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CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS.

Montreal Saturday, 22nd April, 1876.

THE SESSION.

The late session was certainly not rich in Acts. It will place seventy-three on the Statute Book; and will be remembered by the people of Canada, more for what it did not do, than for what it did. Among the Acts passed, the most important is that relative to the management of Indian affairs, the object being to franchise the Indians as rapidly as possible, and it is not of slight interest, as remarked in the Governor's speech, that many of its provisions were suggested by Indian Councils. Further treaties are to be made with the Indians during the recess for opening up the Western Saskatchewan country for European settlement. A step of this nature is necessary, the beginning of settlement having already been kept back for the want of it.

As cognate with this, the formation of the new district of Keewatin in the eastern part of the North-West Territory, is worthy of special notice. This district will probably be a province before many years elapse. It contains some good lands on the route between the old settled portions of Canada and Manitoba; while its mineral resources are undoubtedly immense. The railways and telegraphs through it will promote rapid settlement.

In the acknowledgment for the vote of Supplies, the Ministers were careful to put in the mouth of the Governor-General the statement that care would be taken to see that the expenditures on the Pacific Railway were not embarrassing to the country. This is undoubtedly very proper in itself; but it is very difficult to see what is the object of putting a rule of conduct in a Speech from the Throne, in such a connection. In the coming years the progress of settlement and better acquaintance with the country upon the construction of the earlier portions of the Pacific Railway will undoubtedly determine at what rate of speed the remaining portions shall be built, quite apart from anything that this Government or Parliament can say. It is, therefore, that the words put in the mouth of Lord DUFFERIN are folly.

Another mention in the Speech from the Throne is not unexceptionable. The Ministers make His Excellency say it is well that wise economy has prevented the necessity of increased taxation. This may be matter of opinion for the Free Traders; but there was no use in flaunting it in this way in the face of the Protectionists suffering from depressed industry. It can only serve to embitter the controversy during the recess; and that certainly is never necessary in Canada, and much less when for no better object than vaunting a party triumph.

As bearing on this subject, the report of the Depression Committee may be mentioned here. This was probably more voluminous than any person will ever take

the trouble to read; but it is worthy of notice that, in the remarks on the sugar duties, it is not pretended to be denied that the effect of the American system of drawback is to give the American refiners a protection in our market. But the comforting reflection is drawn that if Canadian refiners are shut up, the amount of people employed bears no proportion to the amount of capital invested! Was there ever such a reason given before! Even if it were admitted to be true, what becomes of the trade from the West Indies in raw sugar, as furnishing return cargoes for our dried fish, shooks-staves and other lumber products, which are now of almost vital importance for us to develop! There can be no answer which is not an insult to common sense. The inaction on this subject, and on the tea duties, are the blots of the session, which the country will have reason to rue and resent.

Among the Acts passed was one to extend the Dominion Notes System to Prince Edward Island, British Columbia, and Manitoba. The Contested Elections Act was also amended with the object of making more effectual inquiry into corrupt practices. There was also an Act to make provision for the collection and registration of Criminal Statistics in Canada; and another to provide for Railway Statistics. There were two special Acts to enable parties to extend and obtain patents, which are worthy of notice as a precedent for parties who may hold important patents in exceptional or particular circumstances. There was also an Act to authorize the administration of oaths to witnesses before Committees of Parliament; and quite a number of Bank and Insurance Incorporation and Amendment Acts.

The last days of the session were marked by the fatigue of members, haste to get away, and impatience of debate, as they always are. It happened in this way that the House would scarcely listen to Mr. POPE's discussion of the Immigration question; which if it had come earlier in the session would have excited a good deal of debate, and probably will yet, on the JENKINS papers next session. It is worth notice that the Immigration Committee recommended to the Government the continuation of a vigorous Immigration policy. The absence of DR. TUPPER, and the illness of Sir JOHN MACDONALD probably helped to shorten the last days. It may lastly be remarked that, so far as this Parliament is concerned, the Ministry take leave of the session stronger and better shaken down in their position than they were before; but how it may be with the country is for time to tell. There were some special points which arose during the session which it may be interesting to discuss during the leisure of the recess.

FISH CULTURE.

The Dominion Government has now in actual operation seven public establishments devoted to the artificial reproduction of fish. Besides those formerly existing at Newcastle, Gaspé, Restigouche and Miramichi, this Department has built and completed three other handsome and commodious establishments at Sandwich, on the Detroit River, at Tadoussac, on the Saguenay River, and at Bedford, on the Sackville River, near the head of Bedford Basin and only a few miles from Halifax. The capacity of the parent institution on Wilmot's Creek, in Ontario, has also been enlarged, so that in future the interior can accommodate many millions more of fish spawn, and the rearing ponds will harbour millions of young fry.

At Newcastle, Ontario, over a million of vivified salmon eggs were deposited in a healthy state, together with 300,000 salmon trout eggs, and 200,000 whitefish eggs. Upwards of twelve millions of whitefish eggs were successfully placed in the Sandwich establishment. About 70,000 were deposited at Gaspé, which quantity ought to have been quadrupled but for the escape of the stock of parent salmon penned up during the summer time. Accidents such as this, and the misfortune by which last year's stock of

