Secular Department.

EUROPEAN NEWS.

Russia and Austria have become friends again, and entered into an offensive and defensive Treaty, which is on the eve of being signed. The terms of it are stated to be as follows :—

First, the most ample concessions as to all that regards the holy places at Jerusalem, will be made by Austria to Russia. Second, with a view to eventualities that have every probability of being realized, Austria agrees to conform her policy to that of Russia as to the Danubian Provinces and Servia. Third, as a compensation for their concessions in the East, and on the Danube, Russia will guarantee to Austria the whole of her Territory, including Hungary and Venetia, against insurrection and foreign foes.

These engagements have already produced a powerful effect. France is inclined now to discountenance the union of the Italians and the erection of a powerful Italian State. It is alleged that a meeting of the French Cabinet was recently held, at which it was resolved "that the project of the annexation of Tuscany to Piedmont must be altogether abandoned. The people of Tuscany will be called upon to choose a Sovereign, and there will be no objection to their choice falling upon the Duke of Genoa, Victor Emmanual's nephew. Secondly, the Duchies of Modena and Parma may be annexed to Piedmont, with the consent of the inhabitants. Third, the question of Romagna is revised, and will probably be submitted to a conference of the powers; but still the idea of creating it as a separate state of the sovereignty of the Holy See, and annexation, subject to that sovereignty, either to Piedmont or Tuscany, is not abandoned. Piedmont will be required to adhere to these proposals, under the threat of withdrawing the French army from Italy, and leaving her to the mercy of Austria."

We can hardly credit this report. It runs counter to all the recent letters and declarations of the Emperor Napoleon and destroys at once the fair hopes of the Italian people. The question therefore at once arises, will they consent to this new programme, or resist it by force of arms. We are inclined to think they will choose the latter alternative.

The intention of Spain to demand the cession of a portion of the Moorish territory is regarded with distrust in England. In the House of Lords, the Earl of Carnarvon asked if the Government had any notice of this departure from the original declaration of Spain. Lord Wodehouse in reply, said Government had been informed that Spain's demands were a large indemnity for expenses incurred, numerous commercial advantages, an extension of the territorial establishment of the Roman Catholic Bishop of Fez, and admission of a diplomatic agent at the same place. The course England will pursue under the circumstances is not indicated. There is a report that the Channel fleet had sailed for Lisbon, and the inference was that the movement may have been occasioned by the necessity for having a force within easy summons of Morocco.

In response to some inquiries by Sir Robert Peel, Lord John Russell said that inquiries had been addressed to Sardinia asking whether there was any engagement or intention to cede Savoy to France. The reply was that there was no such engagement or intention. The British Government had not communicated to that of France any opinion entertained by the other powers, inasmuch as they had received none.—The Swiss Government had asked whether, in the event of the annexation of Savoy to France being effected, England was prepared to abandon the neutrality of Switzerland, as guaranteed by all the Great Powers. Her Majesty's Government had replied that they were determined not to do so. (Cheers.) It appears that all the districts of Savoy were included in the guarantee given by the treaty of Vienna to Switzerland; and her Majesty's Government were of opinion that, if any annexation took place, it was a fair proposal on the part of Switzerland that Savoy should be annexed to Switzerland. He believed—although he had no official information—that France had addressed a communication to Sardinia to the effect that if Sardinia was increased by the annexation of Central Italy, the frontier of France could not be deemed secure without the possession of Savoy and Nice.

The Austrian Government have invented a new term for imprisoning the Italian patriots in their German and Hungarian fortresses: they call that operation "*interning*." A report from Vienna says: "All those individuals that are decided opponents to the Austrian rule in Italy, are *interned* in several fortresses." If that was to be executed literally, Austria ought to *intern* the whole population of her Italian possessions, as there is scarcely one in every hundred who is *not* a decided opponent to her rule. This, of course, cannot be done; therefore the Austrian authorities must confine their measure of interning to the limits of what is possible. If they had any such nice place for deportation as the Emperor of the French has, another Island of Cayenne, they easily could get rid of the obstinate people by deporting them by hundreds of thousands. Being confined, however, to imprisoning or interning them, they can't do any better than to fill their prisons, which, besides the criminals, won't hold more than a few thousand. That number very soon will be reached, prisoners being transported to Germany by whole railroad-trains and steam-boat-loads. How unscrupulously the police officers proceed in arresting the "opponents to be interned," may be concluded from the following instance that happened in the city of Udine on the 28th of January. A police officer, at the head of a military patrol, arrested a butcher of the name of Antonio Ferrante. The arrested man succeeded in escaping, but the soldiers firing at him, he was wounded and fell down. Rising again upon his feet, another volley threw him down once more to the ground, whereupon the soldiers rushed upon him, butchering the mortally wounded man horribly with their bayonets. Of course it was not necessary to "intern" him; instead of being interned, he was interred.

