

SOUTH SHORE SUBSIDIES.

The following instructive series of questions and replies is from a report of what went on in the Dominion Parliament on Thursday of last week. The report is taken from the Montreal Gazette of the 13th inst:

On the vote of \$50,000 for a railway bridge over the St. Francis river, instead of at St. Francois du Lac, Mr. Bergeron said the South Shore Railway Company, which got a subsidy for 82 miles, had acquired the road off the C.P.R. from Sorel to Yamaska; and that part of the Armstrong road, the Great Eastern, from the Yamaska river to St. Francois du Lac. The first part was subsidized by this Government.

The Prime Minister—No, no.

Mr. Bergeron—Yes, and by the local Government. The road from the Yamaska river to St. Francois du Lac has been subsidized by the two Governments, to the extent of \$3,200 by this Government, and \$4,000 by the local Government. That line has been subsidized to the extent of \$7,200 by the country. We are now giving it \$3,200 a mile more.

The Prime Minister—It is quite true, I believe, that the road between Yamaska and St. Francois du Lac was subsidized by this Government. It is quite true that a subsidy was voted, but it is quite true also that there never was a train run over that piece of railway. It is also perfectly true that after the subsidy had been paid the rails were taken up, taken over to Nicolet, put down on the section of railway between Nicolet and St. Gregoire and a new subsidy was given for the same road. The road has never been in operation. I do not know whether the company will use it. I do not think they will.

Mr. Bergeron—Why did they buy it?

The Prime Minister—To get rid of the charter. There were two charters given for the same section of country, one to the Great Eastern Railway Company, and the other to the South Shore Railway Company. The two charters covered the same ground, and the South Shore Railway Company, to get rid of the other company, had to buy the charter.

Mr. Haggart—That is a most extraordinary state of affairs. A road is laid down and subsidized and then someone takes up the rails, puts them on another road, and received a subsidy. The man who did that should be sent to the penitentiary. (Hear, hear). The man who commits a crime like that should be arrested and punished. I do not care who he is. This is the first time that I ever heard of it, and if any crime of that kind has been committed, the guilty party, no matter who he is, ought to be sent to the penitentiary. (Hear, hear).

The Prime Minister—I quite agree with my honorable friend that the party who did that ought to be sent to the penitentiary. I state, on my responsibility as a member of this House, and as occupying the position which I do, that the fact, as I have stated it, is literally true. There was never a train run upon the road except one. One train was run over the road, and then the rails were taken up, removed, put down upon another section of the railway, and a subsidy was obtained for that road.

Mr. Bergeron—Then, as a matter of fact, we are giving \$10,400 a mile for this piece of road.

The Prime Minister—Under the circumstances, yes.

Dr. Sproule—When was that done?

The Prime Minister—I think about 1887.

Mr. Fortin—I think we should know who the party or company is.

The Prime Minister—The company was known as the Great Eastern Railway Company.

Mr. Haggart—There must be some fault on the part of some of the officers in the department. It never came to my knowledge. The officers of the department, who would certify to the Government that this road was furnished with new rails and was entitled to receive the subsidy, must have known, because it must have come to their knowledge that they were taken off another portion of the road, that had already been subsidized, and these officers of the department, whoever they are, ought no longer to be continued in their positions. (Hear, hear).

Mr. Bergeron—What about the line between St. Gregoire and Nicolet? Is that also under the same line of railway?

The Prime Minister—Yes.

Mr. Bergeron—This line has also been subsidized before.

The Prime Minister—It has been subsidized before and subsidized very much under the same circumstances. There never was a train run between St. Gregoire and Nicolet, for which a subsidy was paid.

Mr. Bergeron—So that this has been subsidized by the two Governments. Federal and Provincial, and we are still subsidizing it.

The Prime Minister—Yes. The subsidies of the two Governments have been absolutely squandered.

Mr. Bergeron—That is a very bad state of things.

The Prime Minister—It is.

The item passed.

THE WOOL MARKET.

