

The Daily Gleaner

FRIDAY, MAY 8, 1903.

INTERNATIONAL ARBITRATION.

Once more the question of a universal peace has been revived. This time it is a number of leading Frenchmen who have taken up the matter. It may seem anomalous that a nation which, a generation ago, was looked upon as being, in a number of ways, the most warlike of the European nationalities, should at the present time appear to lead the way in advocating the cause of international arbitration. But the French of the present generation have been brought to realize that the glory of war are ordinarily purchased at a terrible sacrifice, and that, so far as France is concerned, if by any possibility she could live over the past 200 years, and could succeed in erasing from this new experience the sufferings and losses incident to the many wars in which, since 1700, the French people have been involved, the condition of the country, from every possible point of view, would be infinitely better than what it is, even conceding that it is now not only a great but a wealthy country.

The leaders in France in this movement for international arbitration are exhibiting a great deal of shrewd common sense in the manner in which they propose to carry on their work. It is, of course, their desire to ally themselves with those other countries who are working for the same object; but in meetings that have recently been held in Paris the statement has been made that the success of the peace movement may be measurably delayed if the work of popularizing it is not wisely undertaken. These Frenchmen affirm—and it seems to me with a great deal of force—that all attempts made at the present time to bring about a partial or complete disarmament by means of international agreement are simply wasted efforts. Such projects not only recognize that international differences must be settled by appeal to arms, but in the balance which they would establish they have recourse to purely artificial methods, which would need constant readjustment.

The existence of the great navies and enormous armies, involving each year a tremendous tax upon the people of the civilized world, is not a cause, but a consequence, of the unsatisfactory condition of international relations. If the standing armies of the world were disbanded and the navies dismantled to-morrow, international conditions would not be sensibly improved in the absence of some method of settling international differences to take the place of an appeal to arms. Contrarywise, it is held that if an international tribunal is regularly established, then the belief in the necessities of maintaining armies and navies will be gradually weakened.

The plan proposed at these gatherings, as a contemporary points out, is to endeavor to have France arrange special treaties with the various civilized governments of the world, in which it will be stipulated that in the event of any disagreement, except on certain specified subjects, the contention—assuming that it cannot be settled by the ordinary methods of diplomacy—shall be referred to The Hague tribunal for final adjudication. It is considered expedient for the present to drop from the list of questions which may be made the subject of arbitration certain issues involving national territory and national honor. We do not understand that these Frenchmen believe that arbitration on these grounds is forever impossible, but they apparently hold that at the present time it is much better to endeavor to accomplish what is practical, and relatively easy in its achievement, than to attempt to secure the best and fullest measure of arbitration.

If France can succeed in making treaties of this kind, it will doubtless prepare the way for other nations to make similar treaties with countries other than France, and in this manner, by diplomatic understanding, all of the international grievances which may arise between civilized nations, with the exception of a few, will be referred to The Hague tribunal. Thus an importance and dignity will be given to that court which it does not at the present time possess, simply because of a failure to take advantage of the opportunities that it offers. Thus, by degrees, it will become a matter of custom to have recourse to arbitration whenever a perplexing international difference arises, and the easy solution in this way of awkward problems, without the loss of national credit on either side, will tend to make the governments and peoples of the civilized nations of the world more and more disposed to enlarge the scope of the tribunal by referring to it for adjustment those questions which are now thought to so closely relate to national honor that no disinterested third party can fairly adjudicate them.

When after some years of experience it is found that these international differences can be thus quietly, quickly and cheaply brushed aside, the question will push itself forward with irresistible force in all of the civilized nations of the world. Why are we

devoting so much of the results of our labors to the maintenance of needless armies and navies? The question of cutting down the size of these national armaments or of abolishing them entirely can then be taken up, with reasonable expectation of success, because it will then have been demonstrated that there is another and better means of settling international differences than by fighting over them. Until, however, intelligent public opinion throughout the world has brought itself to the point of insisting on international arbitration we cannot hope to make any headway in the work of relieving ourselves from this burden of constantly preparing for war.

MEETING THE NEEDS.

The Railway Bill engaged the attention of the Legislature this morning. As explained yesterday this bill gives assistance to three lines of railway in the interests of the development of our Provincial resources. The Ristigouche and Western Railway, the Central Railway and the Beersville Road are enterprises which the material interests of the Province demand should be encouraged, and the people of this Province will be pleased to know that in this respect the Government is quite alive to its responsibilities. It is encouraging to know that a majority of the Legislature is heartily in accord with the proposition to grant the assistance which the progressive spirit of this age demands. Hon. Mr. Hill, who was the first speaker in the debate this morning, opposed to the measure, and in this connection it may be said that Mr. Hill is likely to be the only supporter of the Government who will give opposition to it. Mr. Hill has peculiar notions in regard to subsidizing, assisting and otherwise aiding material development, and strange as they may appear to be we must do the honorable member for Charlotte the justice to say that he is conscientious in his opinions. But younger men and perhaps much more progressive men do not share his views. The Opposition will, in all likelihood, oppose the bill, for as presented and controlled it seems to feel that its duty is to condemn any measure or any policy initiated by the Government. The Central Railway came in for public aid because it will be an agency for the development of the mineral resources of Queens and Sunbury, and also an important factor in providing cheap fuel for enterprises in all other sections of the Province. Mr. Hazen, the leader of the opposition, whose ambition is to discredit the Government, will scarcely undertake to oppose provincial aid to this project unless indeed he has already concluded to abandon Sunbury county and its interests. Yet the Central, from a Provincial standpoint, is no more important in the policy of development than the other two enterprises. It will be interesting to watch Mr. Hazen's antics. The encouraging feature, however, is that the bill will pass, and as long as the present Government remains in power the march of progress will continue.

