

THE CHARLOTTETOWN GUARDIAN AT SUMMER RESORTS.

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THE CHARLOTTETOWN GUARDIAN

SATURDAY MORNING, JULY 22, 1905

REDISTRIBUTION IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

It has long been foreseen that a redistribution of constituencies in the United Kingdom must take place at no distant date. Ireland, since the great decline of her population by emigration, has long been over-represented in the national Parliament. Her 103 representatives in the Commons are far more in number than the Emerald Isle is entitled to on a basis of population. At present England and Wales together are represented by 405 members, Scotland by 72 and Ireland by 103 members in the Commons. England has one member for 64,832 people, Scotland one for 50,916 and Ireland one member for each 43,840 of her people. If Ireland were suddenly reduced to a like representation with England in proportion to population her membership in the Commons would be diminished to 70.

Scotland is also slightly over-represented when compared with England. Premier Balfour proposed to grapple with this question, but has deferred his action owing to the decision of the Speaker that the bill would have to be discussed clause by clause, which would involve a most interminable discussion. What he proposed seems to have been to take away 22 seats from Ireland, three from Scotland and to add seventeen seats to England and one to Wales. This would slightly diminish the total membership of the House. Of course any such radical diminution of Ireland's representation would be contested by the Nationalists with all their energy, skill and powers of obstruction. Mr Balfour greatly desired to pass a redistribution Bill as it would greatly strengthen his party in the coming elections, but it is now deferred and the matter will probably remain in abeyance till a new Parliament can deal with it.

The case of Ireland in regard to representation bears some resemblance to that of Prince Edward Island, but with many points of difference. The British constitution has no provision such as that in the Canadian constitutional act providing for and enforcing representation according to population. When first united with Great Britain, Ireland was given 100 representatives in the Commons. The Reform Bill of 1832 increased the representation of Ireland to 105, which was subsequently reduced to 103. Otherwise the changes of representation in each of the three Kingdoms seem always to have been in the direction of an increase. Moreover Ireland claims, as we claim here, that it was by the misdirected action of the superior authority that the decrease in her population was caused, and that her representation ought in no cause to be cut down below the number given at the union. The Liberal party in the Mother County simply deny the right of a moribund Parliament to deal with the question of redistribution in any way. So there seems to be little doubt that during the Parliament to be shortly elected Ireland will enjoy her full quota of 103 members.

The Autonomy Bills were introduced in the Commons on February 21 and passed by that body on July 3. Four months and ten days time taken indicates a pretty leisurely method of proceeding.

The Press Gallery, according to a western exchange, ridicules as pure "guff" the stories of long hours and hard work indulged in by members of Parliament. One reporter in the Gallery usually does as much actual work during the week as ten of the members.

The Senate was actually in session about 70 days during the late expensive meeting of Parliament. Most of the sittings were short, some of them but a few minutes in duration. Two thousand five hundred dollars gives over \$35 a day for seventy days' work. On easy days it would give one to two dollars a minute.

Lord Grey stood up when reading his prorogation speech, we are told, thus creating a new precedent and also a favorable impression. Of course, everybody knows why he stood up. No doubt he felt proud of himself as the only man among the host of Members and Senators who had not increased his own salary!

The Japanese are vigorously pushing forward their conquest of the island of Sakhalin, where severe fighting is going on, but nothing has been heard for a good while of the movements of the great armies of Oyama and Linévitch in Manchuria. An independent Japanese force seems to have been landed just north of

Premier Balfour has been outvoted in the Commons, but upon a minor question which does not necessarily involve his resignation.

Mr. Hughes, M. P. has told The Patriot that Hon. H. R. Emmerson, Minister of Railways, will visit Charlottetown next week and will arranged to have the construction of the new station proceeded with immediately, "this is good news."

Of the ex-Ministers who are to hereafter receive pensions eight are Conservatives and four Liberals. The latter receive \$3,500 each while two of the former, ex-Premiers Sir Charles Tupper and Sir Mackenzie Bowell will get \$4,000 each.

"Mr. Hughes is of the opinion that a time will come when the Island and the Mainland will be physically united by a Tunnel. The idea is growing in the country and in Parliament," says The Patriot. "Fly swiftly round ye wheels of time and bring the welcome day."

Congratulations to Senator Ferguson, who is to succeed Sir Mackenzie Bowell as leader of the Opposition in the Senate. Sir Mackenzie is now in his eighty-second year, but hale and hearty. The new leader is many years his junior, and an abler man besides being an Islander, which always counts for something.

And still they are not all satisfied! The Montreal Witness tells that Senator Ferguson "advised that while in attendance on cabinet duties, a Minister without portfolio should be paid a per diem allowance equal to the salary of a Minister." And again, "upon the Bill for the increase of the sessional indemnity Senator Ferguson found fault with the idea of abolishing the mileage allowance that Senators and Members have heretofore enjoyed."

In regard to mileage, now abolished, it is to be observed that since they travelled to and from the capital on passes, a goodly number of Senators and Members have had scruples about drawing their mileage. Over 100 members of the Commons and over 50 Senators seem to be included in this honorable category. The mileage to which members were legally entitled amounted to a large sum in the aggregate and ranged from a few dollars each up to over \$500 for those hailing from British Columbia and roughly speaking at \$140 to \$200 each from the Maritime Provinces according to the distance from the Capital by the route taken.

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- 10 pieces light colored Jap silk " 20c
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- Ladies' tape girdle corsets all sizes " 25c
- 7 Ladies' cravenette coats worth \$6.00 " \$4.00
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- 6 pairs ladies' cotton nickers " 25c
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- 5 ladies' summer jackets worth \$7.25 " \$4.00
- 2 brown lustre waists worth \$1.90 " \$1.25
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