Much interest continues to centre in wool. The circular of Messrs. Justice, Bateman & Co., of Philadelphia, dated July 14th, gives some explanation of the unusual conditions:

The London wool sales, which opened on the 3rd inst., developed in the early part a decline of from 10 to 15 per cent. on merinos, and from 7½ to 10 per cent. on crossbreds, from the closing rates of the previous sales, and were a disappointment.

Disturbances in China so deranged the European money markets as to leave the auction room without sufficient support to sustain prices.

The sales have shown more strength since the opening. The managers have decided to omit one of the usual sales, and there will be none in September or November, but in their place will be one in October.

This is partly due to the fact that, notwithstanding the amount carried over from previous sales, the supply for the last of the year is light in comparison with that which was brought forward last year.

The United States has closed a half year of such general prosperity as has never before been experienced.

With the practical disappearance of extensive resistance to British arms in South Africa, it was hoped that a resumption of normal commercial conditions all over the world would follow; but the increasing gravity of the trouble in China has postponed the realization of this hope.

Woolen manufacturing has been abruptly halted in an unprecedented experience of activity, during which there has been a marvellous expansion in wool consumption; and although the tone of the market is in buyers' favor, the latter seem unwilling to take advantage of the present cheapness of wool, and the demand has fallen off.

The decline from the average price of the past year on Merino wool in the London market has been 24 per cent.

The first intimation that foreign wool markets were being adversely affected by financial disturbances, came from the application of Continental operators in River Plate wools to London bankers for assistance. Heretofore these operators

had arranged for their purchases through their home banks, and their appeal to London showed lack of ability to finance the usual wool operations.

Unfortunately, this weakness transpired, not only at a time when, owing to the South African war, the London wool market was seriously disturbed, but also when wools were worth 60 per cent. more than they were in 1898, thus requiring more money to handle them. When the favorable turn of affairs in South Africa gave rise to the belief in the recovery of business confidence, the troubles in China culminated and the disturbances growing out of this fresh development again upset the financial world and the London sales, until wool now appears to offer a tempting inducement for successful speculation. The greater the decline, the greater must be the reaction. It is a source of surprise that active buying does not begin.

Even at the present depressed time, the American wool grower can sell his quarter-blood wool here at 24 to 25 cents in the grease, or 45 cents clean scoured, while if he sold the same wool in London, it would bring there only 13 cents in the grease, or about 24 cents scoured, in order to compete with the low prices there of skirted Australians, which, with the duties and the freight added, would cost 45 cents, scoured, landed in the United States.

So far as can be seen, the wool clip of this country is coming upon the market under local conditions exceptionally favorable to an advance later on.

It was the uncertainty in foreign markets which caused the decline there, rather than the appearance of any distinctly unfavorable factor; and at present there seems to be no good reason for expecting any further decline in the United States, although it is the apprehension of this which is causing buyers to stand aloof at this time when wool can be bought at no more than the average price of the past year.

ENGLISH, AFTER THE SLANGY STYLE.

The following burlesque on the curious mixture of slang that gets into the language of the West, is from the Chicago Times-Herald. After the census man had jotted down the answers to the preceding questions, he asked:

"Do you speak the English language?"

"Say," replied the "gent" who was under examination, "what kind of a spiel is this you're uncorkin' on me, anyway? Me 'speak the English language? Well, my boy, if you think I'm talkin' Choctaw to you now you're up against one of the emptiest propositions that ever come down the pike. Say, if the man that invented the English language could hear me spiel on my larynx he'd holler for help, and that's no' josh, neither. You don't haft to have no translator to git my meanin' into your headpiece, do you, huh? Me talk English! Old man, if I'm throwin' anything else into you rite now you give me a map of it on a roller, will you?"

—A recent report on pauperism in England and Wales shows that one person in 39 out of the whole population receives relief out of the public funds. One-fourth of the total of 817,000 for the current year are children under 16. This is bad, though not so bad as at one period within the last fifty years, when one-seventh of the population was in receipt of poor relief.

—A Montreal paper states that Mr. Joaquin Salinday, of London, has taken out the Baie des Chaleurs section of the Atlantic and Lake Superior Railway, on behalf of the trustees of the bondholders and will complete the road to Paspebiac. Senator Casgrain is to represent the trustees in Canada.