

try within the past year, in utter despair of eking out a living in the land of their birth. All our surroundings demonstrate the necessity of resorting to other avocations. He was glad to find His Excellency's speech alluding, in highly favorable terms, to the appreciation by the country of the Agricultural Act passed the session before last, of the advantages of which many persons have availed. This will, no doubt, appear when the papers on the subject are before us. He (the President) hoped that agriculture will, in the future, constitute one of the main dependences of the people, that they will cordially take hold of it, and obviate the risk and uncertainty of reliance upon a single pursuit, with its too frequently recurring adverse results. There was one matter in the speech and reply, having reference to the creation of employment for the people in their favorite enterprise, which he heartily approved of. The increased bounty on ship-building was a wise move, because, while providing occupation, it at the same time stimulated the construction of a class of vessels fitted for the prosecution of the Bank and Labrador fisheries. He believed the result of this measure has been highly beneficial, and he had heard it stated that the employment it created has at present prevented much want amongst the people, while providing means for their employment in the future. This course, he believed, would entail no drain upon the public funds, because the money thus spent in bounties will be returned to the public exchequer by increased consumption on the part of the people, rendering them contributors to, instead of a burthen upon, the revenue. Such a method of aiding in the support of the people was widely different in nature and effect from that which is termed able-bodied poor relief. He should not lay blame to any particular Government of the colony for the existence and spread of this system. All our administrations, for several years, have, to a certain extent, appeared to be forced to keep it alive, and, while it is very easy to point out what governments should not do, it is very difficult to show what they should do to remedy the growing evil. It is an extremely hard problem to deal with. No doubt, much abuse has arisen in carrying out able-bodied poor relief, while very little, generally, in the way of substantial work has been returned for the outlay. If at all possible, some stringent means should be devised to repress it and convince the people that they must rely upon their own resources, impressing as strongly as possible upon them that it is not the duty of a government to find employment for them under all circumstances. This system of poor relief is assuming alarming proportions, and, if not arrested, threatens serious consequences to the financial capabilities of the colony. From time to time various suggestions have been advanced to deal with it; sometimes acted upon with slight success, but as a rule it seems to have grown in spite of all efforts to keep it within bounds. All sense of manliness and self-reliance amongst the people is being destroyed by its baneful influence. On the face of it, it seems plausible enough to say that the public revenue should be called upon to aid in supporting those who are unable to support themselves, but an unfortunate feature of the case is that numbers who could help themselves will not do so, and they are increasing, various sorts of imposition being resorted to to obtain a portion of the public money. He thought it would be well to consider whether some means may be adopted to interest the people in the different localities in the expenditure for permanent poor, with the view, if possible, of limiting it to cases of absolute necessity. Some years back it was proposed to levy local taxation to meet local poor relief, but for various reasons the idea was dropped as impracticable. There is, however, a mode by which, without resorting to local taxation, the difficulty might possibly, to some extent, be met. There are, as we know, certain money grants for roads, local improvements and other objects, annually appropriated to the several districts. Now, if the average poor expenditure of each district for a certain number of years be ascertained, and a rule made that so much shall be appropriated to any given district, and that if the expenditure should exceed that sum, the surplus should become a charge upon its road, special or other grants; and that if the outlay was short of the average, the balance should go to the district in addition to its other grants for local improvements. Thus a district would benefit by having its poor expenditure kept down, as the people inhabiting it would feel a direct interest in relieving themselves as much as possible of the burthen that would be thus imposed upon them by keeping their outlay for the poor down to the lowest reasonable point. Under the present system no one is immediately concerned in repressing the expenditure, while on the other hand many are interested in augmenting it. The sooner this matter is dealt with, with a strong hand, with a due consideration to the dictates of humanity, and without harshness or uncharitableness, the better for all concerned, recipients as well as others. Legitimate burthens for the support of the infirm and destitute poor, we are all willing to assist in bearing, while the abuses of the system are fairly a subject of grave complaint. He spoke only in the hope that some remedial measures may suggest themselves to the minds of others for the establishment of local supervision, and enlisting local interest in the curtailment of the expenditure in the several outports. In St. John's, he believed, everything connected with the poor relief is well managed; the abuses he had spoken of being in the external districts, and the further away the more difficult to counteract. He thought it incumbent upon all to offer any suggestions that may occur to them, to save us from the consequences that must ensue in the course of a short time, if the state of things he had referred to be continued.