AT THE LEGISLATURE.

Continued from page 7.

that such a sum ought to be given as compensation as would be fair to labour without hampering capital. He thought that if this bill was withdrawn a committee of the House might meet the representatives of labour during the recess and draft a bill that would be satisfactory. As this bill fails to meet the views of the laborers it would be wiser to let it stand over for another year. The Government were to blame for not having introduced the bill earlier so that the matter could have been more fully discussed. It would be wiser to report progress than to pass a bill the laborers would repudiate.

HON. MR. TWEEDIE—I do not see any good reason why this bill should pass, for although it may not meet all the views of the working men it is certainly not antagonistic to them. This kind of legislation is a new departure and the Government should advance cautiously. It may be that in the working out of this law they will be able to see where improvements may be made. It is better that this bill should pass now so that we may have the benefit of the experience of the working of the law during the year.

MR. HAZEN—Why draw a distinction between a man hoisting with a winch in a vessel and one doing the same work in a quarry?

HON. MR. PUGSLEY—The reason is that we are not including all kinds of working men in this bill. We do not include quarrymen any more than we do farmers.

MR. RYAN—Why should we not include lawyers who lose the cases of their clients and stick them for costs?

MR. HAZEN—So we do if they are guilty of negligence.

HON. MR. PUGSLEY—If we include farmers we should excite alarm among those engaged in husbandry, for a farmer might be ruined by having to pay for the carelessness of one of his laborers.

MR. HAZEN—This bill would never have been heard of but for the action of the Trade and Labor Council in interviewing the Government.

HON. MR. PUGSLEY—I deny that. We passed the workman's lien act and other acts in the interests of working men without any such pressure.

MR. HAZEN—It never would have been heard of but for the Trade and Labor Council, and now the Council say they do not want this bill. Then

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why proceed with it. He had as much regard for the interests of employers as the Attorney General, and he did not wish to be placed in a false position. The bill should have been brought in earlier in the session.

HON. MR. PUGSLEY—Surely my honorable friend does not do himself justice when he states his inability to discuss this bill. We are here not so much to be guided by outside opinions as to give our best attention to the work of legislation. If he withdrew his mind from the idea of endeavoring to prejudice the Government with the working people and gave his attention to trying to improve the bill he would be devoting his time to a much better purpose.

EFFECT OF BILL.

The bill was read section by section. Section 3, which named the cases in which compensation would be granted, was amended, so as to apply to the case of a man placing deals from a saw along a steamship in a sling to be hoisted on board.

MR. LOGGIE—Would that cover the case of a schooner loading or unloading at a wharf?

HON. MR. PUGSLEY—No. Does my honorable friend think it ought to apply?

MR. LOGGIE—I hardly think it should.

MR. PURDY—Suppose a foreman in charge of a crew of men delegates his power to another man, would the employer be liable in the event of an accident?

HON. MR. PUGSLEY—The employer would be liable provided the foreman had power to delegate his authority.

MR. PURDY—They if the foreman delegated his power without authority the employer would not be liable.

HON. MR. PUGSLEY—No. Unless there was some implied authority to provide for the appointment of a substitute by a foreman.

On the question of the amount of compensation, Mr. Hazen said it was quite evident that \$1,500 was the most a ship laborer would ever get, but none of them earned as much as \$500 a year. In his opinion it would be better to make the sum \$2,500.

HON. MR. PUGSLEY—New Zealand is a rich country and money is of less value there than here. I would not like to see the sum made \$2,500. If there is any personal negligence on the part of the employer there is no limit on the compensation, for a laborer can sue out of this Act altogether. I think \$1,500 is a pretty liberal sum for an employer to pay for the neglect of another when he is not to blame.

MR. FLEMING—I have an impression that \$2,000 was agreed upon in the committee last year.

MR. PURDY—This bill is presumably for the benefit of the ship laborers. The stevedores who take the contracts are not wealthy men and I think \$1,500 is enough.

MR. RYAN—I think it is, for any accident generally arises through the carelessness of the laborer.

MR. OSMAN—I think if the damages are put at any higher rate they may cause great hardships.

MR. LOGGIE—Does it affect a sailor who is injured in the discharge of his ordinary duties?

HON. MR. PUGSLEY—If the sailor's injuries were caused by the negligence of the captain there would be a liability on the owner because the sailor was acting under the captain's orders.

MR. LOGGIE—I don't think this should be so. It goes too far. I move that salaries in the ordinary discharge of their duties on board a vessel be excepted.

This amendment was lost, only Messrs. Smith, Fleming and Loggie voting for it. The bill was then agreed to.

HON. MR. TWEEDIE introduced a bill to provide for the registration of Provincial debtors.

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