

Weekly Monitor.

BRIDGETOWN, AUGUST 23, 1876.

OUR OLD FORESTS.

When Columbus, three hundred and eighty-four years ago, on his voyage of discovery, sighted land in this western hemisphere, almost the whole continent of North America was thickly wooded. Since then, however, those wooded solitudes have been invaded by settlers innumerable. Far in the interior for three hundred years the forest wilds have responsively echoed to the woodman's unsparring axe. Large tracts of wilderness have been transformed into arable lands, and the agricultural operations of civilized man extend over thousands of miles, where not very long ago, the savage chased the buffalo, or in Autumn, shook the nuts from the indigenous trees, to obtain the means of satiating his craving for food.

The work of cutting down the "forest primeval" is still carried on with unabated activity and vigor—not only to clear the land for cultivation, but also to procure timber for naval, architectural and mercantile purposes; and to-day thinking men are gravely exercised with apprehensions that the time is not very remote when the wholesale destruction of our timber lands will be deplored. Of late this matter has been discussed through the Press, both in the United States and in these Provinces. It has been even suggested that legislation adopt measures to arrest the reckless destruction of the forests, and to encourage the planting of trees in places where it may seem necessary or profitable.

Without entering into the discussion of the matter to which we have just referred, we can scarcely forbear expressing what has occasionally occupied our own thoughts as we have mused upon the early settlement of our own Province. When the small fleet, managed by French adventurers, in the first decade of the seventeenth century, entered Digby Gut, and surveyed the wood-covered hills in view as they sailed into a romantic inland bay, their wonder and admiration must have been greatly excited. To them all was new—all was beautiful.

The whole of Nova Scotia was then an unbroken wild. In our Annapolis valley there was then a vast amount of valuable timber untouched by the axe. We sometimes give way to imagination, and indulge in a mental vision as respects the aspects of the country at the time. Everywhere were trees.—Towering pines and huge oaks, perhaps centuries old, like venerable patriarchs of the forest, rose high above the smaller varieties of trees. On the intervals there were stately elms and black ash

trunks and wide-spreading boughs. Almost everywhere hard-wood trees and evergreens intertwined their branches. The traditions respecting the density of the woods are not extinct. There are old people in our midst still, who remember when the locality of some of our best cultivated and most populous districts were covered with the primeval forest, unbroken by the settler's axe. Fifty or sixty years ago, there was quite a lumbering business carried on between our mountains. Large rafts of log timber were yearly floated down the river to Annapolis, and there shipped to a foreign market. In Wilmot and Aylesford there were more pine timber than some folks of the present day would be likely to suppose. There, too, were ash and oak trees in abundance, which were cut down and manufactured into staves for export. Spruce were sawed into deals and boards, and were also shipped for the English or West Indian market.—The broads made into the wilderness for the purpose of cultivation and for timber, have transformed the whole appearance of the country, and in our valley today there is little valuable timber left. The ash, the oak, and the pine have nearly all been swept away. When Bridgetown was in its infancy, all Summer long there were small schooners running hence to St. John freighted with boards, deals, staves and shingles. That traffic, however, has ceased for ever.

Perhaps the wholesale prostration of the forests in various parts of the Province has been too reckless and unsparring. In some localities, that once abounded with what was regarded as an inexhaustible supply of fuel, there is a scarcity of firewood, and to remedy the want thus created, many are looking for a substitute to the coal-fields in some of the eastern counties. In our valley there is scarcely a tree left the wood of which is fit for an ox-bow or an axe-handle.

We are not prepared just now to recommend the interference of the Legislature to restrain the owners of woodlands from doing what they please with their own, but it is to be regretted that the work of forest spoliation has not been less sweepingly free. It is time to pause in the work of reclamation, and with an eye to the future, to leave at least some remains of our old forests as a legacy to our children.

FRAUDS AND ROBBERIES.