The question of "war or peace" is the general topic of conversation and newspaper controversy in Northern and Central Italy. In all societies, in theatres, on the streets, in short, everywhere, that question is debated. The newspaper press is almost unanimously of the opinion that there will be war very soon. The *Unione* says:—"Warlike preparations are the order of the day, and it seems that war is inevitable and near at hand. We call the attention of the government and people to the clandestine armaments of Austria, who, without doubt, will strike a blow against Central Italy." "One division of the Sardinian army," says the *Lombardia* of February the 3rd, is about to advance into Central Italy, because the Government does not wish to be surprised by events. The news from Vienna, Rome and Naples is such as to demand precaution." The Verona correspondent of the *Gazzette di Milano* wrote on the 2d of February :—"Last year Austria intended not less than to dethrone King Victor Emmanuel and Emperor Napoleon; this year, she fancies, will lead her to reconquering her lost rule over Italy. To judge from what has been going on here for some days, the lessons she received last year have been fruitless. Austria, perceiving that diplomatic practices are turning over worse for her, in order not to suffer heavy damage by a passive attitude, will take a decisive resolution, as she did last year, and proceed to war herself. I believe that a fatal destiny, an irrevocable malediction, compels Austria to throw herself into the abyss." The *Opinione* remarks : "Austria cannot have concentrated an army of 150,000 for the mere purpose of prohibiting demonstrations of the Venetian people. Her warlike preparations, if not made with the intention to provoke another war, at least reveal the fact, that in government circles war is deemed not only possible but highly probable." On the 7th of February, the *Lombardia* said : "Preparations for war, which is believed to be imminent, continue. The Alliance between Vienna, Rome and Naples, is now beyond doubt, and it is confidently asserted that the Bourbon on the throne of Naples will be the first to descend into the tilting grounds, a new champion of the temporal Popedom. Austria will not fail in following him, in order to share the glory of her ally."

The Paris correspondent of the London *Times* countenances the report that Napoleon is endeavoring to conciliate the Pope. An arrangement respecting the Romagna, likely to satisfy both parties, has been proposed, but the terms are not mentioned. A Vicariate and a lay Government are spoken of. The latest accounts, however, affirm that the difficulty between France and Rome has undergone no change.

The King of Sardinia and Count Cavour remained at Milan. They were constantly received with the greatest enthusiasm. The clergy had presented a complimentary address. The decoration of the Annunciade, which had been conferred by the King of Sardinia on Marshal Randon was expected to be also conferred on Marshals McMahon and Neil.

British and For. American News.

Canada.

INTER-COLONIAL FREE TRADE.—A Despatch from the Governor-General of Canada to the Lieutenant-Governor of Nova Scotia has been communicated to the Legislature of the latter Province, in which His Excellency recommends a reciprocal interchange of all the productions and manufactures of the respective provinces of Canada, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, and also an assimilation of their respective tariffs, so as to permit entire Free Trade between them. Also a despatch from the Lieutenant Governor to Governor-General, dated 13th Dec., 1859, stating that there is every disposition on the part of the Government of Nova Scotia to co-operate as far as possible in carrying out so desirable an object.—*Quebec Chronicle.*

Nova Scotia.

