

The Acadian

WOLFVILLE, N. S., MAY 20, 1887

POLITICAL INCONSISTENCIES.

A few months ago the Opposition press was strongly advocating the repeal of the duties on flour, cornmeal, and hard and soft coal, arguing that, as they were the necessities of life, they should be made as cheap as possible. Particularly did they advocate the repeal of the duties on hard coal and cornmeal, as the former was not a product of Canada and the latter was only produced in a limited quantity. During the present session of Parliament the duties have been taken entirely off anthracite coal, and we should expect that so far the change would prove satisfactory; but on the contrary we find these very papers, which so short a time ago were advocating so strongly the repeal of duties on such articles as we were unable to produce in the Dominion, the first to cry out against the taking off the duties on hard coal; and arguing directly against their former arguments.

During the Holmes-Thompson administration a few years ago in this Province, a bill was introduced in the Lower House to enable the Province to borrow \$700,000 for the erection and maintenance of our principal bridges. This passed by a large majority, but in the Upper House met with strong opposition and was disallowed, with the assurance that they (the Legislative Councilors) would never consent to bond the Province in debt for such a purpose. But on a change of Government a similar bill was introduced in the Lower House to borrow \$700,000, which, being introduced to the Upper House, passed by a good majority, the only opposition to it being from members who had favored the passage of the first bill. Again this winter a further sum of \$520,000 was allowed to be borrowed by the Province for the same purpose, while these same gentlemen of the L. Council could not see no reason why such a sum should not be borrowed.

The Liberal party have been strongly condemning the principle of nepotism, and Sir John A., Sir Charles, and other Ministers of the Cabinet have been vigorously attacked by the Liberal press on every occasion where it was apparent that any person had been appointed to office in any way connected with either of them. Yet we find that Mr. Mowat, the Premier of Ontario, has recently had his son appointed High Sheriff for the city of Toronto, the most lucrative appointment in the gift of the Ontario Government; and not a word in condemnation of the appointment is to be found in the Liberal press.

Returning again to our own Province, we were assured by the present government that their policy was one of economy, and that the finances of the Province were in such an auspicious financial condition that the utmost economy would have to be practiced or the Province would be thrown into bankruptcy. They commenced to economize by cutting down the educational grant, which, by the way, should be the last service in the Province to curtail, and voted to increase the salaries of the Executive in from \$500 to \$800 per year, thereby saving at the bottom and losing at the top.

THE HALIFAX DRY DOCK.

RICHMOND, May 17th.—A few words about the progress of the Halifax Dry Dock may interest your readers. The work has been pushed forward day and night since its commencement last summer, and is now looking somewhat shapely. The first thing necessary was to run a coffer-dam parallel with the shore the required length of the dock, and enclose the space thus formed at the south end or proposed entrance. This was done by driving a double row of piles with a space of about 12 feet between. The piles being square and close together the 12 foot space was filled in solid with water-proof clay, while outside of the piles was dumped all the stone and earth taken from the excavation at the north end of the dock. A solid wall is the result, resisting the action of tide and storm. Cofferdams having been completed yesterday, pumping began last night, and today a large quantity of the water has been removed. To-morrow will probably complete the work, leaving the dock dry. Very powerful steam pumps are used for the purpose. As soon as possible the floor and walls will be commenced. A transverse section of earth dividing the dock in two parts has yet to be removed, when there will be a space some 500 feet long and about 30 feet in depth. In the upper or north section, where the excavating is being done, three railway tracks are laid on the bottom. On these, tractors run lifting the dock early, and coming under a powerful steam derrick are hoisted to the surface where they are again set on another track and run to the dumping ground. Two illuminators are used burning 25 gallons oil per night. The electric light is also used. A steam crane has just been imported for breaking down rock required for caissons.

Our Ottawa Letter.

No. 7.

