

vinial Bonds Our Sixes, long and short, are still at a fair premium, considering the well-known extravagance of our Government. Neither New Brunswick nor Nova Scotia promises to pay can be had at par, if they bear a per cent interest. Quebec finances are not considered hereabout to be in a very bad way, and Ontario is a large lender, instead of a borrower. The truth is, it must be going to the average United States mind to know that with all the boasted wealth and resources of the Republic, U. S. Bonds, sixes as well as fives, are every where at a discount, unmarketable at their face value, while Canadian Bonds, spite of the proximity of unneighbourly neighbours, Foolan sixes, and the rest of it, are becoming more and more a favorite investment, both at home and abroad.

We recommend those who pretend to be the teachers of the public in the United States to make themselves acquainted with the facts of the case before they publish such issues of falsehoods, giving them the benefit of the doubt, and supposing them to be merely ignorant. If the lies on the other hand are published wilfully, with design to inflict injury, if possible, on our credit, then is it of little use to ask that the concoctors thereof retract their falsehoods, for, if they be dishonourable enough to lie, they will neither be manly nor honest enough to acknowledge that they had endeavoured to mislead their readers, and to impose on them as truths fabrications out of whole cloth without the smallest foundation in fact.

LETTER FROM TORONTO.

THE ONTARIO LEGISLATURE!

TORONTO, 24th Nov. 1893.

UP to the present time the proceedings of the Ontario Legislature have been unusually tame. The hosts marshalled on the right and left of the Speaker have not exhibited any very warlike tendencies, although before the Session closes, it is quite possible a breeze may spring up. Very little was said upon the Address in reply to the Lieutenant Governor's speech. The truth of the matter is, there was very little opportunity for the most ingenious opposition to say much, for the speech, although somewhat longer than the generality of such Canadian state papers, contained a rather meagre bill of fare, and very little which could be found fault with.

Since the opening of the House, Toronto has been briskeer than before. As the season advances, business improves somewhat, and the presence of the M. P.'s, the visits of deputations and of private individuals interested in Legislation, give the streets a more lively appearance than usual. Many of the merchants are looking forward to increased business activity between the present time and the holidays. The preparations for the latter are already commenced, and the City promises to be more lively and attractive than usual till after the festive season.

The principal measures which the Local Ministry have introduced into the Legislature, are the Grammar and Common School bills, the Drainage bill, and a bill to quiet the titles and lands purchased at Queen's sales for taxes. The two former measures are much the same as when brought forward last Session, and embody several very desirable changes in our school system. The chief alterations proposed to be made in the Grammar School system are, that hereafter these schools are to be known as High schools, that four of the largest of them are to be called Collegiate Institutes, that the study of the Classics is not made imperative as under the present system, that girls shall be permitted to attend them, and that the Municipalities in which the schools are located shall elect a Board of Public School Trustees, which board shall manage both the High and Common Schools and provide for their support in the same manner as the latter are supported at present. Among the principal changes proposed in the Common School system are the following. The superintendents are to be appointed for counties (not single Municipalities as at present) at a regular salary, attendance at school for six months in the year is to be compulsory, school sections refusing to put up suitable buildings are to receive no Government grant, Salaries of Teachers are not to fall below certain sums, and if parents refuse to get the necessary books for their children, Trustees are empowered to procure them and charge to the parents school rate, &c. These provisions are, in some respects, a little arbitrary, but the bills have been carefully prepared and considered by the Chief Superintendent, J. Ryerson, and will most probably be adopted by House without much amendment.

Among other measures which have been brought forward, several by Mr. Blake are important. Among them is an Act to amend the law relating to Controverted Elections and the prevention of improper practices at Elections, and another to make better provision for the realisation of the Estates of deceased persons. Mr. McKeen has again introduced his bill to render Members of the Commons and Senate ineligible for election to the Local House. Much opposition has been manifested throughout Ontario to these parts of the Assesment law passed last Session, which exempt Government officials, Ministers of the Gospel, and certain classes of property from taxation, and Mr. Trow has brought in an Act to do away with such exemptions. Mr. Boyd has a measure to protect homesteads from levy or sale on execution, and Dr. McGill one to regulate the sale of provisions.