The weather continues unusually mild and open for the season. Indeed it is more like what we look for in the corresponding period of April. The snow has entirely disappeared, and the ice is broken up on the Harbour to within a short distance of the wharves; and from present appearance we should not be surprised to see the harbor altogether clear in a few days. The neighboring colonies, too, are to the same effect. In Montreal the robbins had made their appearance some weeks ago, and it is stated in the papers that the Harbor of Shediac has been open for some time. The Gulf is also said to be entirely free from ice.—*Pictou Chronicle.*

The House of Assembly have been engaged ever since they resumed business on Monday in the discussion of matters connected with the late general election. The sitting on Tuesday was protracted until one o'clock next morning. Several long speeches were delivered by sundry windy members. On Wednesday the subject was resumed. It is quite certain now that the Revenue Bills will meet with attention, prior to settling the disputed seats on either side. The Revenue Act is one of all-engrossing importance to the community, and should be dealt with in a more enlightened manner that has characterized the conduct of the House for many years past. The Distillery question demands an immediate and impartial adjustment. The injustice which the distillers have hitherto suffered at the hand of the Legislature ought no longer to have an existence. It is really monstrous to prevent these manufacturers from exporting their products, thus excluding them from participating in the markets of the world.—*Journal, March* 16.

Cape Breton promises to be as remarkable for its Mines and Minerals as for its other good qualities. Its coals have been famous for years. Its Mineral Springs are just coming into notice. A Marble Quarry of peculiar richness has been discovered at New Canada a district lying between Whycocomah and Mabou. A Lead Mine of great richness has been discovered at Broad Cove, Margaree. A lease has been taken by a Company, which is now duly licensed by Government and will commence operations in the Spring. The lease covers about 600 acres. The ore is supposed to contain 75 per cent. of the metal. We have handled a piece and it seems quite as heavy as pure lead. The Company consists mainly of Cape Breton gentlemen.

New Brunswick.

The New Brunswick Legislature have decided to import stock from Great Britain of the value of £1850, viz: six Bulls and four heifers, Durham cattle, £500; three bulls and two hefers, North Devon; and two heifer, Ayreshires; twenty rams and ten ewes, Longwood sheep; two rams and four ewes, Southdowns; and swine to the amount of £100. Also, to be imported from the United States: two horses of Morgan or Messenger, or other established breeds, of the value of £600. The stock to be disposed of at public roup in St. John, N. B., after twenty days notice in the newspapers of the Province.

A vessel belonging to Mr. McKie, from the Gut of Canso, arrived at New London this week; and we hear there were two or three vessels seen off this Port yesterday. This is extraordinary at this period of the year Indeed, the season is an unusually fine one—we have had fine balmy days, with warm rains, such as we generally look for in the early part of May. The grass is looking green in spots—the Robbins and Wild Geese made their appearance sometime since, and there is every indication of Spring bursting in upon us at once. The vessels in the Harbor are fitting out for their Spring voyages, and some are nearly loaded. This day the Ferry Boat crossed from Southport to the Ferry Wharf in this City.—*Id. of yesterday.*

The Rev Mr Hall will preach (D.V.) at Cavendish on Lord's day, 1st April next.

The New Brunswick House of Assembly has passed a resolution for an address to the Queen, requesting Her Majesty to take steps to have the wood goods of that Province admitted into France under the new Commercial Treaty. Also, one for an address to the Governor, to communicate with the governments of Canada and Nova Scotia, as to the propriety of uniting in some joint action, in the matter —*N. B. paper.*

The Halifax *Witness* says that nothing new of importance has transpired regarding the *Hungarian*. Two additional bodies have been found—that of a man and that of a child. The wreck of the *Indian* was attributable to some extent to recklessness, and we fear the same charge must be made regarding the *Hungarian*. Her cargo was very valuable, and intended for the Canada market. The news of her loss caused great excitement in the Canadian cities. She had on board but 70 passengers. All the lives lost would amount to 140 or 150. Her hull and cargo were disposed of at auction on Thursday to a Yarmouth Company for the sum of £4070.