OTTAWA, May 13.—Since the House of Commons commenced its session three important divisions have taken place. The first was on Curran's Home Rule and Coercion resolution, which was carried by a respectable majority. Following this was the Queens (N. B.) election case. In this the Government was sustained by a majority of thirty-two. The third was upon the Deputy Speakership. The Opposition endeavored to abolish the office but on a division the Government was sustained by an increased majority. In the case of Curran's resolution it could not be called a party question, and from the English papers the Canadian House of Commons in passing the resolution have received no thanks for their trouble, as the English press, and rightly too, contend that we in Canada have no right to meddle with their affairs, as the English Government are fully capable of looking after themselves. But who says that the question has not been brought up in Parliament here for the purpose of political capital to be made out of it on some future occasion; we will see. In the Queens (N. B.) case the vote decided that it should not be dealt with by the Commons first but should go to the Committee of Election and Privileges, and by them be looked after. This committee met, and Hon. Mr. Thompson said that the task before them was not to decide between the two gentlemen concerned (King and Baird) but to settle the question as to the powers of the House to deal with it at all; and moved that a sub-committee be appointed to examine precedents in the case. This motion was objected to by Mr. Blake and Weldon (St. John), and the latter moved an amendment that returning officer Dunn be ordered to alter his return, substituting the name of King in place of Baird. The main motion was carried, the amendment on division being defeated by a vote of 16 to 13 in committee. The probability is that this now celebrated election case will not be settled until it is settled by a judge. So far as the Deputy-Speakership is concerned any one who has any parliamentary knowledge (and who has not now days?) knows it is an office that is required, and the present Government at least intend to have a Deputy-Speaker at any rate—whatever the Opposition may have when they succeed in handling the reins of government. The Government's majority on this question was 43. These majorities speak for themselves, and one is reminded of what was written and printed in the Opposition press, and telegraphed all over the Dominion in fact, that Blake had a majority of one. Perhaps he will have some day this majority—or a larger one, it is to be hoped if ever he has a majority at his back—but it will not be in the sixth parliament, whatever it may be in the seventh.

Included in a previous letter to the dissatisfaction that existed with the Opposition in regard to the getting of members in the last election, Mr. Mills complaining that the Government had their political sympathies gazetted sooner than the Opposition members; but Sir Charles Tupper's son, the junior member for Pictou, showed that if the Government did show any partiality in this matter, they only took a leaf out of the Opposition's book, and did nothing more in 1874 than the Opposition were guilty of doing in 1874. The following will show just how the parties were gazetted at the election alluded to:

Table with 4 columns: Year, Party, and other details. Rows include 1874 and 1887.

The Department of Agriculture have issued their blue-book. It is a large one, full of valuable information; so much so that it is hard work to know just what subject of its contents to write upon. This department has also issued a pamphlet for distribution containing a letter from Colonel Ravenhill, R. A., Inspector and purchaser of horses for the Royal Artillery. His letter treats on the condition afforded by Canada for the supply of horses for the cavalry service in England. The pamphlet in question is published with a view to building up an important export trade for the Dominion. Col. Ravenhill advocates the establishment of a horse fair or fairs at central points in the present state of the Dominion no English or European dealer could afford the expense or time of moving about the country along great distances, and only being able to purchase a very limited number of good animals. While the artillery purchasers were in Canada last season they examined 7,674 out of which they purchased only 83. It is suggested that the Canadian Government should appoint an inspector of horse-breeding operations, with a view to the improvement of the stock. As the importation into England alone is over 17,000 horses annually, it is pointed out that this trade is well worth attention. The pamphlet contains in full an interesting address on horse breeding recently delivered by Col. Ravenhill. The question rises in my mind, Why do not we in Nova Scotia, and you may say in King's Co., go more into the raising of horses than we do? Prince Edward Island farmers appear to be more wide-awake in this important industry than Nova Scotia. Even New Brunswick is far ahead of us. There is no doubt that money is to be made in breeding horses providing of course that we breed the right kind for export. Here we have a good market in the English government, a never-failing one at that, and the farmers and horse-breeders must look ahead and pay more attention to this subject,

and by so doing they will find it a very profitable undertaking.

The fisheries papers, forming a volume containing upward of 260 pages, has been brought down by the Minister of Marine and Fisheries. A discussion upon this is expected soon, and as the Opposition ever since the meeting of Parliament have been persistent and importunate in their demands, now that they have the papers, it will be funny to see what they will succeed in making out of them.