One of the most animated discussions which has yet taken place was upon Mr. Boyd's measure to adopt an Income Franchise. This discussion came off on Wednesday of last week. The measure was stoutly opposed by Attorney General MacDonald, and the six months halt was carried by 46 to 27. When the Dominion Government have adopted an Income Franchise, as the Premier explained last session, the Ontario Ministry does not appear to advantage in being less liberal.

The Hon G. B. Wood, Treasurer, has already laid before the House the Public Accounts for the last year. There is also a statement of the expenditure for the nine months which have expired of 1893. It is to be regretted that the Financial year has not been altered so as to terminate earlier than the 31st December, for under the present arrangement, it is almost impossible to make a comparison of the expenditure of the Government, at least until the accounts are too old to be of much interest. If Mr. Wood made his financial year close on the 30th June, like the Dominion Government, it would be a great improvement; and if the Local House intends to meet always about November, the period might even be made later and allow sufficient time to lay the public accounts before the Members before the close of the Session. The total receipts for the year ending 31st December, 1893, were \$2,200,176.49, and the expenditures \$1,182,883.63—leaving the snug balance of \$1,017,292.86 in the Provincial exchequer. During the nine months which have expired of this year the revenue has been \$2,061,641, and the amount spent \$1,622,914. Attorney General MacDonald boasts that he has now a surplus invested of over \$20,000,000, but it ought to be mentioned that the Government is conducted with unusual economy, if not absolute parsimony, and that very little has yet been expended in public works or other undertakings for the development of the revenues of the Province.

The battle of the Railway charters, to which I saw you referred recently, has begun in earnest, although not much of the struggle has yet been seen in the House. A large and influential deputation from St. Thomas, headed by Sheriff Munro, has been here for some time, as well as several American gentlemen interested in the Southern line. It is rumoured that an amalgamation is likely to take place of all those in favour of the direct line from the Niagara to the St. Clair River—the basis being an equal number of representatives on the Board of Provisional Directors, and the obtaining of power to cross the St. Clair river at any point in the townships of Moore or Bombara, leaving it to those who actually subscribe the stock to say whether the crossing shall be opposite St. Clair City or lower down. Thompson is said to object to this arrangement because this change would enable the Board to control him and not him the Board—put the feeling among the members of the Legislature is such that, if he won't consent to this arrangement, which is most earnestly desired by the St. Thomas deputation, he will most probably fail in getting the Charter amended at all.

The Premier has announced that the House will rise before Christmas. But unless the business proceeds faster hereafter than it has done up to this time, the chances are the Legislature of the House will not then be sufficiently advanced to adjourn. Last Session Mr. McDonald made the same announcement about adjourning before the holidays, but the Members had to come back in January. The Attorney General is, however, about to allow the Members a Sessional allowance instead of a monthly pay, and possibly this fact may assist him to push the business through quickly, and send the "collective wisdom" to their homes before Christmas, thus enabling the Local Ministers to eat their turkey and pump pudding in quietness and peace.

THE PETROLEUM TRADE—A NEW MOVEMENT.

THE following is taken from the *New York Bulletin*.—In petroleum, as in nearly every other important branch of trade in America, New York occupies the most prominent position. About seventy per cent. of all the exports of petroleum made this year have been from this port, while of the remaining thirty per cent. shipped from Philadelphia, nearly all has been exported on account of New York merchants.