The Evening Telegram.

ST. JOHN'S, FEBRUARY 28, 1888.

KILLING TIME IN THE ASSEMBLY.

Long Sessions and Needless Expense on the People.

'Tis a great calamity to the Commonwealth to have reckless and unthinking people in the lower branch of the Legislature. Members of the Assembly should be wise and prudent men, always careful to economize public time and money, and never unmindful of their duty to those they represent. Unfortunately, not many such men are to be found in our House of Commons to-day. One after another the few independent and patriotic representatives of the people have dropped out of politics, until scarcely a single reliable man can now be found in public life here. The natural consequence is a two-fold extravagance—waste of public time and waste of public money.

Take, for example, their conduct at the present moment. The session is nearly three weeks old and our M.H.A.'s have been immolating about an hour a day, on an average, of their precious time daily upon the altar of colonial duty. To use the words of an exchange in a similar case: "The truth that they are public men summoned to do public business has not yet dawned upon them." It is time to interrupt their ease with the reminder that the taxpayers of Newfoundland do not give their legislators nearly \$250 per annum to idle away days watching the sergeant-at-arms wrestle with the mace.

Why cannot the House settle down to work? The Government should be prepared with legislation that would fully employ the members from the day they assemble. A delay of two or three weeks annually precedes the active consideration of public business. This is due to a desire to prolong the session and persuade the people that the members earn their salaries. The House always squanders ten or twelve weeks upon legislation that need not engross its energies for a month.

In years gone by there might have been some excuse for long sessions and needless expenditure, but certainly there is none now. With a depleted exchequer and financial obligations increasing day by day, the country can ill afford to have thirty-five or forty extravagant individuals playing at statesmen for the greater part of three months every year. At least this is the view the public take of the matter, and popular sentiment seldom errs in such cases. We hope His Excellency Governor Blake, who has promised to administer the Government in a constitutional manner, will keep his keen and observant eye on "honorable gentlemen" of the Executive and compel them, during the remainder of their term of office, to discharge their obligations with some regard for the public welfare.

CAPTAIN DAWE'S SEALING BILL.

AFTER the committee on the "address in reply" was raised on Friday evening, the House went into committee on the Sealing Bill of the gallant Captain Dawe. For the information of our sealers, thousands of whom read the TELEGRAM, we shall give a little synopsis of this bill:—

- (1) It repeals last year's Act.
- (2) No sealer to kill seals before March 12th, or after April 20th, under a penalty of \$400.
- (3) This section makes it unlawful to bulk or pan seals before March 28th, or after April 20th, under a penalty of \$400 for each seal.
- (4) Forbids the bringing in of such seals into any port of this colony.
- (5) Penalties to be recovered from masters, owners or crews; that is, such of them as are found guilty of a breach of the bill.
- (6) No steamer allowed to go to the fishery after April 1st, on a second or subsequent trip, in any year: Provided that if ship break down first trip and has been forced to return first trip, she may sail again any time before April 10th.
- (7) This section makes the penalty for second trip double the value of seals taken, which may be sued for before a Stipendiary Magistrate. Appeal is allowed when the penalty amounts to \$100.
- (8) This section makes masters incompetent for two years who commit an offence under the act.
- (9) Vessels, cleared from this colony for Davis Straits or Greenland fishery are liable to the penalties of the act.
- (10) Gives the power to a Stipendiary Magistrate to try all cases under the act.
- (11) Limits the time of suing for all penalties to three months.

This Bill passed through the remaining stages on Friday night and was taken to the Council yesterday by Captain Dawe and Mr. Murphy.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY NOTES.

Morris and Scott Attack Murphy.

THE RADICAL MEMBER REPLIES.

Amendments by Bond, Morine and Murphy.

