

THE PUBLIC REVENUE.

THE latest official returns as to the condition of the public revenue appear to indicate some revival of general activity, as the following table of comparisons for three successive months of May helps to show:—

	1882.	1883.	1884.
Customs	\$1,772,895	\$1,921,964	\$1,735,778
Excise	538,013	587,931	458,751
Post Office	113,689	165,320	160,804
Public Works	280,283	292,675	248,423
Miscellaneous	144,571	158,670	315,110
Total	\$2,855,771	\$3,106,569	\$2,925,175

It will be seen from the above that the general receipts from the various sources named actually exceed those of 1882 by nearly \$70,000, and that in the great item of Customs' receipts the difference in favor of the year just named is under \$37,000. The improvement is made more manifest by still further extending the comparison to the months of February, March and April over the same period. The result is as follows, applicable to Customs' receipts only, the other items above quoted for the same period not also being at hand:—

	1882.	1883.	1884.
February	\$1,831,759	\$1,814,354	\$1,400,871
March	1,915,459	2,012,511	1,705,529
April	1,659,701	1,700,385	1,323,148

The most gratifying feature of this improvement is that it is not spasmodic, as often in former times when a reaction has set in, but healthily slow and likely so to continue. A satisfactory item, too, is the increase of the receipts of the Post-Office, which were \$53,000 in excess of the corresponding period of 1882 and greater, too, than those of May last year. The business of this Department is usually accepted as a reliable indication of that of the country generally. Some of the other items of augmentations are no doubt due to the increase of population through immigration, a factor which is unquestionably already making itself appreciably felt. The turn for the better now apparently being taken will go on most advantageously by being allowed to do so quietly and naturally. It would be a mistake to attempt to get up any kind of "boom" on the strength of it, that process of forced activity having at various times already cost the country most injuriously. A renewed development at this time of unnecessary importation of goods from abroad is also to be carefully shunned. The total outlook at present is that the modest estimate of surplus arrived at last session by the Minister of Finance will be a good deal exceeded before the close of the fiscal year. It is not at all likely to reach the enormous surplus of 1882, but it looks as if Sir LEONARD TILLEY may have at least a couple of millions of dollars more than he ventured to assure Parliament that he dared to hope for.

THE returns issued by the Board of Trade show that during the month of May British imports decreased, as compared with that month in 1883, £3,100,000, and that the exports increased during the same period £358,000 as compared with those of May 1883.

DYNAMITE INSURANCE.

THE increasing activity of the dynamite fiend, both in Europe and America, has suggested some sort of set-off to the possible results of the operation of this most cowardly class of all miscreants. The *Pall Mall Gazette*, of London, advocates the formation of a Dynamite Assurance Company to insure people against the steadily growing class of casualties introduced by Irish malcontents, at a premium of say 3d. per £100. The *Gazette* says that Accident Assurance Companies now insure against injuries by vitriol-throwing, and constructively against injuries by garroting, and thinks that dynamiting, though less dangerous, should also suggest a new and profitable class of risks. The *Chicago Investigator* declares that a new hazard for insurance has lately come into existence which offers a large and growing business to the company which may be organized to assume the risk. The losses from dynamite, both of life and property, it says, are of frequent occurrence, and as the general populace becomes better acquainted with its destructive and fatal power, may be more frequently resorted to by criminals of all classes, but especially murderers and thieves. Whether it would be profitable or not the *Investigator* is not prepared to say, but thinks it probably could be made to pay if the rates charged are sufficiently high. This conclusion appears sound enough so far as the United States are concerned. It has now become difficult to take up an American paper without finding in it one or more reports of the use of dynamite for some purpose of outrage, either to person or property, or both, and generally in furtherance of some private revenge. In Canada we have happily so far escaped this, having hitherto had to suffer more from the threats than the deeds of the dynamite cur. On the Continent of Europe, however, especially in Germany and Austria, this modern class of crime has been developed to an alarming extent, and how England and Scotland have fared the whole world knows but too well. There, however, the ominous word "reprisals" is being muttered, the terrible meaning of which bloodless retaliation seems hardly yet to be thoroughly understood by those who alone would be its certain and immediate victims. But whether in any of the countries the suggestion of the *Pall Mall Gazette* as to dynamite insurance would be profitable is a question for the companies themselves to solve.

BANKERS AS JURORS.—The New York State Legislature has lately declined to exempt from jury-duty the presidents, cashiers, first tellers of banks, and the presidents, vice-presidents and actuaries of insurance companies. A great deal of pressure was brought in favor of the bill, but as the ignorant and corruptible element has a good deal prevailed of late locally it was deemed advisable in the public interest to have a reserve of intelligence and honesty to fall back on in case of occasional need.

BYSTANDER AND THE PRIVY COUNCIL.

THE often erratic and always pugnacious "BYSTANDER," finding either annexation or independence slow of coming, now turns his attention to the demolition of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. For the very first time, so far as our observation has gone, the impartiality of that great tribunal is assailed and its identification with political parties asserted. The accusation is direct and impossible of misconstruction. Says Professor GOLDWIN SMITH in *The Week*—"It is suspected that policy as well as law is taken into consideration by the "Privy Council." The writer of that sentence has been for some time lifting up his voice against the extent to which party feeling has reached throughout the Dominion. Jeremiad has followed jeremiad in which the terrible evils about to fall upon us in consequence of that still growing perversity were pointed out with all the best force of an eloquent and fertile pen. It is possible that many were thus caused to contemplate the matter, to question how far the rebuke might deservedly apply to themselves, and to resolve on mending their ways if found needed. But in the midst of such good resolves comes this extraordinary accusation against a body which the entire community has, with the sole exception of the Professor himself, looked up to with veneration and confidence. That such confidence has been justified is established by the various decisions that the Judicial Committee has given in the several cases in which questions on which Canadian political feeling has been developed to an excessive point have been disposed of. Taking them as a whole neither the Dominion Government nor its Provincial opponents can claim special victory. The defeats and the successes have been very fairly divided, leaving behind the inestimable result that the opponents felt that in all cases exact justice had been done and the true interpretation of the law rendered. Such a result could be the outcome of the decision of no other tribunal—certainly of none in Canada. The very knowledge alone that this Court was about to pronounce on the Boundary dispute instantly allayed a public irritation which had already developed into talk of civil war, and every one is prepared to yield with cheerful submission to the decision be it what it may. Unfortunately no such sentiment exists in connection with our own Supreme Court, the next below it in authority, which has on not a few occasions been publicly declared to have been biassed by its political prejudices, and it is unquestionable that the decisions of that body fail to command that respect, where political questions are in any way involved, which attaches to the renderings of the imperial tribunal. Whether that dissatisfaction with the judgments of the great Court sitting at Ottawa is well or ill founded we do not here discuss. The fact remains that the workings of the Judicial