

## LAWS, NEW AND AMENDED.

THE business results of the late session of Parliament embody several matters which the commercial community will find it useful to know.

## FINANCE.

In the realm of finance, there is the measure providing that the whole or any part of the public debt may be inscribed and transferred in a registered copy in Great Britain. This is in accordance with the provisions of the Imperial Act which enables the debts of colonies to be admitted to the list of inscribed stocks in England. A more important measure is the Act amending the Bank Act. This law continues the charters of 34 incorporated banks, and provides that the Jacques Cartier Bank may change its name to the Provincial Bank of Canada, and the Merchants Bank of Halifax to the Royal Bank of Canada. A clause provides that persons holding bank stock in trust shall not be personally liable as a shareholder. Several other provisions growing out of the failure of certain banks of Canada during the last few years, and doubtless suggested by these occurrences, are made. For instance, arrangements are made for the appointment of a curator in the event of a bank suspending. Then, again, the Canadian Bankers' Association is recognized and its powers defined. The by-laws of the Bankers' Association are not to go into force until they are approved of by the Treasury Board of the Canadian Government. There are also provisions for the purchase of the assets of a bank.

## THE TARIFF.

No tariff changes were made in detail at the late session, but, as is well known, the preferential rate on British goods was increased to  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the duty. But this preferential rate does not apply to wines, malt liquors, spirits, liquid medicines, and articles containing alcohol, tobacco, cigars and cigarettes. Besides that, the reduction will only apply to refined sugar when the Minister of Customs is furnished with satisfactory evidence that such refined sugar has been manufactured wholly from raw sugar produced in the British colonies.

It is provided also that machinery not made in Canada and for use in beet-root sugar factories may be imported free.

## RULES REGARDING FRUIT BARRELS, ETC.

The regulations of the Inland Revenue Department have been amended in several particulars relating to weights and measures. For example, it is provided that the barrels containing apples for export shall be of the following dimensions, viz.: 26 $\frac{1}{2}$  inches between the heads, inside measure, and a head diameter of 17 inches, and a middle diameter of 18 $\frac{1}{2}$  inches, representing as near as possible 96 quarts. These dimensions shall also apply to barrels when apples, pears or quinces are sold by the barrel. The penalty for disobeying this law is 25c. for each barrel of apples, pears or quinces offered or exposed for sale or packed.

Another provision is that when eggs are described by the standard dozen, the dozen shall mean 1  $\frac{1}{4}$  lb.

Every ball of binder twine is to be stamped with the name of the maker or importer, stating the number of feet of twine per lb. in such ball. The penalty for disobeying this section is 25c. per ball. This section relating to binder twine does not come into force until October 1, 1900.

## COPYRIGHT.

The passage of an Act giving copyright to Canadian publishers of English books whose owners make an arrangement with local publishers has been passed without amendment.

## CHINESE IMMIGRATION.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier's Act restricting Chinese immigration also passed. This is a measure of considerable interest to people

in British Columbia. The Government, by it, are given power to appoint one or more persons to administer the Act and engage interpreters at salaries aggregating not more than \$3,000 a year. Under the Act, only members of the Chinese diplomatic corps or other Government representatives, with their suites and servants, and consuls and consular agents may enter without paying the fee. Others who escape the tax are Chinese children, born in Canada, who have left this country for educational or other purposes and establish their identity on returning; also merchants, their wives and children, tourists, men of science, and students who substantiate their status to the satisfaction of the authorities.

Any woman of Chinese origin who is married to a person not of Chinese origin shall come in free, being deemed to be of the same nationality as her husband.

The Act also contains provision regarding the landing of Chinese and certain regulations to prevent any introduction of disease. Another section prohibits the traffic in Chinese women. A penalty is imposed for landing the Chinese before the tax is paid. Rules are also given for the passage of Chinese through Canada in transit to some other country, and provision is made for the registration of those who leave Canada and wish to return.

Any Chinese who break the new law may be put in prison for a year or be subject to a fine of \$500. The organization of Chinese courts is prohibited.

## CRIMINAL LAWS.

The Criminal Code has received a number of amendments, the subjects dealt with being chiefly the publication of indecent books, photographs, etc., the offences of kidnapping, counterfeiting money, etc.

Slight changes are also made in the laws regarding theft, and certain procedure in the case of accused persons. The changes are more technical than comprehensive and of more interest to the legal community than the commercial classes.

## ARBITRATION OF LABOR DISPUTES.

The last measure to which attention may be directed is the Act passed to aid in the prevention and settlement of trade disputes, and to provide for the publication of statistical industrial information. By this measure boards are established for the purpose of settling disputes between employers and workmen by conciliation or arbitration. The law follows the English Act to a certain degree, and provides for the creation of an arbitration tribunal when the disputing parties are willing. The Act is not obligatory, and has no power, therefore, to terminate a strike.

In connection with this, the Act sets up a Department of Labor which shall collect and publish statistical and other information relating to the conditions of labor, and issue, at least once a month, a publication known as The Labor Gazette, containing information regarding the labor market and kindred subjects.

As already announced through the press, the Government have appointed as editor of this new paper Mr. William Lyon Mackenzie King, M.A., LL.B., at present on the staff of Harvard University and a distinguished graduate of the University of Toronto. Mr. King is not a politician, but has been engaged in journalistic work and in special inquiries into conditions of labor for several years.

In connection with the work of the session, it might be mentioned that the Minister of Customs, Mr. Paterson, took a vote of money for the purpose of providing a staff to publish promptly and fully the trade statistics relating to imports and exports. This will be put into shape at once, beginning with the present month, which is the first of the new fiscal year.