Our country readers will rejoice to hear that the noon-day prayer meetings in this city (which are held in Smith's building, Prince William Street), continue to be well attended, and have evidently been much blessed. The average attendance probably exceeds 120, and in this every Protestant denomination in the city is represented—the Baptist and Methodist brethren, however, being in a decided majority. The Episcopal ministers have not been in attendance for some time, owing—*it is said*—to injunctions of a prohibitory character received from head quarters. We trust the brethren and sisters will persevere in these delightful exercises, which are also being much blessed in Carleton, and we doubt not that in answer to the prayer of faith, this city, too much given up to covetousness and worldly-mindedness, to say no more, will be visited with times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord.—*St. John Colonial Presbyterian.*

STEAMSHIPS LOST.—The *New Brunswicker* says the wreck of the *Hungarian* makes the fourteenth steamer which has been lost since the commencement of steam navigation between Europe and America. Subjoined we give the names of those that have been lost :—

1. President—Never heard of.
2. Columbia—All hands saved.
3. Humboldt—All hands saved.
4. City of Glasgow—Never heard of.
5. City of Philadelphia—All hands saved
6. Franklin—All hands saved.
7. Arctic—A few only saved.
8. Pacific—Never heard of.
9. Lyonnais—A few only saved
10. Tempest—Never heard of.
11. Austria—Burned—great loss of life
12. Indian—Three lives lost.
13. Argo—All hands saved.
14. Hungarian—All hands lost, probably.

THE POPE'S TRIAL.—*The Tablet* of Saturday, the 11th, contains the following, which is put in Latin as well as English. We reproduce the English version simply as an exhibition of the present temper of the extreme party in the Roman Catholic Church:—"Pius IX. before the Congress, which is announced to be held in Paris, anno 1860. The French Emperor: Behold the man! What think ye? England: Away with him! away with him! Crucify him! Sweden: Thou hast said it. He is deserving of death. Austria: What evil hath he done? Sardinia: We have a law, and according to this law he must die. Prussia: I find no cause in him. Spain: I am innocent of the blood of this just man. Portugal: Why this waste? Russia, What is that to us? Look you to it. Naples: Although all should be scandalised in thee, I will not be scandalised. The French Emperor: Hail, Rabbi! (the spirit, indeed, is willing, but the flesh is weak). It is expedient that one man should die for the people. The French Empress: Have thou nothing to do with that just man, for I have suffered much in a dream concerning him. The Christian People: Woe to that man by whom he shall be betrayed! All the Sovereigns: Surely He hath borne our sorrows and carried our sins. Bishops and Priests: Be of good heart, for the time is at hand when God will deliver thee. The Pope: Sit ye here while I go and pray, After three days I shall rise again, and blessed is the man who shall not have been scandalised in me."

From the Boston Atlas and Daily Bee.

VACCINATION AND SMALL POX.

The question has been raised in certain quarters whether vaccination is an absolute protection against that most fearful of diseases, Small Pox. The preponderance of medical opinion is that it is a protection; whereas it is asserted that several deaths have occurred at Westford, within a few days, where vaccination had no effect whatever. In the meantime any light on the subject is not without interest. The following extracts from a thesis on "Vaccination," read by Francis Dyer Beer, of Charlottetown, P. E. Island, at the exercises of the graduating class of Harvard College, on Wednesday last, are of interest.

"It has been, even till lately, denied by the most enthusiastic advocates of vaccination, that small pox could ever occur after the genuine cow pox. Accumulated evidence to the contrary, however, has convinced dispassionate reasoners of the untenability of this position, and that the truth is that vaccination in a great majority of cases confers a complete and permanent security against small pox; but this law is subject to exceptions Hence the necessity and propriety of revaccination, which, if it confers no benefit, at all events does no harm. It is also perfectly established that where small pox does occur after vaccination, it is generally divested of its formidable character, and constitutes a comparatively mild disease, which is now recognized under the name of modified small pox. In Westphalia, during the years 1776-80 the small pox deaths rate was two thousand six hundred and forty-three. During the years 1817-50 it was only 114. From such information as exists, it seems that the small pox death rate of London, within the 'Bills of Mortality,' during the eighteenth century, ranged from three to five thousand annually. During the ten years, 1845-55, it was less than 340. The small pox in Copenhagen is but an eleventh of what it was before vaccination was introduced; in Sweden little over a thirteenth; in Berlin and large parts of Austria but a twentieth; and in Westphalia but a twenty-fifth.

"In Marseilles, the number of deaths and cases, in the severe epidemic of 1828, and their relation to the vaccinated, and non vaccinated, and variolated masses of exposed population, as given in a table made for the purpose by the "Societe Roy de Medicine," was as follows.