The House met at 4 p.m. yesterday. Mr. Bond arose to present some petitions having reference to a matter of immediate moment and legislation—the Bait Bill. They were signed by 1,000 fishermen, and prayed that the bill would not be put in force. Although there was a paragraph in the address about the Bait Bill, the Speaker refused to receive them.

Mr. Morine got on his feet to make a personal statement concerning a slanderous editorial in the Government organ, the *Mercury*. He clearly showed that the editorial was published the same day as his speech on the address, in order to detract from its value.

The House then went into committee on the address. In accordance with his statement on Friday night, Mr. Morris gave his speech upon the address. The subject had been gone over so often that all chance of being original was taken from him. He had something fresh to say upon the paragraph on the Municipal Bill, and referred back to his connection with the Sewerage Bill of last session, which had been defeated in the Upper Chamber by petitions brought about by the misrepresentations of its contents in the public prints by Mr. Murphy. He stated that Mr. Murphy did not oppose the bill while going through the House, and was not present while the bill was passing. He then went on and made full criticism of the different paragraphs in the address.

Mr. Murphy, in reply, showed, by quoting the official records, that he not only opposed the bill but spoke against it, and that if he were not present he could not have made such a speech. With reference to the charge of misrepresentation, here was his letter, and he challenged the hon. member to point them out.

Mr. Scott then followed with a strong personal attack on Murphy's conduct under the bill of last session, to which that gentleman replied in a skilful and telling speech, throwing back each of Mr. Scott's assertions upon himself.

Mr. Greene then made a short speech on the address, full of eulogy of the Government. He added nothing fresh to the debate, and spoke for twenty minutes.

Mr. McGrath took the floor after his friend sat down and informed the House that, if other gentlemen on his side had been bought, he at least was not. After Shea's resolutions for a railway North, the Government were broken up, and he thought, in their extremities, after they had spurned the Liberal Party, that that unfortunate amalgamation should never have been entered into. He had the pleasure of seconding Mr. Bond's Amendment to the Bait Bill, and the Government did not know what hardship they were inflicting on men to the Westward.

Mr. Bond made a short speech in substantiation of his position on that bill. There were now 420 vessels, 42,000 tons, out of St. Pierre, to the Bank fishery, an increase of 70 vessels more than last year. If the Government allowed French vessels to enter Fortune Bay for bait, as United States vessels are allowed, at \$1.50 per ton, this would amount to \$63,000; light dues \$10,000, and bait money \$200,000; or, in all, \$273,000. He referred to the wasted rights of Fortune Bay fishermen and made a speech so thoroughly showing the impracticability of the Bait Bill, the loss it would occasion the labor of the country, and the destination that it would bring about, that he drove fear and consternation into the ranks of the Government, and made the Attorney General look so foolish and mad that he lost his temper and, for the first time for the session, got up to reply. In parenthesis—the Attorney General is much improved in manners since his trip to Washington, and that St. Vitus-dance of eye-rolling, shaking himself and twisting his face has, in a considerable degree, lessened.

Mr. Winter said the condition of the country, the French competition in Spanish markets, and the falling off in catch and price of our fish were the three very important reasons that led the Government to this Bait Bill. He referred to the vested rights of the fishermen of Fortune Bay and said they amounted to nothing as compared with the interests of the whole country, as secured by the Bait Bill. Mr. Bond interposed and showed his (Mr. Winter's) inconsistency, when some years ago presenting petitions, numerous signed, praying the Legislature to do away with sealing steamers, he (Mr. Winter) said it could not be done—no matter how general the desire—on account of the vested interests of the merchants. "You, sir," said Mr. Bond, "regard the vested interests of a half dozen St. John's merchants, and cast to the winds of Heaven the vested rights of 5,300 people in Fortune Bay."

The Attorney General, being then "knocked out," went on: "We'll allow Americans to buy bait, for they compete with us as men and do not interfere with our markets."

Mr. Morine showed how the Americans sent fish to our West India markets, and how they excluded us by protection from their own markets.

The Attorney General was now beginning to look foolish and "sorry that he enlisted." He said the bill was not his.