The late bold robberies in Halifax have awakened in thoughtful minds a deep consideration respecting the prevalence of such depredations in almost every populous city and town in civil

ized countries. The raid upon the bank of Nova Scotia, as well as that upon the Provincial Treasury, must have been deliberately planned: it certainly was most adroitly executed. Such a successful deed of villainy could not have been an impromptu act. It was no sudden impulse to rob, evoked by a tempting opportunity. Ample preparations, it manifestly appears, were made for the audacious exploit. In New York, or in some other foreign city, this felonious enterprise was probably concocted, and the means devised for its unflinching execution. Most likely spies or scouts were sent to Halifax weeks beforehand to reconnoitre the ground—obtain information—and calculate the probabilities of success. Dextrous robbers, generally speaking, are not novices in the intricacies of human nature. Those, whom we are now considering, knew that Barnum's novel and imposing exhibition through the streets of Halifax would cause universal curiosity, and kindle a spirit of general excitement—that even the most plodding and pains-taking business men, would be thrown off their balance—that the most cool and calculating citizens would for the moment forget their accustomed vigilance—and that an irresistible impulse to "see what was to be seen" would inspire momentary forgetfulness of ordinary employments and duties. The marauders also knew that the crowd as well as the all-pervading excitement favored the robbery and the probability of escaping detection. The plan had been skillfully devised—the arrangements in detail had been carefully prepared—Barnum had come—his attractive procession, with an unprecedented cavalcade, to the stirring strains of music, was passing through the streets—and who could forego the desire to indulge in a peep at it?—The temptation to do so was irresistible. Everything transpired as the robbers expected; and when the pre-calculated moment came, their nefarious scheme culminated in success. The pickpockets and villains of every grade and type in distant cities will regard it as a "brilliant achievement"—a successful stroke of adroit audacity.

The employees of the robbed Bank have been unsparringly condemned, and some of them have been hastily dismissed for alleged carelessness, although, excepting this one act, they had hitherto been competent, careful, faithful and unscrupulously honest. Like everybody else in the city—male and female, old and young, grave and gay, lay and clerical—they were under the overpowering influence of a general excitement; and we think a stern admonition, instead of dismissal, would have been adequate punishment for a moment's unintentional neglect; and it may not be easy to find such efficient business men as they have proved themselves to be, to fill their places. We commiserate their misfortune; and it may be that the directors of the Bank have treated them too harshly.

This remarkable robbery is only a glaring manifestation of the fraudulent tendencies of the present age. Starting crimes, like the one we have been reviewing, are only prominent indications of the moral impurities which are deplorably prevalent in social and business circles in all populous communities. Mammon is the worshipped idol of the age, and millions practically admit his claim to divinity. The acquisition of gold these infatuated worshippers regard as the paramount (if not exclusive) business of human life. To this desire to be rich may be attributed most of the frauds, forgeries and robberies which are common occurrences at the present day. A mercantile fraud and a felonious robbery, in spirit and object, are identical. The business rogue and the executed thief occupy the same moral platform and have the same object in view—plunder! While the latter, with judicial ignominy, is consigned to the penitentiary, the former escapes the legal punishment that is due to his race. While public opinion continues to regard fraud as only a venial offence, and robbery a penal atrocity, public morality will tend to foster a delinquent principle which naturally culminates in infamous crimes that are, fewer burglaries would be perpetrated, and fewer banks would be robbed.

THE LONE MAN AT SEA.

An English despatch has announced that Captain Johnson in his cockle-shell of a dory—the Centennial—has succeeded in the safe performance of a voyage across the Atlantic. This is a daring feat; but the advantages to be derived from it is not conspicuously discernible. Almost every body regard it as a hazardous, if not a fool-hardy undertaking. Some considered it the enterprise of a lunatic. However, it is accomplished, and though it may not be fruitful in results either to the "lone mariner" or to any body else, it is something to think, talk, and write about.—Our own imaginative powers have been excited as we have thought of that solitary navigator in mid-ocean. If constituted like me in general, he must have been impressed with a singular sense of utter loneliness. Within the scope of his vision there was nothing but the sky above, and nothing below but an interminable watery waste bounded by the horizon. No land, no ship, no indication that a human being except himself, had ever invaded the oceanic solitude which he had reached, was in sight. In that billowy expanse, what were his cogitations?—What his sense of peril—what his hopes—what his prospects? Was he oppressed with the weight of conscious dreariness? Did he think of home—of friends far away—and of the uncertainties that darkened the prospect of ever seeing them again? When did he sleep? Did he slumber in the night or the day? And who was on watch when he sought repose? Dare he dally with Morpheus without somebody at the helm? What were his dreams while he slept. God and he only know. We almost imagine that we see him at night looking upward at the starry constellations, and regarding the twinkling luminaries as gracious signals from above, to assure him that there is a protecting Power that pervades the universe. He may

have had hours of heart-depressing despondency, if such a spirit as his can be said to dwell upon his lonely hours by tuncful vocalities? Just think of him singing the words of Cowper, somewhat modified:

Oh! Solitude, where are the charms, That sages admire in thee? Better dwell on a populous shore Than be all alone on the sea.