salmon fry at Miramichi, amounting to a million and a half, was reduced to 150,000, are attributable in some degree to negligence or incompetence. The Tadoussac establishment, which turned out 80,000 of last winter's hatch, has this year about 200,000 salmon eggs in excellent condition. The success of this experiment, so very encouraging in its first two seasons, is mainly due to the indefatigable exertions and warm interest bestowed on it by Senator PRICE and Mr. RADFORD, of L'Anse à l'Eau. In addition to an excellent frost-proof building, well supplied with good water and capable of holding ten millions of fish eggs, there are now a series of commodious rearing ponds, both brackish and fresh, and secure reception houses at Little Islands Bay and River St. John, to catch and retain parent fish. The number of salmon ova laid down at the Restigouche works was 300,000. At Miramichi, only 60,000 were procured, the sudden advent of wintry weather having prevented the gathering of any considerable stock of spawn. The Bedford establishment has 600,000 salmon eggs in a thriving condition. This is an excellent beginning in Nova Scotia. The whole number of young fish distributed last spring from the hatching of 1874 was 1,700,000. These were placed in various waters as related in the reports of the several persons in charge. An experiment in re-stocking with salmon, begun three years ago at Salmon River, about forty miles below Ottawa City, was continued last spring. Nearly 30,000 salmon fry, in healthy condition, were liberated at different places in the stream. This deposit makes, altogether, 47,000 little fish distributed in Salmon River. The guardians in charge of the stream report that the upper waters were crowded with young salmon in the autumn months, and that many were seen exceeding ten inches in length. It should be proved conclusively next season whether or not these youngsters will emigrate to the salt water and return, after the fashion of their kind, to the nursery waters in which they are reared though not bred. The natural instinct which leads salmon back to their native streams may possibly develop itself into a secondary manner among those artificially hatched and transferred to other waters, thus leading them, as adults, back to localities where they have passed the earliest stages of their existence.

Great numbers of the Lake Ontario salmon having been artificially bred at Newcastle, and after furnishing fry to re-stock other streams, have every year escaped into the lake, the time has arrived for testing to what extent they may now be captured as adult fish, fit for food and commerce. That they are sufficiently numerous in the vicinity is plain, for large schools of them are frequently seen by the fishermen, and quite a large number are taken in the nets used outside for lake trout. There are difficulties in the way of capturing them as early in the season, and in the same manner as salmon are caught in the tidal estuaries and on the sea coast. The main difficulty is their habit of approaching the lake shores, chiefly about spawning time, when they are less valuable for market, and at a time when the law interferes with their capture. Further attempts might be made to catch them in the deep water during the summer months, and, failing which, the law should be relaxed so as to admit of fishing for them during the autumn season.

Several new fish-passes have been constructed at private expense on mill-dams and other obstructions, and many existing structures have been improved and repaired. In some instances the Department has constructed additional ones, encouraged by the vast quantities of alewives and other migratory fish now returning to the streams and seeking to ascend to their sources.

In addition to enforcing those sections of the Fisheries Act which relate to the obstruction and pollution of streams frequented by fish, the statute relating to saw-dust and mill-offals in navigable

streams was enforced wherever the urgency of abuses demanded legal interference.

METEOROLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The agencies employed in the Dominion for collecting meteorological statistics, and utilizing the facts and principles required, are a central office, chief stations, ordinary stations, reporting telegraph stations, and publishing telegraph stations. There are nine chief stations in the Dominion, 15 reporting telegraph stations, five reserve telegraph stations, 36 drum stations, and 72 ordinary stations. During the year 628 storm warnings were issued, 250 to Quebec and points west of Quebec, and 378 to the Maritime Provinces. Of these warnings 105 were sent in September, 200 in October, and 154 in November; no warnings were sent in the month of July, and only five in the month of December. In Prof. KINGSTON's report there is a table showing for a few places the number of warnings which were and were not verified, from which it appears that at six stations 100 out of 125 warnings, or 80 per cent. of the whole, are known to have been verified, and that of the 100 verified warnings 75 reached the hands of the agent before the commencement of the storm. The sum of \$35,079.76 has been expended during the fiscal year ended 30th of June last of the appropriation of \$37,000 made by Parliament for the service. The expenditure may be classified as follows: For salaries Central Office, \$5,930; chief stations, \$1,340; telegraph stations, \$1,533; reserve telegraph stations, \$840; drum stations, \$1,565; instruments and apparatus, \$3,766.06; fixtures and repairs of apparatus at stations, \$340.70; signal masts and gear, \$1,246.37; telegraphing, \$9,033.13; miscellaneous expenses, \$3,484.50. Many persons in Canada are of opinion that it is very doubtful whether the expenditure of such a large amount of public money on account of this branch of the public service has been productive of such practical results as would warrant its continuance on such a large scale. The amount expended during last fiscal year, viz., \$35,079.76, appears large for this country as compared with the amount expended in the United Kingdom, which is £10,000 sterling annually. In the United States, however, the amount expended last year was \$415,000, exclusive of a special grant of \$88,000 for the formation of military telegraph lines on the Mexican frontier, part of which would be used for meteorological purposes.

We have before us the report of Professor KINGSTON, as Director of the Magnetic Observatory, Toronto, for the calendar year ended 31st December, 1875. During the year just closed, the general nature of the work has continued as in former years; but very important accessions have been made to the appliances of the Observatory for the carrying out of the objects for which it was established. The correct time is determined at this establishment for the magnetic and meteorological observations, and all the clocks and watches in Ontario have been regulated by this time for more than thirty years, and for the last four years the Observatory has given time daily to the city by striking all the fire-alarm bells at a fixed instant. The sum of \$4,800 was voted by Parliament for this Observatory, and the sum of \$4,796.90 expended. The Montreal Observatory is in connection with McGill College, and Mr. McLEOD acts also as Meteorological Observer in connection with the Central Office, Toronto, it being one of the chief meteorological stations. Observations are taken day and night at equal intervals, not exceeding three hours, and three observations daily are telegraphed to Toronto. Observations are also published daily in one morning and one evening city paper; and during the past year printed monthly abstracts have been published, giving the "means" of all the elements for each day of the month and for the month itself, and giving also a synopsis to include any extraordinary ob-