By a return made to the House, the receipts and expenditures show that up to the 1st of May of the financial year 1885-86, the receipts were \$27,307,575, and the expenditures \$28,850,249. For the same period of 1886-87 the receipts were \$28,160,936, and expenditure \$25,985,548. There was interest payable on the 1st of May to the amount of \$1,274,000—in England, \$175,285, and in Canada, \$98,720. The Finance Minister has presented a statement of revenue and expenditure for the current fiscal year from July 1st, 1886, to April 30th, 1887. For the last two years a considerable deficit has been noticeable, due in a great measure to the fact that the cost of suppressing the rebellion in the Northwest was defrayed out of current revenue, and in part to the decrease in customs receipts through the decline in the value of staple articles which reduced the receipts from ad valorem duties. To date, the receipts have been \$28,160,936 as compared with \$27,307,575 in the corresponding period of the preceding fiscal year—a gain of \$853,361. The expenditure of the current year to April 30th was \$25,985,548 as against \$28,850,249 in the same period of the preceding year—a reduction of \$2,864,701. Almost the whole of this arises out of the item of cost for the suppression of uprising in the Northwest, there having been spent for this service only \$210,085 this year as compared with \$836,246 in year 1885-6 to same date. By the above it will be seen that the revenue so far this year is \$2,175,388 ahead of the expenditure. But there has fallen due this month interest on the public debt to the amount of \$1,274,000. This will reduce the surplus to less than a million dollars, but still leaves it reasonably certain that the transaction of the twelve months ending June next will show a balance on the right side of the ledger.

The temperance question is one that is much talked about here, both by Members of the House of Commons and those who are not in that exalted position. The sub-committee of the Temperance Alliance now conclude not to have a prohibitory bill introduced at this session. Instead of this a resolution will be introduced setting forth that in the opinion of the House it is expedient to prohibit the importation, manufacture, and sale of intoxicating liquors, except for sacramental, medicinal and scientific purposes, and that the enforcement of such prohibition and the regulation of the manufacture, importation and sale of liquors prohibited or allowed shall be by the Dominion Government through officers specially appointed for that purpose. The prohibition party in the House of Commons are also actively at work in the good cause. They have appointed a committee to draft a measure of prohibition which they intend introducing in the House. Mr. Jamieson, M. P. for North Lanark, who is considered the leader of this party in the House, says that the measure will be an embodiment of all the main features of prohibitory law, and that the sub-committee who are now drafting the measure will report at an early date to the general committee, when the notice of motion will be passed. The prohibitionists are confident that they will be able to bring the matter to a vote. We will then be able to see who are the temperance men in the House of Commons. On the other hand Mr. McGill intends to introduce a bill to repeal the Scott Act. So you see the glorious cause of temperance is marching on, hoping for victory in the end.

Nova Scotia matters have taken up a great portion of the time of the House the past week, the railway between Oxford and New Glasgow, which is now an assured fact, being a bone of contention with the Opposition. The Government have appointed Mr. Colby, Member for Stanstead, to the Deputy Speakership, much to the surprise of many, as others were thought to have had a better chance for the bill. The nomination pleased Mr. Blake, therefore no vote was taken upon it. J. J. C. Abbot, Mayor of Montreal, has been called to the Senate, and will assume the leadership of that body. The Deputy Speakership's salary is \$3,000—two thousand for the office, and the remainder as seasonal allowance allowed to Members. The House adjourned on Wednesday next and will stand adjourned till May 25th. Sir John received a requisition signed by 28 Liberals and a larger number of Conservatives asking for the adjournment. The members living near of course appreciate this holiday, but those who will not be able to return home are grumbling considerably. As it is Parliament cannot possibly get through its business before the latter part of next month and the probability is that it will rise a day or two before Dominion Day.

The estimates were brought down on Monday last. The appropriations for Nova Scotia amount to \$19,700. North Sydney and South Sydney got \$6,500, and \$6,000 for new post-offices, but \$7,200 is not named.

Nova Scotia's share of the grants for harbor improvements amounts to \$75,000. Of this amount, \$20,000 goes to Digby pier. No grants for any harbor improvements for King's Co. C. A. C.

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