

sum compared with the \$2,500 paid to Canadian M.P.'s and Senators.

It is, however, quite a mistake to speak of the payment of the members of the English House of Commons as a novelty. The novelty was rather the reverse custom, but, they were paid in earlier days by the constituencies not out of the national revenue.

In the time of Charles I., the attention of Parliament was drawn to the absence of members for certain constituencies. The explanation was given that, Milbourne Port and Webley had sent no members to many Parliaments because of the inability of the people to pay the members their wages! One of the most illustrious of English men in those days informed his constituents that he would defray all the costs of attending Parliament out of his private means. A number of members were elected by a mere handful of voters. At Warwick and Colchester, for instance, the Mayor and Council were the electorate, at Brichport, 2 bailiffs, and 13 burgesses, and at Lewes a number of constables elected the local member. Under such conditions the custom at length prevailed of the M.P.'s not being paid. Payment of members out of the national revenue will widen the range of choice, but the evil will arise of creating a class of professional politicians of a lower partisan type than the men of independent means who, for so long, have been content to serve as Members of Parliament without any other recompense than the honour of this position.

FOREIGN INSURANCE COMPANIES IN GREAT BRITAIN.—A motion is before the House of Lords in regard to foreign insurance companies doing business in Great Britain. The Government is being urged to compel these companies to keep in Great Britain a sufficient proportion of their securities to cover the claims of British policy-holders.

FRANCE'S FOREIGN POLICY.—The new President of France and his cabinet at a meeting held on 13th inst., decided to maintain the foreign policy of their predecessors in office, including the stand taken by France at the Moroccan conference. This dissipates a cloud that was gathering and causing anxiety in the money market.

THE MINING HORROR IN FRANCE.—By an explosion of gas in a mine in France there were over 1,200 colliers killed. This is an unprecedented number to have been killed in a coal mine by one catastrophe. In 1866 there was 360 miners destroyed in a mine at Barnsley, England. Many explosions have occurred which were fatal to a large number, usually caused by the careless use of open lights where "fire damp" was known to exist, or, disregard of the precautions necessary to render the Davy safety lamp effective in preventing an explosion. Familiarity with danger seems to lessen the anxiety

to take precautions against it. Premier Laurier has sent a message of sympathy to the French Government which expresses, as far as words are able, the deep sorrow felt in Canada for the afflicted families towards whose relief it would be a graceful act to Canada to contribute.

* * * *

DANGEROUS SIDEWALKS.—Alderman Larivière, chairman of the Road Committee, called the foremen of the department together whose attention he called to the heavy damages the city was condemned to pay for accidents arising from defective sidewalks. He considered that there was no excuse for sidewalks being allowed to get into such a bad state of repair as to be dangerous. He urged the foremen to be more attentive to their duty in this respect and to promptly report any bad spots and defects found in their section.

A further matter needs reform which is this, sufficient care is not taken to replace rotten or broken boards by those in better condition. In some instances, portions of the sidewalks complained of by the neighbours have been removed and replaced by boards in fully as bad a condition as those removed.

In other instances very dangerous holes in sidewalks have been filled up with ashes, and places needing repair have been patched with odds and ends of old boards which have made a very uneven surface. Economy, no doubt, is very commendable, but the economy which saves a dollars worth of lumber and labour, and results in an accident for which the city has to pay \$3,000, would be more accurately styled recklessness.

* * * *

LAND GRANTS TO RAILWAYS BY QUEBEC GOVERNMENT.—The Quebec Government has granted 2,132,260 acres to 14 railways, exigible upon completion of the road for which the subsidy is granted. The minerals, coal and petroleum in the lands are reserved as the property of the Crown. The railway company will be obliged to sell to settlers in good faith, lots at \$2.50 per acre. These subsidies will lapse if the railway they are given for is not commenced and completed within a specified time.

* * * *

HUDSON'S BAY LANDS along the line of the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway are likely to be purchased by a London company being formed for this purpose with \$5,000,000 capital.

* * * *

APPLICATIONS TO PARLIAMENT.—Notices appear in the last Canada "Gazette" as follows:

The Dominion Fire Insurance Co. asks for power to change its head office from Vancouver to Toronto. The National Fire Insurance Company, Toronto, capital \$500,000, seeks incorporation.

La Banque Provinciale asks power to redivide its stock into shares of \$100 each, and authority to use the name "The Provincial Bank of Canada."

"Canadian Lloyds, Ltd.," seeks incorporation to do a marine business.

The Chartered Bank of London and Canada, seeks incorporation.

Application will be made to the Parliament of