"Do you renounce," said Mr. Bond, "your own child?"

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL—"The bill had more fathers than me."

MR. MURPHY—"It was therefore illegitimate."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL—"Men have often to clothe the children of others."

MR. MORINE—"You were foolish to put clothes on this mercantile baby."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL—"It was given me to put in shape. I had merely to tie the ribbons around it."

MR. MURPHY—"You were then the wet nurse."

MR. MORINE—"Judging from his speech, he is a dry one."

Mr. Winter, having been thus peppered, sat down confused and muttering "bosh."

To-morrow we shall give the amendments and the manner of voting. The address passed at 12 o'clock last night.

LAST NIGHT'S CONCERT.

The Athenaeum concert of last evening drew a pretty large audience and, as a whole, was quite successful. The lady singers were Miss Fisher, Mrs. March, both of whom were in excellent voice and were handsomely encored; Miss Shirran, who gave "Happy Little Maiden" very felicitously. "The Better Land," interpreted by a young lady whose name we failed to learn, was characterised by the plaintive pathos which breathes through the melody. Mrs. Steer's pretty lyric received the treatment of a delicate and very musical soprano voice. Colonel Fawcett recited the sad, sad story of youthful heroism and youthful hope; but, alas! it lay buried in the front ranks of the slain, nearest the enemy. The gentlemen who favored the audience with solos were Doctor Rendell, Mr. Corner, Mr. Crane and Mr. Anderson, whose songs were complimentarily honored by the audience, but two of whom appeared a second time—Mr. Corner, by repeating a verse of "Simon the Cellarer," and Mr. Crane, with the last verse of "The Anchor's Weighed," both of which fine airs—old, to be sure, but always fresh—they rendered in capital tones and good style.

HE LOST HIS TEMPER.

MR. ATTORNEY GENERAL WINTER completely lost his temper during the debate on Mr. Bond's amendment to the "address in reply" last night. In thus acting he (Mr. W.) committed a great mistake, for which he suffered severely at the hands of the Opposition. The junior member for Bonavista had almost as much fun with him as the Philistines of bygone days had with Israel's Attorney General Samson. The result was different, though: Samson succeeded in bringing down the house every time, while in the case before us, our Attorney General didn't manage to bring it down once, all the "bringing down" being done by the Opposition.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.—"Beaver" and "Occasio Facit Furem," Bonavista—Your interesting communications are before us and will receive due attention. "Nehemiah McGrath" and "H. R."—We shall punish your letters to-morrow.

We learn that the postal authorities of Canada and the United States have "improved" the parcel post between the two countries, to the incalculable advantage and convenience of the two peoples. What has our Postmaster General done in this direction for Newfoundland?

The social attraction for to-morrow evening will be the annual tea-meeting in the basement of Queen's Road Congregational Church. Elaborate preparations are being effected by the committee, who seem determined to make this event an unparalleled success in every particular. The musical and literary programme promises to be more than ordinarily interesting, a resolution having been passed prohibiting "dry readings" altogether, and making long speeches a grave social misdemeanor. This is a bold dictum to promulgate at a tea-meeting, but it is absolutely necessary under existing circumstances. Desperate diseases can only be checked by powerful remedies. As regards the tables and their contents. Well, it is only necessary to say that these very important matters will be attended to by the good ladies who have undertaken to "furnish" as well as "preside." All things considered, then, a very pleasant evening is pretty certain. Shouldn't be surprised to hear some snow-headed but frolicsome octogenarian shouting, no his way home to-morrow night:

Now, by my soul, and by these hoary hairs, I'm so o'erwhelm'd with pleasure, that I feel a latter spring within my wither'd limbs, That shoots me out again!

By Telegraph

FROM THE WEST COAST.

Heavy Snow Storm at Channel. OUR FISHERMEN AND THEIR PROSPECTS.

(Special to the Evening Telegram.)

CHANNEL, Last Evening.

