

interested and got the most benefit, but would not take the trouble to attend the meetings. He could as a private citizen spend his time just as pleasantly as any one else, but he had broken many social engagements to attend the meetings. Still, he had taken up the obligation of president and wished to carry it out. In his opinion it was a disgrace that a hockey match should take away the bulk of the members from an annual meeting.

In giving this rebuke to the merchants and manufacturers of Peterboro, Mr. Charles administered a reproof to many more business men all over the country, members of boards or committees or other associations which are intended to benefit the places in which they are established. It is true, and it has long been true, that the willing few public-spirited and self-sacrificing members of such bodies, are in the majority of cases left to do the work in which every member should take his share. The amount of selfishness shown in such cases is discreditable in the extreme. We have known it to happen in large places as well as small that men on important commercial committees would excuse themselves on very inadequate pretexts—one had "a meeting to attend," which turned out to be a whist party at the club; another had to take his wife for a drive; a third went fishing and sent no excuse at all. Assuredly that was a conspicuous instance cited by Mr. Charles, when the bulk of the members absented themselves from an annual meeting in order to attend a hockey-match. It may be pleaded that this marks the strong sporting instinct of the community. Yes, it does. But it does not indicate a business-like instinct on the part of the more staid members of that community, such as members of the Board of Trade may be presumed to be.

Can the gentlemen who thus abnegate their duties reasonably expect the unpaid officers of a body in whose proceedings all business men have an interest, to give up their own social or family engagements to work for the good of the absent ones? Presumably there were several among the baker's dozen of members that did attend that annual meeting who were just as anxious to see the hockey-match as were the others who witnessed it. Had not Mr. Charles, and Mr. Quartermain, and Col. Edwards, and the other ten good men and true as fair a right to neglect the Board of Trade meeting and see the fun as any one else? Of course they had. But they were capable of some self-sacrifice at the call of duty, while apparently the remiss ones were not.

Selfishness is ingrained in most of us; laziness is the bane of many. We are humanly fond, and properly so, of our leisure, of our recreations, of our home attractions. But there are times when something must be given up for the general good, when personal comfort must give way to the Strenuous Life. If a petition to Government to right a wrong is to be discussed, or if a meeting with the town council about municipal affairs is arranged, or a conference with railway authorities to remove injustice in freight rates, the place for a member of a board of trade is in the fighting line, with his fellow-members. Such are the occasions which bring out bold, ardent, public-spirited individuals. But these energetic leaders cannot do all the fighting: they need to be backed up by the rank and file. And a man who won't take his share in defending his own interest in such a case deserves to be called a duffer.

## AFFAIRS IN NOVA SCOTIA.

Much as other parts of Canada have felt the cold weather and excessive snow falls of February, it is doubtful whether any province has had such bitter experiences of enormous snow drifts and all that they imply in the interruption of business, as Nova Scotia. The letter of our Halifax correspondent, written on 6th March, was delayed and did not reach us in time for last issue, though ordinarily these letters reach us on Wednesday of each week. The storms, it tells us, were the most severe for thirty years. Freight trains were delayed between one and two weeks, passengers were imprisoned in snow drifts for four days at a time. In the Annapolis Valley, indeed, no outward trains could be run for ten days; provisions and fuel grew scarce, churches and schools had to be closed, and flour went up to \$9 per barrel. These were very real hardships; and the hindrance of business had a marked effect in lessening the transactions of merchants as well as in affecting their mails, so that inconvenience is too mild a word to describe the effect upon them of the past few weeks. Indeed the loss as a result of the succession of storms is estimated at three millions of dollars. The mileage of the railroads in Nova Scotia is about 1,125 miles, and of this about 350 miles (of the Intercolonial), was all that was in operation for that trying period.

Although Cape Breton farmers are depressed for lack of hay and for other reasons, the prospects of that Island industrially are encouraging in several respects. The Dominion Coal Company, and the Nova Scotia Steel & Coal Co. are both preparing for a large output, and it is expected that the Dominion Iron & Steel Co., which has been expending money and effort on its works to bring them economically up-to-date, will have its rail mill going by May 1st. There are hopes, too, that the new steel plant of the Nova Scotia Company will be in operation in a few months, and the Cape Breton Coal, Iron, and Rail Company will have rail communication with their shipping ports, if not with Sydney this year. All this points to a busy and let us hope a prosperous season there.

During the last fiscal year the output of coal in Nova Scotia increased, and that of gold decreased. The coal raised amounted to 5,247,135 tons, an increase of 2,000 tons over 1903. Gold production fell off 10,000 ounces as compared with the previous year. Gypsum increased in output 5,000 tons; barytes, 3,000 tons, while limestone decreased 70,000 tons. The decrease in gold output is taken to indicate that the day of the small miner and worker on tribute is passing. Operations on a large scale, however, are in progress in several sections, with hopes for good results. Deep mining is being given more attention, two mines having raised gold at a vertical depth of a thousand feet.



## BRITISH COLUMBIA FINANCES.

The other day, in the British Columbia Legislature, an abstract of receipts and expenditures of the province for the half year ending 31st December, 1904, was brought down by the Premier, Mr. Tatlow. We give its principal items. First in revenue is the half-yearly capitation grant from the Dominion for lands, for subsidy and interest, in all, \$153,538; land revenue brought in \$108,175, and the sales of land \$58,233; timber leases yielded \$34,929; general mining receipts were \$57,599, besides which a "mineral tax" yields