

THE TARIFF COMMISSION IN MONTREAL.—The Hon. Mr. Fielding, Finance Minister, and his colleagues on the Tariff Commission, opened a session of that body in this city on 7th inst. Mr. Fielding was chairman. Naturally, there were quite divergent representations made by representatives of interests affected by the Tariff as to what changes are desirable. Some, indeed, objected to any change. Mr. Horsfall, on behalf of the woollen manufacturers asserted that, unless this industry was given protection of about 38 per cent., all the woollen mills in Canada would be closed in three years; one-half of them he stated were now closed. A claim for higher protection was made by representatives of barbed wire, switches, frogs, and intersections of steel rail tracks. The wholesale grocers complained of this market being flooded by American importations at slaughter prices.

The representatives of local rolling mills wished no change made in the present duties on pig iron and steel billets, but a continuance of the bounty system was favoured. A plea was made for more protection against the importation of English cartridges, which, it was stated, were invoiced at less than the prices quoted in England. This, we may say, is provided for by the existing law.

A lower duty on the finer cloth imported from England was asked by a delegation from merchant tailors, who stated that as such goods were not made on this side the Atlantic, a protective tariff was not required.

After a large variety of trades had been represented, a member of the Trades and Labour Congress argued in favour of goods consumed in Canada being manufactured here.

The Tariff Commissioners have a laborious task before them in considering the various facts and arguments presented respecting the tariff requirements of the country. One feature, very prominent, was the demand for higher protection and some regulations to check the practice of flooding this country with goods in order to break the market.

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THE HON. MR. AYLESWORTH ON PENSIONS TO EX-MINISTERS.—The Hon. Mr. Aylesworth, who was recently appointed postmaster-general, when addressing a meeting of the electors of North York, which constituency he is hoping to represent, expressed his disapproval of the pension granted last Session to ex-Cabinet Ministers. This may be regarded as an intimation that the Government, of which he is a member, has resolved to repeal some portion of the Act under which the pensions were granted and the sessional indemnity increased. We have repeatedly objected to various features in that measure and are fully satisfied that our views were in accordance with public sentiment. Mr. Aylesworth's utterance evidences that he and his colleagues have decided to have amendments made in the measure in question.

MONTREAL'S SHIPPING BUSINESS, 1905.—The returns of the business of this port up to end of October show the number of sea-going vessels that arrived here were 759 against 742 in same term 1904. The tonnage was 1,759,639, which was an increase of 39,965 tons over last year. Since 1901 there has been a yearly increase in vessels and tonnage. The revenue of the harbour to same date was \$260,079, an increase of \$21,380.

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THE ALLAN LINE'S MISFORTUNES.—The Allan Line has been singularly unfortunate this season. To avoid sinking another steamer, which would have cost a number of lives, the SS. "Victorian" sheered out of its course in a dense fog and ran aground in the river on her way outward bound. A few days ago the SS. "Bavarian" ran on a rock near Quebec, where she is likely to spend the winter, if ever released. The first accident was strictly such, it was unavoidable, but the latter one points to some defect in the lighting service of the St. Lawrence. Mr. Hannah, general passenger agent of the Allan Line, states that the SS. "Bavarian's" grounding was due to the light on the Marguerite buoy not being lighted, of which neither the pilot, the captain, nor the Quebec agents had been notified. Should this prove to have been the case, it constitutes a very serious charge against whoever was responsible for the light being out, whose duty it was to notify navigators. The light whose absence caused the wreck of the SS. "Bavarian" is stated to have been unlit for two days. This is suggestive of some deplorable negligence, or want of systematic supervision of the lighting service of the St. Lawrence, which, no doubt, will receive the attention of the Minister of Marine, whose exertions to improve the conditions of the river have been most commendable.

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THE STAMP TAX AND ITS EFFECTS.—The tax imposed by the Quebec Government on the sale of securities is having an adverse, restrictive effect upon this business. It has created a prejudice against Stock Exchange transactions in this province and financial operations that were likely to be of advantage have been so hampered by the Quebec stamp tax that business has been diverted elsewhere and projects are likely to be arranged outside this province which, but for the stamp tax, would have been a source of local advantage. Why the movements of capital should be subjected to vexatious taxation is an inscrutable mystery. It is singularly impolitic and very liable to be fruitful in injustice. The interests of this city require every facility being given to legitimate financial operations, just as all departments of trade and commerce for their development and prosperity need to be left entirely free for their activities to expand.

If the Government is really compelled to secure