

## PARLIAMENTARY REVIEW.

**DOMINION.**—The work in the standing committees of the House of Commons has of late been very exacting upon the time and attention of the members, and has, as in the railway committee, attracted no small degree of public interest. In the House the proceedings have been marked by no special feature, but several important resolutions have met their foregone fate. Among these is that of Sir Richard Cartwright to the effect that the House do not now go into committees of supply, but that it virtually consider commercial union with the United States. This resolution was manfully shouldered by the Opposition, but the Government battering rams were brought to bear upon it, and it was flattened out by a vote of 121 to 78.

The same fate overtook Mr. Kirkpatrick's resolution in favor of reciprocity in wrecking, which was voted down by 108 to 56.

In our yet sparsely settled Northwest Territories, the protection of the law is principally looked after by the police force, which contains some of the very finest young men in the country. Some of these men have been in service for the past fifteen years, but heretofore they could not count on receiving any substantial recognition of these services, now however it is proposed to grant a fair pension to any member of the Mounted Police who has served for twenty-five full years or, if incapacitated by accident, after having served fifteen full years. These pensions are but a measure of justice to a class of men which undergoes many hardships in the pioneer service which the country calls upon it to perform.

At length it has been decided to insist upon the Canadian Pacific Railway Company constructing the link between Harvey and Salisbury—just why the company should have objected to build this link is not quite clear, but, perhaps the true inwardness of the matter lies in the fact that the company is expending large sums in the purchase of railways which will act as feeders to its main line, and that just at present it finds it inconvenient to carry out its contract in the Maritime Provinces. However the contract is to be carried out, and Messrs. Kenny and Jones deserve credit for their persistence in bringing this matter before the Railway Committee and the House of Commons.

If our Chamber of Commerce and Board of Trade could act as a unit in matters material, what strides would be made by Halifax in the closing decade of the nineteenth century. A joint committee of the Senate and the House of Commons has been appointed with a view to considering in what way the Legislative expenses could be reduced. The object is a good one, but the end aimed at is so completely round the corner, that politicians will be unable to see it without craning their necks, and this politicians never aspire to do.

Oh that missing link! Yarmouth has cried for it, Digby has sighed for it, and Annapolis has lied for it. The representatives of Annapolis have always pretended that they desired to see the missing link finished, but most of the good Port Royalists are keen enough to know that it will reduce Annapolis from the position of a railway terminus to that of a railway side station. However, from a provincial standpoint the link will be of great advantage, and Yarmouth cries and Digby sighs will now be quieted, as its construction is to be undertaken as a Government work.

**PROVINCIAL.**—How many weary hours, yea, even days, the House of Assembly devotes to the consideration of Municipal Assessment. Each member appears to have an assessment hobby of his own, and rides it for all it is worth, while the poor tax-payer becomes more and more perplexed as to the probable amount of his taxation, the only certainty being that it is sure to be more. It seems to us that the Government should reserve the right to introduce all measures which affect municipal taxation, and put a stop to the innumerable ill-digested bills that are always being forced upon the attention of the Legislature.

The Government deserves a great deal of credit for having adopted a system of instruction for the coal miners of the province. Seven mining schools, with an aggregate attendance of eighty pupils, are now in existence in the counties of Cape Breton, Pictou and Cumberland, and most excellent work is being done. The object is to train our Nova Scotians and fit them for occupying the positions of over-men, underground managers, etc., it having been necessary hitherto to fill these positions with Englishmen and Welshmen, in other words, with men who have had the opportunity of acquiring a theoretical, as well as a practical knowledge of coal mining.

The report of the Secretary of Agriculture recently laid upon the table of the house by Premier Fielding is worthy of a wide spread publicity. The Secretary, Dr. Lawson, is a common-sensed enthusiast in matters agricultural, and has the advantage in his work of that practical knowledge which enables him to write intelligently upon the questions under discussion. In addition to the general report of agriculture for the past year, the Secretary's report contains a concise description of the model farm, and an account of the importations of thoroughbred stock.

As the law now stands the municipal boards of health are obliged to meet monthly, and as this is inconvenient, impracticable, and unnecessary, the law has been evaded by the municipal councils omitting to appoint boards of health. This of course will never do, for in the event of a serious epidemic it might plunge some districts into great trouble. The law is now to be amended so as to provide for quarterly meetings of the Boards of Health at specified times, which is as it should be.

What a bad lot these Dominion officials must be, or at least are made out to be by some of the members of the House of Assembly. According to some of these statements, Dominion officials are forced by the Federal Government to throw their votes in its support, and are at the same time impelled to use their time and talents in the support of government candidates for parliamentary honors, hence a bare majority in the Provincial Legislature has curtailed the rights and privileges to which they would otherwise under the law be entitled. This bare majority declares that no Dominion official shall

be a municipal councillor, that no Dominion official shall have a vote in municipal affairs, although as a property owner he or they may be taxed, and further that no Dominion official shall have a vote in provincial elections. This appears to us to be petty and narrow to a degree that savors of semi-civilization. It is a poor rule that does not work both ways. If Dominion officials are to be cut off from their municipal and provincial franchises, then why not cut off all provincial and municipal officials from the exercise of their Federal franchise? Every one knows that these latter officials take a very active part in Dominion elections, but few people are petty enough to suggest as a remedy that they should be shorn of half of their citizenship. Out upon such littleness, our politicians should scorn to act the petty part, when a broad and liberal policy is within their reach.

Our young men and our hardy fisherman must still possess their souls in patience, notwithstanding that the parliament has denied them the suffrage which their Nova Scotian manhood has by all the laws of justice given to them. The legislature has refused to endorse manhood suffrage, and has restricted the privileges of the franchise to the more favored ones, who by the accident of birth or some other circumstance, stand on a higher rung of the material ladder. We could grow eloquent upon this question, but for the present we say young men bide your time, and remember this: citizenship is the inborn right of every Nova Scotian who is prepared to accept its responsibilities, and that the day is not far distant when the dollar mark will no longer stand between our young men and the franchise.

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