters of this nature, but Sir John Macdonald thought there could be no question of this, a view in which Mr. Blake and Mr. Macdougall concurred. A curious point arose with respect to these bills. The Quebec Legislature gave a charter to one of these companies, with exclusive rights for twenty years in the Province of Quebec, a provision which will be rendered nugatory by the Act of the Dominion Parliament.

There was a long debate on Mr. Girouard's bill to abolish the appellate jurisdiction of the Supreme Court. I have not space to give you a summary of this, but may say that the French members generally have a very strong feeling against the jurisdiction, and, in fact, against the Court itself, which they do not hesitate in private to declare is one of the absurdities of our legislation. Mr. Girouard said he should renew his motion every session, so long as he remained in Parliament, unless he obtained the end he desired. Sir John Macdonald promised that the question should be taken up by the Government during the recess, and if no solution of the difficulties could be found, a commission should be appointed, on which the Quebec Bar should be represented; but he stated distinctly that, under the terms of the B. N. A. Act, this Court must have appellate jurisdiction over all the Provincial Courts, or be done away with altogether.

On Thursday, Dr. Orton introduced a bill to prevent agents of foreign railways and others from holding out inducements to persons to emigrate from Canada. We should have in this a new principle in our legislation, in favour of which there might be something said, in view of the great extent to which the evil complained of is carried. But it is probably altogether too late in the session to consider seriously any question of this nature.

On motion to go into Committee of Supply, Mr. Blake moved a resolution declaring that the Government had increased the rate of taxation from 14.03 per cent in 1877-78 to 19.70 in 1879-80—that the rate of taxation is excessive and should be reduced. He made a speech condemning the policy of the Government, to which Sir Leonard Tilley replied. The debate involved the whole question of the National Policy. Sir Leonard contended in reply that the taxation *per capita* was less per head than in any year since 1873-74, and with regard to the surplus for this year, as the taxation *per capita* was not increasing, he thought the people would be con-

tent to wait another twelve months and see if the circumstances of the country would then warrant a reduction. Sir Richard Cartwright supported Mr. Blake, and Mr. White, of Cardwell, followed, making an apt and clever reply. The motion of Mr. Blake was defeated by a vote of 131 to 53. A large number of items of supply were got through with, the House sitting till nearly 2 a.m.

On Friday several measures were advanced a stage in the House of Commons, among others a bill of Mr. James Macdonald, the Minister of Justice, to amend the law relative to the naturalization of aliens. He explained that his object was to confer by one law the same privileges on aliens as by the Imperial Act. This bill came from the Senate, it having been passed in that House through all its stages. The rights conferred on foreigners will not affect their relations with their own governments, but give them the rights of British subjects in all other parts of the world. Nothing more can be done. The German Empire, for instance, will not recognize any law interfering between it and its subjects, and however and wherever naturalized, will immediately arrest any person who may have left Germany while owing military duty. In the case, however, of those Germans who may have left Germany before the age of military duty began, or after it has been rendered, there would be no molestation in the event of their returning to Germany.

The Senate has decided by a small majority to amend the Scott Act so as to allow the sale of light wines and beer in districts to which this law may be applied,—a proceeding which does not very much please the temperance men.

OUR ILLUSTRATIONS.

In spite of the refusal of Sir Richard Cartwright and his followers to admit the prosperity of the country, there can be no doubt of the genuine revival of trade everywhere, and the crowded store which our artist has represented is an emphatic protest against the pessimist views of the opposition. So much in explanation of our cartoon of this week.

We illustrate on the next page the last of the skating carnivals at Halifax, N. S., which took place on Monday, the 28th ult. The spectators were more numerous than those present at any of the other carnivals this winter, the promenade downstairs being jammed the first half of the evening and the gallery containing almost as many. The crowd on the ice was not quite as great as the last, but the costumes on the whole looked much better, there being more variety and not too much of the grotesque character. Three champion skaters, Mr. John S. Cummings, of St. John, Miss Fanny Youill, of Truro, and Master Daniel Holmes, of Stellarton, spent the evening on the ice for the amusement of the on-lookers. At intervals, Mr. Cummings and Miss Youill would take the centre of the ice and there go through some most difficult evolutions gracefully and easily, and Master Holmes also showed himself very skilful in his management of the skates, creating remarks of wonder at his performances. The latter and Miss Youill appeared in fancy dresses one as a "Spanish Toreador" and the other as "Evening Star." The ice kept very good throughout the night. It became covered with water towards the end but the only bad result from this was in falling, which befell a few, and compelled some of them to retire in rather an uncomfortable condition. The Infants' Home Troupe and the Bed Cap Snow Shoe Club were among the characters attracting considerable attention from the audience. A good representation of Tom Thumb was much gazed at, being rendered very conspicuous by his diminutiveness. Grandfather's Clock kept erect much better than two weeks ago, and skated around with greater ease. The bands of the 101st and 1st-19th regiment discoursed excellent music.

OUR sketches from Manitoba this week represent various incidents of a settlers life in the West, a life, which, if it has its hardships has undoubtedly its enjoyments too. The smoking party in the sketch seem thoroughly disposed to forget the cold outside and to dispose themselves to take the good the gods provide them and be thankful.

THE statue of the Republic which we illustrate on our last page is considered the masterpiece of M. Dalon, one of the most illustrious of living sculptors. This splendid group is intended to be placed in the Place de Trône, Paris.

