

getting the long promised bills from Ministers, it would appear there ought to be two Ministers for each Department in place of one. He advocated the reduction of Ministers and Departments, and could see no reason why the Speaker of this House should not be a member of the Government, and so endeavour to reduce the expenses of the Government, which are entirely exorbitant and disproportioned to the wants and requirements of this country. He said it sounded strangely for Ministers to be practicing economy on a few poor miserably paid employees whilst they winked at the great evil of our present system. The large number of Ministers and their numerous staff and departments, were arousing public feeling and alarm from one end to the other of this Dominion. Though he did not expect that any remedy would be adopted now, he thought the day was not far distant when the public voice would make itself heard in no mistakeable terms.

On motion of the **Hon. Mr. Campbell**, the bill was read a second time and ordered to be referred to a Committee of the whole House on Tuesday next.

STATIONERY OFFICE ESTABLISHMENT BILL SECOND READING

Hon. Mr. Campbell said this bill would enable the Government to exercise more control over the contingencies of the various departments, and prevent extravagance in reference to that item of public expenditure, which it had always been difficult to check, as no uniform system has been pursued. In reference to the charges for those items, there had been a laxity in the old Province of Canada, and to some extent in the Dominion, since the passing of the Constitutional Act. The Chairman of the Contingent Committee mentioned a case of overcharge for stamping envelopes; he had made enquiries but could not ascertain the office it occurred in. Some better check should be provided against overcharges than has been heretofore. The responsibility by this bill will be on the Head of the Department, who will be required to examine every account and certify it. The matter will not even rest here, but will have to go before the Committee on Contingencies, who will examine it, when it will ultimately be paid under the Finance Department. This will result in a proper supervision being kept over these items of expenditure. He could see no reason why the economy which had been the result of the course pursued by the Joint Committee

on Printing should not be general and exist in all the Public Departments, (Hear, hear). He could speak for the Department with which he was connected, that a due course of economy had always been pursued.

The bill was then read a second time and ordered to be referred to a Committee of the whole House on Monday.

CURRENCY BILL.

Hon. Mr. Campbell moved, seconded by **Hon. Mr. Kenny**, that the Bill intituled "An Act respecting the Currency," be now read a second time.

Hon. Mr. Campbell said this measure had been much changed since the bill was first printed under the auspices of the other branch of the Legislature. At that time it was proposed that this bill should be a double system; one part of the bill to go in force in case the United States did not establish their currency on the basis of the report of the International Monetary Conference, held at Paris, and the other to be put in force in case they did establish their currency in accordance with the basis there agreed upon. It had been considered that this double system would be attended with a great deal of inconvenience, therefore it was thought best to submit the measure to the House, which was based upon the report of the Conference; if the United States adopt that system it will be common to the United States, Great Britain, France, and one or two other powers who were represented at the Conference held at Paris. It fortunately happens that the currency of Nova Scotia will not be seriously affected by the new system, while it will be a convenience to all the inhabitants of the Dominion.

Hon. Mr. Wilmoit said this bill should have been so prepared that it would have established one uniform currency for the Dominion, instead of continuing two systems: one in Nova Scotia and the other in the rest of the Dominion. According to his judgment and experience the system in use in Nova Scotia was by far the most simple, and as to fixing the price of gold that was an arbitrary enactment. It would be far more sensible to have the value of the sovereign fixed at \$5 than at \$4.86 $\frac{2}{3}$, because when fixed at \$5 all the aliquot parts were in decimals, whereas if fixed at \$4.86 $\frac{2}{3}$ it commenced with fractions and carried it out through all its aliquot parts. The sovereign at the former value was bills of exchange at a premium of 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, while

at the latter value it was bills of exchange at $9\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, trade regulating itself so far as the rate of exchange was concerned. In Nova Scotia they found no difficulty in trading with Great Britain, United States, or any other country, and suffered no loss in consequence of thus fixing the basis of the circulation. In New Brunswick the notes of Nova Scotia are actually circulating $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent discount, while the rate of exchange is nearly 3 per cent; so Nova Scotia really gains by that.

Hon. Mr. Ross stated that Nova Scotia really lost 3 per cent, by fixing the value of the sovereign at \$5.

Hon. Mr. Wilmot said he differed with his hon. friend, and could assure him they did not require to be taught by persons from any part of the Dominion, even from Ontario itself, with regard to the practice or principles of trade, for they had a keen eye to their own interests. He (Mr. Wilmot) thought that the fact that the Government had left their currency as it was, showed they had been convinced by the arguments of the gentlemen from Nova Scotia. When Sir Robert Peel attempted to apply his currency measures to Scotland, the people rose in their might and refused to abandon a banking system that had done so much for the country. As to unsettling all accounts this very bill has provided that liabilities or debts existing before the new system comes into operation shall be paid in the currency now existing. It would be a great inconvenience to have to re-coin all the sovereigns in the Dominion to carry out this new system. Their value is altogether arbitrary, therefore it would be better to fix the value of the sovereign at \$5, according to the Nova Scotia system, which comes so near to the value fixed by the Conference at Paris, and which was the most reasonable and advantageous way, and leave trade with other countries to regulate itself, which currency regulations in this Dominion could not affect.