"Total of population from 1 year to 30, susceptible, 40,000; cases of small pox, 6020; deaths by small pox, 1024. Number protected by previous small pox, 2000; cases 20; deaths, 4. Number protected by vaccination, 30,000; cases, 2000; deaths 20. Number unprotected, 8000; cases, 4000; deaths, 1000."

The Protestant.

SATURDAY, MARCH 24, 1860.

Young Men's Christian Association and Literary Institute.

Mr. Leeming delivered his lecture on the "Microscope" on Thursday evening. A large audience testified the general interest in the subject. Some of them, however, especially the younger portion, might be disappointed. It was impossible to exhibit many of the wonders of the microscope to so many persons without some instruments which we do not as yet possess. The President, in his opening remarks, indeed, intimated that measures were about being taken to obviate this by the provision of some new instruments. We may hope to be better prepared for rational pastime next winter than in the one which is now closing. Meanwhile the lecturer of Thursday evening laboured under the disadvantage above suggested. He aimed to compensate for it by explaining the laws of light, the mechanism of the eye, and the construction of the microscope. He exhibited also some draughts of objects as magnified by the microscope. And he did his work well: that is, for all who could distinctly hear, and intelligently follow him. He deserved all the good things that were said about him. Yet doubtless he will do better under more favorable circumstances. In winding up his lecture, he threw out some important practical hints. First, he strove to awaken an interest in the pursuits of natural history. Next, he urged the formation of a Museum in the city. It is to be hoped that these hints will not be lost—perhaps, however, the latter must take the precedence. If the few lovers of natural history among us were to set to work, and form their Museum, on ever so small a scale, they would thus cast into the public mind a germ which could scarcely fail to prove fruitful. The Liverpool Athenæum, now a large and flourishing institution, was founded by three men. One of them presided at a meeting held by the three; the other two moved and seconded the requisite resolutions; and *all* carried them. It is wonderful what one earnest man may accomplish; much more two or three such. Let Mr. Leeming take courage, then, and try what he can do. In due time he will reap his reward.

Mr. C. Barker, Bible Christian Minister, will lecture next Thursday evening. "TEMPERANCE" will be his subject. We have not had much on that great topic this season. We bespeak a large attendance.

We may state for the information of our readers, and of our Temperance friends in particular, that duties were paid in this Island during the last twelve months on 61,360 gallons of spirits, including Wine, Gin, Rum, Brandy and Whiskey. When we take into consideration that the 61,360 gallons have been wholly consumed by our people, besides no doubt a large quantity both manufactured and imported on which duties have not been paid, who would not say that the Maine Law would be a blessing to the Colony?

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

MONDAY AFTERNOON, March 19.

The afternoon was occupied in receiving petitions, of which a great number was presented.

Mr Davies obtained leave of absence for a week, on account of ill health.

On motion of Hon. Mr Coles, the suggestions of the Board of Education which accompanied the annual report of the School Visitor, were ordered to be published in the *Royal Gazette*. His object was to elicit the opinion of parties throughout the Island conversant with the practical working of our educational system, before the discussion on the Act should take place.

TUESDAY AFTERNOON, March 20.

Hon. Col. Gray, by command, submitted inter-Colonial correspondence on the subject of Light-houses on the East Point and North Cape of this Island; also, the Report of the Indian Commissioners, which were read.

After several petitions had been received—

Hon. Mr. Longworth introduced a Bill to amend the Act to establish Township Boundary Lines—read a first time.

Hon. Mr. Haviland brought in a Bill to amend the Land Purchase Bill, by investing the Commissioner of Public Lands with summary powers of proceeding against defaulters who had not taken out their deeds, such as he now has, in cases where deeds have been delivered and instalments are in arrears.—Read a first time.

WEDNESDAY, March 21.

A number of ordinary road petitions were presented.

Mr. Conroy presented a petition from inhabitants of Cascumpec, praying a grant for the extension of the Electric Telegraph to that part of the Island.

The Bill to amend the Act relating to judgments in the Supreme Court was read a third time and passed.

The Bill to alter and amend the Act relating to the establishment of Township Boundary Lines was committed to a Committee of the whole Hou,s, and reported agreed to without amendment.

The House then went into Committee on the Bill to amend the Land Purchase Act. The Bill was agreed to without amendment, and also without opposition, excepting that offered by Mr. Cooper, who stated that the Act required the titles of the estates to be investigated before it was noted upon, but as this provision had never been complied with, he was opposed to any amendment to the Act which might possibly affect the position of the tenant.