In his voyage, however, he more than once was hailed by fellow captains in command of state ships. When he was first described by them in mid-ocean he may have been mistaken for a clump of drifting seaweed, driven far from some distant shore. When near them, he was ever tempted to forego the glory that awaited the success of perilous enterprise? Was there a struggle in his mind whether or not he had better abandon the dangers he was encountering, and seek safety in a passing ship? If there was such a mental struggle, his pride got the mastery of his fears. Did he wear his hat as well? and we suppose Captain Johnson will be profusely congratulated on his daring and success by multitudes in both hemispheres.

THE COUNTY COURTS.

A "Royal Gazette" Extraordinary was issued on the 18 inst., containing the following PROCLAMATION:

By His Honor the Honble. Adams George Archibald, Member of the Privy Council of Canada, Companion of the most distinguished Order of St. Michael and St. George, Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia, &c., &c., &c.

Whereas, in and by an Act of the Legislature of the Province of Nova Scotia, passed on the seventh day of May, in the year of our Lord 1874, entitled "An Act to Establish County Courts," it is provided that the said Act shall not go into operation until brought into force by Proclamation of the Lieutenant Governor in Council.

And whereas I have thought fit by virtue of the power and authority further conferred by the said Act, to order and direct that the said Act shall come into operation on and from the 21st day of August instant. And I do hereby proclaim that, from and after the said twenty first day of August, instant, the jurisdiction of the City Court for the City of Halifax, in all cases of torts, and for forcible entry and detainer, and for the liberal supplies voted for the said Act, transferred to the County Court, for District No. One.

And I do, under and by virtue of the said power and authority, further confer and direct that the Judges of the different Districts shall hold their courts at the places and times following—

DISTRICT NO. 1. Halifax—Second Tuesday of January, June and October. Middle Musquodoboit—Second Tuesday of May and third Tuesday of November. Tangier—Fourth Tuesday of April and first Tuesday of November.

DISTRICT NO. 2. Lunenburg—First Tuesdays of February, May and September. Liverpool—First Tuesday of March, third Tuesday of April, first Tuesday of May, and first Tuesday of November. Shelburne—First Tuesdays of April and December. Barrington—First Tuesday of January, second Tuesday of August.

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Parliament was prorogued last week by Royal Commission. The Queen's speech was read from which Throne by the Lord High Chancellor. Her Majesty declares that relations with all foreign powers are of a friendly character, and looks forward confidently to the maintenance of the good understanding. It alludes to the efforts with other powers for the settlement of the differences between the Porte and its Christian subjects and declares readiness to unite in efforts for mediation between the contending parties. In regard to the United States and extradition, the Queen says: "The inconveniences to both countries which would follow a cessation of the practice of extradition are great and obvious and I entertain the hope that a new arrangement will soon be arrived at by which the matter will be placed on a satisfactory footing." Referring to India, Her Majesty says: "I am deeply thankful that my dear son, the Prince of Wales, has returned in good health from a lengthened journey in India. His presence in that part of my dominion has given occasion for the expression of feelings of loyalty and devotion to his person of a highly valuable. In pursuance of the power conferred upon me, by proclamation, assumed the title of Empress of India. In making, as regards India, the addition to the ancient style of my crown, I have desired to record on this occasion the peculiar interest to me and the earnest solicitude which I feel for my Indian people. The Queen thanks Parliament for the liberal supplies voted for the army and navy, and assures her people that no effort shall be wanting to keep the expenditures of the country within the bounds of moderation."

NOTICE is hereby given, that the partnership heretofore existing under the name, style and firm of Troup & Morse, was on the 27th day of July last, dissolved by operation of law. All persons indebted to the late firm, are hereby notified to make immediate payment to the subscriber.

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