

Spring freshets have done considerable damage in parts of New Brunswick. The Woodstock bridge, which cost \$40,000 for construction and repairs and was less than twenty years old, was carried away.

If there is anything we are accustomed to regard as harmless it is maple sap and the various sweets that are made from it, and it is therefore a great shock to hear of the death of William Dukeshire, of Matland, from drinking the sap. After partaking of the usually refreshing beverage he was taken with cramps and died shortly after in great agony. The quantity he drank may have had something to do with the fatal effect, but it is a very unusual thing, and we hope will remain a singular instance.

It is reported that the attention of the Government has been called to the fact that E. A. Macdonald, who is running as an annexationist candidate for the Legislature in Toronto, is a Lieutenant in the York Rangers. The right of this holding a commission in the Militia while at the same time advocating separation from the Empire and disloyal sentiments to the Crown is being questioned.

#### PARLIAMENTARY REVIEW.

**DOMINION.**—The items of supply are being rattled through in a businesslike manner, and for the most part they are being voted with little or no discussion.

Quite a lively debate took place over the appropriations for the Militia department. Several of the Government supporters expressed their disapprobation of the Snider rifle with which the Canadian Militia is armed. They regard this rifle as out of date, it having been thirty years since it was first introduced into Canada. The Minister of Militia stated that it would cost \$800,000 to arm the Militia of Canada with modern rifles, and that as matters stood at present the expenditure was rather greater than the Government cared to undertake.

Upon one point the Opposition has shown itself to have a definite, fixed and unalterable policy. Mr. Mills voiced this sentiment when he moved that Canada should have the authority to make her own treaties. This would mean a long step toward independent nationality. It would mean that Canada and the United States, Canada and the West Indies, or Canada and any other country, could formulate and ratify any treaty whatsoever without the co-operation or consent of Great Britain. Laurier, Cartwright, Mills and the supporters of the Opposition believe that Canada should have this authority and should have the power to exercise it without the interposition of British diplomats but Foster and his colleagues in the Government regard the movement as impracticable. They have no desire to loosen the ties which unite us with the mother land, and they believe that were the power within the scope of a Colonial Government it would lead to independence, or possibly in the case of Canada, be the forerunner of annexation to the United States.

Mr. Ives strongly advocated an export duty upon logs, claiming that as matters now stood the saw mills of the United States were cutting the timber of Canada, white pine alone excepted. Mr. Foster, representing the Government declined to accept the arguments of Ives, and stated that the policy of the Government was to meet the Government at Washington in a friendly spirit. If the export duty upon logs was again imposed it would lead to retaliation by the United States, which would be of no advantage to the exporters of spruce and hemlock, while it would seriously cripple the exporters of white pine. By request Mr. Ives withdrew his motion.

In the actions taken by the Government against Thomas McGreevy, Nicholas Connolly and others, it was deemed necessary to use the evidence taken before the Parliamentary Committee at its last session. This evidence was taken under oath and is such as to incriminate certain of the prosecuted parties. The Opposition claimed that it was contrary to British justice to use evidence taken under the protecting arm of Parliament in the criminal courts of the country. The Government held that without this evidence the guilty parties could not be brought to justice. Even if the latter contention be true it does appear to us that the Opposition took the broadest view as to the use of the evidence in question, and we fear that the action of Parliament in allowing the evidence to be used in the criminal courts may effect future Parliamentary enquiries. The evidence was given with the belief that it could not be used in the ordinary courts, and witnesses gave evidence accordingly; but now this evidence so frankly given is to be turned against the accused. We have our doubt whether such evidence is admissible, but this question will be settled by the courts.

**LOCAL.**—In looking over the railway legislation of the session one is forced to the conclusion that the Province of Nova Scotia is now fairly provided with railways in operation or with prospective railways, charters for the construction of which have already been granted. True, some of these charters have been slightly amended but scarce any new railways are projected. Mr. Cahan is seeking for a charter for a railway

connecting Shelburne and Barrington with Yarmouth but as a portion of this route is already covered by charter the granting of the new charter may create a small breeze. The Provincial Secretary has expressed himself favorable to a free competition in railway matters and the feeling of the house is strongly in the same direction.

The report of the Hospital for the Insane is creditable to the patient hard-working officials of that Institution. Over four hundred patients are now under treatment and taken all in all the report shows a gratifying percentage of cures.

Mr. Hemeon is fathering a movement which has the hearty endorsement of THE CRITIC. We have for years been of the opinion that the best and most effective temperance work could be accomplished by teaching the people the evils resulting from use of alcoholic beverages. We have published many interesting and instructive facts upon this phase of the question and we believe that such information thoroughly disseminated among the people will do more for the cause of temperance than scores of restrictive and prohibitory acts. Mr. Hemeon and his co-workers are looking to the rising generation for results and they desire to introduce into our public schools a text-book dealing with the poisonous effects of alcoholic beverages and narcotics. There are some difficulties in the way of the adoption and practical use of such a text-book, but these can easily be overcome if the movement has behind it zeal and determination.

According to the meagre statistics of marriages in the Province one might infer that matrimony was on the decline. From the County of Antigonish the returns show but twelve marriages during the year 1891, and the record in many other counties is very little better. The truth appears to be that the record is extremely imperfect, that many clergymen fail to give returns of marriages in which the banns have been published, and altogether the register is at best but partial, and hence is unsatisfactory. The same deplorable inaccuracy is reported as to the registration of births, and yet it is oft-times of the greatest importance to an individual to have an official register of his birth. It is time that the Government took hold of this matter with its customary energy, and we believe that by enforcing a system of registration with small fees the entire expense of the statistical department could be defrayed.

The Province of Nova Scotia suffers not a little from a too scant revenue. In keeping abreast of the times the Province has to assume many responsibilities which a few years ago were either neglected or left to benevolence of individuals. The Government has in consequence to ask ways and means for increasing the revenue, and they purpose doing this by levying succession duties upon estates. First, all estates are exempted the value of which do not exceed \$5,000; and second, all estates to the value of \$25,000 are exempt from succession duties when bequeathed to relatives. With these exceptions a succession duty is to be levied upon all estates, and the proceeds will go far towards keeping up in a state of efficiency such institutions as the hospital for the insane, the Victoria General hospital etc.

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