THE U. S. METEOROLOGICAL SERVICE.—It is in the "Fact Room" attached to the U. S. Meteorological Signal Service Bureau at Washington that the figures are made up for presentation to the public. Six men, with an officer, work here. The officer comes on duty at 11 p.m., and remains till 1 30 a. m., the men being relieved so as to come on duty twice in the twenty-four hours. The principal maps are made up in this apartment. No. 1. Showing details of weather over the United States. No. 2. Abnormal change of barometer in United States. No. 3. Actual changes. No. 4. Shows abnormal change of temperature. No. 5. Actual changes. No. 6. is a colored map.

At 1. A. M. the prediction goes to the country. Everything has to be charted and acted on in fifteen minutes. The officer has to predict the weather in a brief quarter of an hour. While the operation of preparing the predictions is taking place, a "translator," who stands at a desk, and who has 4,000 of the 3,000 cipher words by heart, reads the electric messages. This room is the very heart of the Signal Service.

The reports are brought in to the translator on slips of paper—a single cipher word, say "cadi," means that the wind is blowing from the West, and is of a threatening nature. The translator calls the name of the place first, then something like the following: "Thirty, thirty-one, barometer; thirty, fifteen, actual barometer; seventy-nine, temperature: seventy-four, actual temperature; humidity, East, fair; twelve miles velocity; two cirrus clouds, N.W. one cumulous stratum from N.E.; no rainfall.

The operator enters all this on the map, each map being marked by a small circle denoting station, each station being numbered. The operator is so familiar with the map that, blindfolded, he could put his finger on any station. On the walls are maps of canal routes, and the watersheds and basins of principal rivers. There is also a chart labelled "Dangerous Winds," another "Cloud Symbols," and a third "Signal Stations." On the mantelpiece is an off-shore signal board devoted to mariners.

WE omitted last week to state that in the illustration of the wreck of Nordheimer's Hall after the fire, which appeared in last week's issue, our artist had the assistance of a photograph by Messrs. Notman and Sandham of the interior of the building.

"IL LEONE DI CAPREKA."—We give a sketch of this little craft of three tons burden which after a voyage of 110 days arrived Gibraltar from Montevideo under the command of Captain Vincente Fondacaro and a crew of two men, all Neapolitans. The length of the vessel is 27 feet, her breadth amidship 7½ and depth of hold 3 feet. She is built of Carob wood, walnut, and cedar, coppered and copper fastened. Her deck laid in alternate stripes of black and white woods and all round her tiny bulwarks runs a stripe of polished brass while a little lower down is one of gilding. A small ventilator is placed just before her foremast, and a miniature binnacle in front of the opening in her deck near the stern where the steersman stands or sits. These two articles as well as all other deck fittings are made of brass. She left Montevideo on the 3rd of October, 1880, and at Lat. 30. 10. S. and Long. 47. 30. W. was nearly capsized in a gale and when 300 miles from the Island of Herro one of the Canaries, the adventurous mariners encountered a great shoal of sharks which surrounded their little ship and would have upset her if not kept at bay with boat hooks. Arriving at the port of Palmes on the 9th of January, 1881, they sailed from there on the 13th of same month and arrived here on the 23rd. She sailed from here a couple of days ago on her way to Naples via Barcelona. It is, we believe, Capt. Fondacaro's intention to visit, General Garibaldi, the original lion of Caprera and present the vessel which is worth \$4,000 either to that hero or King Humbert of Italy. It may be interesting to Canadians to know that Capt. Fondacaro gained his nautical experience in British vessels and obtained his masters' certificate in 1876 in St. John, N. B.

SALE OF A MAZARINE BIBLE.—The library of the late Lord Hampton, better known as Sir John Pakington, a select portion of which has been sold by Messrs. Sotheby, Wilkinson & Hodge, was remarkable for some exceedingly rare versions of the scriptures, among which were the first edition of Coverdale's Bible and others, Tyndale's first Pentateuch and New Testament, &c. Besides these there were the prayer-books of Edward VI., liturgies of Elizabeth, James I., and Charles I., and Laud's Scotch liturgy, with a large collection of other prayer-books, primers of Henry VIII., Edward VI., Mary, and Elizabeth, with many scarce books and some manuscripts, of which an interesting one was the large "terrier" or vellum of the estates of Sergt. Pakington, who died in 1560. The great interest of the sale was, however, enhanced by the addition of a nearly perfect copy of the famous Gutenberg or "Mazarine Bible," which did not belong to the Westwood House library, but was that discovered in the sacristy of a village church in Bavaria about four years ago, when it was purchased by Mr. G. Kamensky, the vendor on this occasion. This copy which measures 14½ inches, had the Old Testament only, and was complete to the end of Maccabees, where folio 486 and part of 506 are supplied in perfect fac-simile. The public sale of this rare book, even in an imperfect state, has occurred since the copy in the Perkins library was sold for £2,690, and this large price represents the high value set upon this first book printed with movable types. It was now put up at the close of the second day's sale, and after a very strong competition, fell to Mr. Quaritch's bidding of £760.—From the *London Times*.

LANGUAGE CAN BUT FREELY DESCRIBE the pangs of rheumatism. This malady is one of the most obstinate which tortures humanity, and yet there is a specific which will overcome it and prevent its recurrence. The name of this sovereign remedy is Dr. Thomas' Electric Oil, a combination of six of the best known medicinal oils, the remedial efficacy of which is not weakened by evaporation, since it contains no alcohol to render it volatile. On this account, as on many others, it is superior to all other liniments, lotions and other remedies used externally and has this further advantage that it is used internally as well. It is an incomparable specific for lameness, stiffness, burn's bruises, frost bites and other bodily troubles treated outwardly, and is a grand medicine in throat and lung diseases. Used for man or beast. Sold by all dealers. Prepared only by NORTHROP & LYMAN, Toronto, Ont.