

compared with January, consist of a decrease in the item of "Coin, Bullion and Provincial Notes" of \$1,655,400 an increase of \$601,425 in the "Balances due from other Banks," and of \$1 775,313 in the Dis-counts We find that to the accounts of the Bank of Montreal the Ontario the Merchants' and the Royal Canadian Banks, is chiefly due the decrease in specie, while to the first three and the Bank of Commerce is due the increase in Dis-counts.

BANKRUPTCY LEGISLATION

THE subject of bankruptcy has always been felt to be a difficult one, and the difficulties to be overcome in framing any general measure for the relief of insolvents and the protection of creditors at one and the same time, are so many in number and so practical in their nature that they have not yet been vanquished in the legislation of any country. The Scotch system works well in Scotland, creditors appearing to obtain fair dividends within a reasonable time. There the creditors elect a trustee, with three inspectors or commissioners to watch him, and we believe little difficulty is experienced in finding amongst the creditors three persons willing to assume this responsibility and prepared to make the check on the trustee an efficient one. A Bankruptcy Bill for England, following the Scotch model pretty closely, has been recently introduced by the Imperial Government, and though acknowledged to be an improvement on previous measures, and received with general approval, yet is open to criticism, and will not in all cases answer the purposes for which it was intended.

Some of the provisions of this bill, modified somewhat, may, however, be found valuable, and we hope our Government in undertaking—as they probably will—to amend the present Act, will avail themselves of any provisions that may appear suitable to the circumstances of this country.

One arm of the English law is to secure the declaration of insolvency as soon as possible after a debtor becomes bankrupt, and thus obtain as large dividends as possible. The mode in which this object is to be attained is by withholding from the debtor his discharge for six years if his estate yields less than 10s or 6s. 8d (the exact amount is not fixed as yet, in the draft. This, it appears to us is a step in the right direction, but in practice would have no effect in securing dividends above the point at which the debtor would be saved from the suspension of his discharge nor would it offer to him any inducement to economise his estate if he should at once pass that point. To be practically useful the idea should be carried out much farther and placing the limit at which a debtor would have a right to an immediate discharge in the ordinary way at a very high point, say 17s. 6d in the pound, a fine should then be inflicted for every 6d in the pound the dividend falls short of 17s. 6d. If, for example, the dividend was 17s, then the discharge might be withheld six months; if 16s, then eighteen months, and so on, down to the very lowest dividend. If this were done, then every man in trade, so soon as he began to discover an unsoundness in his financial condition, would have a direct inducement to suspend as soon after he found himself to be insolvent as possible whereas at present parties carry on just as long as they can manage to obtain credit.

Another provision in the English bill suggests an idea that might be advantageously embodied in a Canadian act. Post nuptial settlements are declared to be void if made within two years of bankruptcy unless the bankrupt can prove himself to have been solvent at the time. This would generally be needless here but as marriage contracts, giving a married woman power to hold property in her own name, safe from creditors of her husband, are usual and afford a very ready means for the commission of fraud some steps should be taken to neutralise their effects. It would also be well if every marriage contract of this nature were required to be registered, so that creditors might be able to exercise discrimination in time and not give credit on the basis of property apparently, but not really possessed by the party asking to be trusted.

It is also provided in the English bill that the trustee's accounts are to be audited by an official accountant and although we do not say that the official assigns under the present act need supervision, we do say that men are more liable to err, and consequently that in this country, as well as in England it would be well that all accounts of insolvent estates should thus have the check of an official audit.

MR. CUDLIP AND HIS ANNEXATION RESOLUTIONS.

MR. Cudlip, member for St. John, recently gave notice that he would move the following resolutions in the New Brunswick House of Assembly:—

"Resolved,—That the condition of this Province excites the most earnest solicitude and is worthy of and deserves the consideration of the House. Burdened with increased taxation under the New Dominion on many of the necessities of life, for which we receive no corresponding return or advantage: with the almost certain prospect of an increase rather than a reduction, with our people dissatisfied and leaving the Province by hundreds for the United States, there to make a home for themselves and families. It becomes worthy of consideration whether we should not as a Province, seek to carry out what our people are doing individually, and ask the United States to admit us into the Union on fair and equitable terms.

"With iron ships built in the United Kingdom, so cheaply as practically to close our ship-yards for building for sale, with spruce and cheaper freights from the Baltic competing with the produce of our forests it is becoming yearly more difficult to make a saving return for even the labor invested; with our great mineral wealth undeveloped, with but a limited home market for our coals, our fish and our agricultural products we are compelled to look for a more extended market—and however averse it may be to our long cherished predilections and associations, that the time which has so long bound us to the Mother Country should be severed, we are forced to the conclusion that requiring a more extended market, the nature of our production and the geographical position of our country point to the United States of America as our natural market, and that can be best and most surely secured by a union with the United States.

And further Resolved, That a Committee of three be appointed to devise and report to this House the best course to be adopted to bring the Union to a successful issue.