Yesterday a strong breeze prevailed from the southeast, culminating in a heavy snow storm. To-day the wind is west and the weather fine and mild. None of the boats ventured out on the fishing ground since yesterday. The catch, so far, has been pretty good, and, with favorable weather, it may be considerably augmented. Our fishermen do not appear to be much better off than they were at this time last year.

FROM ROSE BLANCHE.

All the Skiffs Out—No Drift Ice.

(Special to the Evening Telegram.)

ROSE BLANCHE, This Forenoon.

To-day the weather here is fine, and, the harbor being clear of ice, all the fishing skiffs are out. No drift ice can now be seen in any direction, and prospects are favorable. A light breeze is blowing from the northeast.

ENGINEERS AND FIREMEN STRIKE.

No Change in Dominion Tariff.

BURIED BY AN AVALANCHE.

Germany Supports Russia's Demand.

HALIFAX, N.S., Feb. 28.

The engineers and firemen on the Chicago and Burlington railway have struck. Fifteen thousand employes are idle.

No change will be made in the Canadian tariff this season.

The village of Vallorta, North Italy, has been buried by an avalanche, and many persons killed.

Germany supports Russia's demand for the deposition of Prince Ferdinand.

FROM CAPE RACE.

(Special to the Evening Telegram.)

CAPE RACE, This Evening.

A brisk breeze from E.N.E. has been blowing all day, with heavy rain. The slob ice is now close in on the shore. No vessels have been sighted to-day.

LOCAL VARIETIES.

NO ARRIVALS last night. The drift ice is now being forced in the narrows.

CURLERS are reminded of the "Points Match" to-morrow at the usual hour, ice permitting.

IN consequence of the disagreeable weather, the "Benovolent" practice is postponed until Saturday at 7.30 p.m.

A SPECIAL MEETING of the St. John's Typographical Union will be held at the usual place, this (Tuesday) evening, at 8 o'clock. A full attendance is respectfully requested.

OUR special despatches from the West Coast are hopeful with respect to the approaching seal fishery in the Gulf. The cod fishery about Channel and Rose Blanche is also being successfully prosecuted.

The address of the Assembly in reply to the Governor's speech was presented at half-past twelve this afternoon to His Excellency at Government House, by the members of that body, to whom the Governor returned an appropriate response.

DIED.

On Sunday, the 26th inst., Mary Jane, beloved wife of Charles Ellis, and eldest daughter of the late William Pinkham, aged 48 years, a native of Stokeinleigh, Devon, England. Funeral to-morrow (Wednesday) at 11 o'clock, from her late residence, 292 Water Street, when friends and acquaintances are respectfully requested to attend without further notice.

At Hillsboro, St. John's, Nfld., this morning, after a lingering illness, aged 25 years, Robert Hedley Vickers, (late of the Registrar General's Department, New Zealand) eldest son of the Hon. Mr. Justice Pinsent, of the Supreme Court of Newfoundland. Funeral on Thursday next at 12 o'clock.

At Conception Harbor, on Sunday, the 26th inst., after a painful illness, Captain Thomas St. John, aged 67 yrs. He leaves a wife and a large number of friends to mourn their sad loss. The deceased was a good friend to the widow and orphan, whose prayers he always solicited.—R.I.P.

At Boston, on the 3rd inst., after a lingering illness, John, son of John Butler, aged 29 years.—R.I.P.

SHIPPING INTELLIGENCE.

25—Curlew, Delancy, St. Pierre, 2 days, Bowring Bros.—ballast. Scotia, Smith, Liverpool, 27 dys, J & W Stewart—35 tons coal, 55 half-chests tea, general cargo.

27—Aurora, ss, Fairweather, Dundee, 21 days, W Stephen & Co.—supplies for the seal and whale fishery.

25—Portia, Dawson, New York, Harvey & Co—1941 qts fish, 100 bris apples, 1 qtr-cask wine, 40 trcs salmon.

27—Sretha, Harvey, Rio de Janeiro, P & L Tessier—2499 qts fish. Ebel, Sopp, Pernambuco, Job, Bros & Co—4993 qts fish. Stonehouse, Larré, Barbados, Job, Bros & Co—1881 qts fish.