AFTERNOON SITTING.

The amendments of the Council to the Will amendment Act were agreed to. They extended the time for a creditor to seize, in execution, the real estate of a deceased debtor, to 6 years.

The rest of the sitting was taken up with the second reading of the Hon. Mr. Haviland's Bill for the protection of property of married women from liability on account of the husband. Agreed to with amendments.

THURSDAY, March 22.

On motion of Mr. McAulay, it was resolved that there be a call of the House on Monday next, to take into consideration the several petitions lying on the table.

Mr. Beer, from the Special Committee appointed to examine the petition of John Shannon, reported, that as it referred to matters of a local and private nature, its prayer could not be entertained by the House. The report was received.

On motion of Hon. Mr. Coles, a call of the House was ordered for Tuesday next, on the Despatches relative to the appointment of a Land Commission.

Hon. Mr. Longworth presented a Bill to alter the Statute Labor Act, which was read a first time. It provides that keeping the Main Post Roads in a state of repair shall be let by contract for a certain number of years, and contemplates the reduction of Commutation Money for a single person from 4s. to 3s. a year. It also requires overseers to furnish certificates to those who may commute or perform their statute labor, in order to meet a provision in the new Election Bill respecting the qualifications of persons voting under the elective franchise.

AFTERNOON SITTING.

Mr Beer moved the House into Committee on the Memorial of the Mayor and Common Council, and the petition of divers inhabitants of Charlottetown, on the subject of the proposed new Market House.

The Memorial asked a grant for purchase of a site for the Market House; whilst the petition prayed that the House would not sanction its erection elsewhere than on Queen Square, and that a Bill might pass authorising the trustees to the city of a site on the west side of the Square. After a very long discussion, Hon Mr Pope moved a resolution, adopting the prayer of the petition. To this Mr Perry moved an amendment, that the Speaker take the chair. The amendment was lost, and Mr Pope's carried to the House, when, the question being put, Hon Mr Haviland moved that the report be received this day 3 months.—Lost.

Yeas—Messrs. Haviland, Gray, Coles, Whelan, Thornton, M'Aulay, Kelly, M'Neill, Longworth, John Yeo, Perry—11.

Nays.—Hon. Mr Yeo, Douse, Beer, Ramsay, Laird, Pope, Cooper, Holm, Howat, Sinclair, Doyle, Conroy, Owen, Sutherland, Montgomery—15.

Mr Pope's resolution was carried by the same division—the relative position of the above names being changed.

LEGISLATIVE DEBATES.

TUESDAY AFTERNOON, Feb. 28.

DECIMAL CURRENCY BILL.

Mr. McNEILL.—I rise, Mr. Speaker, to move the second reading of the Bill of which I have given notice, to authorise the keeping of public accounts in dollars and cents. The Bill will not have the effect which has been attributed to it, of changing the currency. It does not interfere with that subject. In Nova Scotia, last year, the Hon. Mr. Young, then the leader of the Opposition, introduced a similar measure, which was supported by the Government, without reference to party differences. Canada had adopted the decimal system some years since, and New Brunswick two years ago passed such a law, which is to go into operation this year. The Bill, I may state, is brought in by myself, as an independent member, without previous consultation with hon. members, either of the Government or Opposition. It will have the effect of saving a great amount of labor, and its application to the public accounts will gradually induce mercantile men to adopt the system of keeping their accounts in dollars and cents. The decimal system obtains over nearly the whole of North America; it is in practice in France, and has been strenuously agitated, and I believe that the time is not remote, when its advantages will be recognized by the British public. The Bill, I consider, will be a great boon to the people of the Island. Our trade with the United States is already very large, and is constantly increasing; and by assimilating our mode of accounting to theirs, our people would readily understand their currency, and their intercourse would be greatly facilitated. I leave the Bill, however, to the action of the House.