Of course, these resolutions received the contemptuous treatment they deserved, and were not even allowed to be placed on the notice paper. It is even stated that Mr. Cudlip was convinced before hand that they would meet with no other fate than that which actually befel them and it does seem strange that any man would place himself in so very false a position. But for the fact that Mr. Cudlip is known to hold the sentiments expressed and very badly expressed too, in these resolutions, we might be led to imagine that he gave the notice of motion with the full knowledge that it would be rejected, and thus make evident the fact that New Brunswick was a thoroughly British Province, loyal to the Crown and to the Confederation. At all events, his action has made this plain, and though pitying him for his capacity to do as he has done, we are glad the opportunity was given for the representatives of New Brunswick to show that they had no desire to attach themselves to the United States. We hope our republican friends and would be fellow citizens will take note of the circumstance, and see how futile is the expectation that even in the Maritime Provinces where some dissatisfaction has been shewn with regard to the Union—that even there there exists no disposition amongst the people to make any change which would separate them from the Mother Country, at all events for many years to come.

We do look forward to a time when all the lands in British North America now owning allegiance to Queen Victoria shall be joined in the great Canadian Confederation, and when peacefully, quietly, and with the full consent of the Mother Country, that Confederation shall obtain its complete independence. We trust the time is not so far distant but that grown-up men and women may live to see it, when Canada will be the name of all the great country that stretches from the Atlantic where it washes the Eastern shores of Newfoundland to the Pacific, and from the Great Lakes to the Arctic Ocean, and when, no longer a Confederation, it will become one of the Kingdoms of the earth, able and willing to take care of itself and protect itself from all comers.

The change from our present nominal dependence but virtual independence to complete freedom in name as well as fact, would be very trifling, and would not be very much felt except by the withdrawal of the British troops now quartered in various parts of the country and we suppose even with reference to them we might make an arrangement for retaining them here in our own pay. However, it is yet premature to speak of making this change, nor should it should be seriously discussed until first all the Provinces that still hold aloof are incorporated in the Canadian Confederation. This will doubtless take some time yet to accomplish, and the consolidation of the various parts of the Union into one homogeneous nation will take still longer. But we should all cultivate the feeling that though still in our teens we are fast growing out of them, that we must soon attain our majority, that

when the time comes we must be willing and proud to assume the duties and responsibilities as well as the rights of free citizens; and we should also endeavour to understand how rapidly this country is growing, what extraordinary progress has already been made since a very recent date, how great are its natural resources, and cease to let the comparison between us and our more numerous neighbours make us appear in our eyes as so small and so contemptible.

There are indications that a strong party is being formed in the United States in favour of a renewal of reciprocity in trade with Canada. The value of the equivalents which Canada can give in exchange for the right to sell her products unhindered by duties in the markets of the United States, is beginning to be more widely appreciated, and though it is not at all probable that there will be any immediate action taken in the matter, we were inclined to think that, so soon as the revenue of the United States becomes somewhat less exacting, we shall be able to arrange a new Reciprocity Treaty on some mutually advantageous basis. We need be in no hurry; we have not suffered since the abrogation of the late treaty, and we do not think we are in any present danger of being deprived of markets for all our surplus produce. In fact, unless manufactured goods were included in the list of articles in which there was to be free trade, we do not see how we would gain very largely by a renewed treaty. If the markets for our manufactures were widely extended, we have no doubt a very great impetus would be given to the manufacturing interests, and that a large amount of both English and American capital might find its way hither for permanent investment. In conclusion, we have only to repeat our expression of satisfaction that Mr. Cudlip has by his resolutions, which received the support of not one single member of the House, given occasion to the expression so unanimously of the anti-annexation sentiment of the representatives of New Brunswick.

NEW FOUNDLAND.

THE resolutions providing for the admission of Newfoundland into the Dominion of Canada, passed the Assembly on the 5th of March, by a vote of 17 to 7 and the Legislative Council on the 10th of March. They provide that certain charges are to be annually defrayed by the Dominion Government, as specified, together with the just claims of the Colony for other charges and concessions of like character with those borne or made by the Dominion with reference to the other Provinces. The charges enumerated are as follows,—

Table with 2 columns: Charge and Amount. Includes Governor and Secretary (\$10,624.00), Fuel and Light for Government House (974.00), Customs' Department (36,127.00), etc. Total \$206,154.92.

It is also provided that the Dominion shall assume the public debt and liabilities of the Colony, and that there shall annually be allowed to the Colony for the support of local institutions 80c. per head of population as at present, and to increase with the population up to the number provided for the Provinces of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick; that also interest at five per cent. per annum shall be paid on the difference between actual public debt, and the debt which by the Confederation Act it would be entitled to have in coming into the Union, that in consideration of the surrender to the Dominion (with certain rights reserved) of the ungranted and unoccupied lands, mines and minerals of the Colony, the sum of \$176,000 should be paid annually, that no tax shall be imposed on the exports of the Colony, unless a similar tax be levied on all the staple products of the Dominion; that in the present isolated and undefended position of the island, the maintenance of a garrison force in St. John at present is indispensable; that the prosecution of certain branches of the fisheries should be stimulated by special subsidy from the general government, and that in any Custom's Act of the Dominion, importers dried fish should be subject to certain provi-