The refining of crude is done principally in Pittsburgh, Cleveland and New York. Until within the past twelve months Pittsburgh had manufactured more refined petroleum for export than either New York or Cleveland, but Cleveland during the past year, has increased her refining capacity, and furnished more of the exports than Pittsburgh. New York has also added materially to her refineries, and the works of the Olefinum, Brooklyn and Wicks Brothers may be ranked among the largest in the country. The business between New York exports and Cleveland refiners is done mainly by brokers, the refiners usually selling to exporters on consignment, delivery being at seller's option within the "lay days" of the buyer's vessel. This is considered the most desirable and legitimate contract that can be made. The business is, however, speculative, and there are always speculators who are willing to pay more for buyer's options for future delivery than the exporters can afford to pay. As a rule, we believe the New York refiners are not sellers of buyers' option contracts for more than one month ahead. Cleveland house are willing to take more and greater risks of this kind; but it is in Pittsburgh and Philadelphia that the speculators can be most fully accommodated. Contracts can be obtained from Pittsburgh refiners, through their commission houses, at buyers' option for one month, in "lines" for a series of months, or extending over the whole twelve months. It is to this mania for speculation that we ascribe the decline in the refined products of Pittsburgh for the past year. As nearly as can be learned from inquiry, the refiners of that city are nearly all speculators on either "bull" or "bear" side, buying and selling options of each other and of outside parties who always have the advantage. This mode of doing business irresistibly recalls the story of the two Yankee boys who, being confined over night, emerged from their dungeon next morning rich men, from the fact of having passed their hours of imprisonment in swapping jack-knives. The result is that speculation has almost entirely usurped the place of legitimate manufacturing business. Not more than half of the refiners in Pittsburgh have been in operation during the past season. If the refiners there would be content with moderate and sure profits, limit their sales to periods of thirty or forty days ahead and to the legitimate exporting trade, and contract to deliver at seller's option to suit the "lay-days" of the buyers' vessels, it is questionable that they could run their works at a greater profit than any other manufacturing centre. By adopting this course they become more intimately connected with those who buy oil for actual export, their brands would become better known and more desirable to the buyers, as in many cases one brand would make an entire cargo; they would pay less commission warehouse charges and use less by leakage; in short, they would become masters of their own business, having no contracts for future delivery of refined oil they would not be obliged to buy crude futures at advanced rates to cover, thereby continuously stimulating the price of crude. The Pittsburgh refiners possess, in most cases, ample tankage and could easily hold their refined oil over the weak and dull stages of the market. The location of Pittsburgh, connected as she is by rail and water with the oil regions, and possessing cheap fuel, iron, and co-operation, and the Pennsylvania Railroad always guaranteeing her lower eastward freights than the Pennsylvania or any other railroad company will concede to any other manufacturing point—all these advantages combine to enable her to deliver refined petroleum at tide water at lower prices than can be touched by the refiners of either New York or Cleveland.

We have noticed within the last thirty days a decided advance in prices for both refined and crude petroleum. Rumours are current that this advance originated in a combination made in Pittsburgh by several wealthy houses, believing the time had come for them to hold their stocks at higher prices. We have endeavoured to learn something of the condition of the crude oil market, as the price of refined must ultimately be based on that of crude. After diligent enquiry among those engaged in the purchase of crude on wharves for shipment hither, we find that crude for immediate delivery is exceedingly scarce, and that the demand there is from the legitimate trade. Those parties assert positively that the reports of daily production and stocks at the wells, made by the *Litvillie Herald*, are gross exaggerations, and claim that if the stocks on hand were anything like the estimate of it given by that paper, they could easily obtain oil for shipment. They estimate the daily production at not over 30,000 barrels and the actual stock at from 50,000 to 100,000 barrels less than the *Herald* reports. They also think the trade has been continually misled by overestimated production and stocks. We cannot assure ourselves of the amount of stock held in New York, but we know that it is here very light. It is only fair to say that the exporters here are buying very little, assigning as a reason that Europe has plenty of petroleum and will not respond to the advance in the American market. However, the laws of supply and demand will, in the end, fix the price on a just basis; and if the reports concerning the scarcity of crude oil be true, Europe must meet the legitimate American price, inasmuch as petroleum is evidently the gift of Providence to those among the poor, who, in that country, either desire or require to see after twilight.