Hon. Mr. McCully said that when the Government introduced this measure it was with another connection, which was to authorize the Governor-General, by acclamation, to establish a uniform system of currency in the Dominion, and then it stated that in case the monetary arrangement made by the Conference in Paris, should be adopted in England, and also in the United States, the second part of the bill should come into operation. As the bill had been changed, he thought it might not be amiss to say he had felt it to be his duty to urge the undesirability

of making any change in the monetary matters of Nova Scotia, particularly at the present time. Nothing would so irritate them at this time as to have the whole system of their money changed and altered. In making this change, they would only be changing the name and not the value of money; and he held the principle that a debt should always be discharged in the currency in which it was contracted. If the currency was changed old debts must be paid in old currency. The sovereign passes in Nova Scotia for five dollars, and the consequence of this is, the English shilling passes for a quarter of a dollar, and twenty of these make a sovereign. If it had been the policy of the Government to change this currency, every merchant in Nova Scotia would have had to re-mark all his goods; the article marked at five dollars would have to be taken down and marked in the new currency. Every quarter of a dollar goes there for twenty-five cents, but under that Bill it would have had to be put down to twenty-four, and the impression would have gone abroad that the people had lost the difference between the old value of the money and the new. The Government have taken that view of it, and acted very wisely in not passing that part of the Bill. He referred to the facility with which calculations could be made with the Nova Scotia currency: by adding one fourth, sterling money was brought into currency and by subtracting one-fifth, currency was reduced to sterling money, but if the sovereign was valued at $\$4.86\frac{2}{3}$, it required pencil and paper to make calculations. It would not have been seemly for him to have asked that the currency of the Dominion should be assimilated to that of Nova Scotia, unless that was the policy of a neighboring country or perhaps of the empire, but all he had asked was that their currency should remain in the meantime, without change. In travelling in Belgium, France, and he believed in Italy, he found the money was counted precisely as it was counted in Nova Scotia. The currency of Nova Scotia is the most convenient that can be introduced, although there was some inconvenience attending the use of the English sixpence which was $12\frac{1}{2}$ cents, and the English half crown, which was $62\frac{1}{2}$ cents, but when those two were put together, there was no difficulty at all. He was not surprised to find that the bankers of Nova Scotia had sent up a remonstrance against changing their currency, and expressing a desire to have the currency of the Dominion made identical with that of Nova Scotia if changed at all.

Hon. Mr. Ross said it was very gratifying to know that some of the powerful nations of the world were determined to arrange their currency according to a uniform standard. He then referred to the loss sustained by the merchants of Nova Scotia in consequence of having to take sovereigns at a higher rate of value than they were worth elsewhere.

Hon. Mr. Anderson argued in favour of the Nova Scotia currency. He said though they managed their transactions with a sum of money nominally greater than its value in other countries, yet they sustained no loss in their mercantile transactions with those countries in consequence.

Hon. Mr. Reesor said every one must know that the value of money depended upon the intrinsic value of gold, as this was the standard of value in every civilized country. A man in Nova Scotia sends fish or lumber to the West Indies, or to England, and he gets paid in British sovereigns, or in gold, which is the measure of value in the commercial world; then whether the sovereign is called four dollars or five dollars is a mere matter of convenience in his own country, and makes no difference in the amount he can buy with it. It is very desirable for every country to regulate their currency so as to correspond with the currency of other countries, and with this view a Conference met at Paris to decide upon some basis of a decimal character for the currency, as that was the most convenient currency in keeping accounts. Everyone must recollect the time when books were kept in the old style of pounds, shillings and pence, causing a great deal more labour in counting money than now. The difference between the two systems might be compared to the difference between single rules in arithmetic and compound rules. He quite agreed with his hon.

friend from Nova Scotia (Mr. McCully) that there were some very good features in this measure, but he thought the members should have more time to look over these bills, in order to discuss them properly, and ascertain whether the changes made will be for the benefit of the country. He then referred to the Bill relating to the contingent expenses of the Government, and said they had to take it for granted that it was a good bill, as the Government had promised that an important reform would be effected by it. He had no hesitation in saying to the Government that if they did not effect a reform, public opinion would call them to account. He then referred to the vast increase in the expenses of the Civil Government since the organisation of the Dominion Parliament, and unless by some new arrangement, for which the Government will be held responsible, a large reduction is made in the expenses there will be a great deal of dissatisfaction created throughout the country.

Hon. Mr. Dickey said he had some reason to thank the Government for the course they had taken in this matter, and he hoped it would only be an earnest of other legislation which would have similar effects.

The bill was then read a second time and ordered to be committed to a Committee of the whole House on Monday next.

The House then went into Committee (**Hon. Mr. Olivier** in the chair) on the Bill intituled "An Act respecting accessories and abettors of indictable offense," which they agreed to without amendment.

The bill was then read a third time and passed.

The House then adjourned until Monday at three o'clock.