Hon. Mr. COLES.—The adoption of the currency of the United States will not increase our traffic with them. The Americans know well enough what the value of our currency is in dollars and cents; but the bulk of the people of the Island would be subjected to great inconvenience in making their calculation in American money. The hon. member says that the Bill proposes the adoption of the system in keeping the public accounts; but that would impose upon all parties through whose hands public money is disbursed to make up their returns in the same manner. The difficulty of such an innovation must be perceptible to any one who reflects upon the subject for a moment. We had better adhere to the good old British practice. The other Colonies have not acted upon the system, but have found it expedient to keep to the old mode. When we shall have seen the results of the experience of the decimal system, it will be time enough for us to adopt or reject it. It is true that we have extensive dealings with the United States, but we also trade largely with Great Britain; and when the Railway shall be completed between Shediac and St. John, I believe that New Brunswick will be the best and largest market for produce. It would be a long time before the people of the Island would become accustomed to the change, and nothing but confusion would ensue from the public accounts being kept in dollars and cents, and the accounts of mercantile men and others in pounds, shillings and pence.

Hon. Mr YEO.—The proposed alteration in the currency would be attended with great difficulty. When I was in England, about ten years since, great efforts were being made to introduce the decimal system there, but it has not been adopted yet. The great bulk of the people are tenants, and the leases specify the rents to be paid in our present currency or in Sterling. The Bill would be productive of no good, but a great deal of annoyance and confusion. The same would be the case with Merchants, and others who had to pay duties on their importations. As to the alleged increased facility in keeping accounts, I have never found any difficulty in that respect. I have large dealings in Boston, New York and other parts of the States, as well as with Britain and the neighboring Colonies; and although some of my accounts are made out in dollars and cents, and others in pounds, shillings and pence, I experience no inconvenience from the difference.

Hon. Mr LONGWORTH.—It is, I believe, quite true, as the hon. member who introduced the Bill, has stated, that he has not applied to any member of the Government on the subject. He has brought it in on his own responsibility; and while I give him credit for a sincere belief that the measure will be of benefit to the country, I must say, that, after a very cursory glance at the Bill, I am not prepared to support it. It is true, as that hon. member stated, that the decimal system has been recognised by legislation in other colonies; but in New Brunswick the law has remained for years a dead letter on the Statute Book. I know not the reason,—it may be the result of some deep rooted prejudice against any deviation from long established British usage. New Brunswick, being a Colony which prides itself upon its adherence to British institutions, it has not been adopted in practice there. In Nova Scotia the system only came into operation on the first of January last, consequently we have no means of knowing how its working will affect the people of that Province. But I think the example of the mother country is quite sufficient a guide for us in dealing with so momentous a question as the currency. The Imperial Parliament appointed a Committee to examine and report as to the expediency of introducing the decimal system. An influential Committee, chosen from both sides of the House, and representing all interests, was appointed. Their report, which was of considerable length, and which reviewed the question in all its bearings, was adverse to the proposed change; and really I cannot see what benefits can be expected to result to the Island, when the change was not considered an improvement in Great Britain, where all the accounts of her great monetary institutions and establishments, public and private, are kept in pounds, shillings and pence. It is true that in the United States, Mexico and Texas the computation is by dollars and cents; but there is no reason why we should deviate from our system to conciliate the people of foreign countries. As to the argument that the Bill would have the effect of inducing Americans to open accounts with us, they have already all fair and legitimate inducements to do so, and they manifest no reluctance to avail themselves of them. The Bill might, indeed, to a certain extent, facilitate the dealings between the Island and the United States, but such facility would not justify us in deviating from long established usage and unsettling our financial system. The Bill strikes at the root of our present mode of computation. It specifies the value of foreign coins relating to dollars and cents; for, by the existing statute, the value of the Mexican and American dollar is fixed at 8s 3d, but the Bill before the Committee gives the value of the sovereign at five dollars, thus making the latter coin worth £1 11s 3d. It is impossible that such a Bill can go into operation without a thorough change in our present currency act. If the measure is intended to assimilate our currency to that of Nova Scotia, it will have the effect of adding 20 per cent. to the present value of our money, and will consequently affect all existing contracts to that extent. This aspect of the question alone, is entitled to grave consideration; and I am satisfied that hon. members have not had time to give to the subject that deliberation which its importance demands. The time may, probably will, come when the neighboring Colonies, having tried the decimal system, their experience may influence us to adopt it; but we may safely rest content with a mode which has stood the test of centuries, until older countries shall have shown us an improvement realized in practice.

Hon. Mr. THORNTON—I have as yet heard no reasons in favor of the Bill sufficient to induce me to support it. I shall, therefore, give it my opposition, as being productive of no good. The Bill provides that the public accounts be made out in dollars and cents, but allows a column in which they may be kept in pounds, shillings and pence. If notice was given last year of the introduction of this Bill, the Government should have given the hon. member, Mr. McNeill, notice that they would not support it. Any measure affecting the currency should be introduced by the Government. There is no inconvenience felt by Americans trading with the Island from our present system. When a man from the United States sees a dollar he knows it is worth 100 cents, and one of our farmers selling his bushel of potatoes for an English shilling is aware that he receives 1s. 6d. currency; but he would be sadly puzzled to tell what that amount would be in cents. As to the alleged facilities to the mercantile community to flow from the adoption of the system of accounting in dollars and cents, I cannot see them; for if a merchant receives his invoice of American goods made up in that currency, he finds no difficulty in ascertaining the amount in cURRENCY; and the exporter of our produce to the States as readily computes the amount of his sales there in pounds, shillings and pence. Suppose that troops should be again stationed in the Island—they would be paid in British money, with the value of which they are acquainted—what would the soldier know about cents, if he was required to receive change in a purchase, in such currency! At present he could tell the number of pence or halfpence he would be entitled to receive after paying for what he bought, but he would have no idea of the new computation. We do not require the alteration which the Bill would effect, but what we do want is a legally established coinage, as they have in the other Colonies. Some years ago, a Bill for that purpose was disallowed at home, and the consequence has been that individual speculators have, to their own great profit, been in the habit of putting into circulation a lot of copper coins, of so comparatively small intrinsic value that three of them will not weigh as much as a Nova Scotia penny piece.

Hon. Mr. WIGHTMAN—There is no doubt that the hon. member Mr. McNeill, in introducing this Bill was actuated by the best motives—that he sincerely believes in the beneficial character of the change proposed; but I think that before he sought to make so great an alteration in our monetary system he should have elicited the opinions of the government, to whose province the subject peculiarly appertains. The sudden alteration which the Bill would create must be productive of every serious inconvenience; in fact there would be no end to the confusion it would cause in all matters of account. We had better wait till we see how the system will work in the other Colonies. As has been said in this debate, Canada passed an Act establishing the decimal system some years ago; and some grave objections must have existed to its practical working, or it would have been in operation long since. I have no objection to that system, but its introduction would seriously embarrass the largest portion of the people of the Island. I, therefore, oppose the Bill, which I would cheerfully support if I could see any advantage likely to result from it.

Mr. COOPER—I consider that the decimal system possesses great conveniences, but before we could realize them we should require to have a coinage suitable to it. Until we had that, it would be no easy matter for the bulk of our people to habituate themselves to the new method—which could not work satisfactorily without the decimal coins which would circulate in the other Colonies at the same value as in the Island, which is not the case at present.

Mr. DAVIES—I am in favor of the principle of the decimal system, which would greatly facilitate all monetary calculations, and I doubt not that eventually we shall adopt it; but at present the country does not require it and is not prepared for it. No merchant labours under any difficulty in consequence of his American accounts being made up in dollars and cents. In fact, that system has been adopted by two of the Banks in New Brunswick: the Westmorland, and the Bank of British North America. The reason why our Bank notes did not circulate freely in the neighbouring Colonies is to be found in the fact that the balance of trade is so much against the Island. I do not coincide in the opinions expressed by some hon. members that the Bill should of necessity, be a Government measure. Any member, in my opinion, is justified in introducing such a Bill without previous reference to the Government, or consultation with its members; and it should be discussed without reference to any political organization. In Great Britain the principle on which the Bill is based has met with the general recognition of the mercantile community, and the principal objection to its adoption has been the inconveniences which its practical adoption would cause. As I said before, the system will, I believe, be ultimately carried into practice in the Island, as being more simple and convenient, and its adoption is only matter of time. The action of the Bill, if it became law to-day, would not depress or enhance the value of our produce in the slightest degree.

Mr. BEER.—I think that hon. members do not fully understand the object of the Bill, when they argue about its effect upon existing contracts. As I understand the hon.

[To be continued.]