

The Evening Telegram.

ST. JOHN'S, JANUARY 24, 1888.

ABOUT THE BAIT ACT.

More of the Party's Selfishness.

AN INSPIRED MISREPRESENTATION OF FACTS.

The Montreal Gazette of the 1st ultimo contains a letter from its Newfoundland correspondent, of such a grossly-misleading tone and tendency as to call for a few words of comment. Perhaps all our readers are not aware that the gentleman who represents that paper here is the clerical editor of the Mercury. Such, however, we know to be the case, from correspondence and other evidence now in our possession.

This being so, then, it will not be hard to assume that some, at least, of our contemporary's statements are inspired by the Government, in whose service he always manages to find remunerative employment of some sort or other. One paragraph of the letter in question refers to the Bait Bill, and to this we shall direct our attention to-day, leaving his bitter and malicious remarks on the recent Government libel suit against the TELEGRAM, and other equally venomous and untruthful "pronouncements," for a subsequent issue. He (the Gazette's correspondent) says:—"The intelligent and respectable portion of the inhabitants of Fortune Bay are heartily glad that the catching and carrying of bait to the French is to be stopped." This assertion we have no hesitation in characterizing as a deliberate and wilful falsehood. No one knows better than the said correspondent that all classes of the people of Fortune Bay are opposed to the Bait Act. He cannot be ignorant of the fact that last year a petition against the measure, signed by almost every intelligent man in Fortune Bay, was sent on here from that district, to be forwarded to the Imperial authorities. Nor can he deny that he has read Mr. Bond's speeches on the subject in the House of Assembly, together with numerous well-authenticated letters from his (Mr. B.'s) constituents endorsing and emphasizing his conduct in respect to the ill-advised Act.

The Gazette's correspondent, we contend, cannot plead ignorance to all or any of the foregoing facts, and yet he calmly sits down and pens the statement, for a prominent Canadian newspaper, that "the intelligent and respectable portion of the inhabitants of Fortune Bay are heartily glad that the catching and carrying of bait to the French is to be stopped." What shall we say of such an untruthful writer? Is his conduct in keeping with the vows he took on the occasion of his ordination to the sacred ministry? Not much. Is he a credit to the community in which he resides? Well, hardly. Is it any wonder that he takes so kindly to his congenial occupation of abusing the TELEGRAM and venomously attacking private citizens? We don't think it is.

In another part of his paragraph on the Bait Bill the reverend correspondent writes:—"Our Government are preparing to enforce the act vigorously next year. Not to do so would be an act of imbecility. Steamers will be placed on the coast to prevent smuggling of bait, and there will be strict regulations in the Customs." This sentence is inspired we have no doubt whatever. It bears the impress of inspiration on the very face of it.

"Steamers will be placed on the coast," &c. &c. Yes, that's just it. The Bait Act is to be a big job for a few politico-mercantile monopolists. In other words, the people of Newfoundland in general, and the inhabitants of Fortune Bay in particular, must suffer because the Premier and a few of his friends have two or three old steamers whose occupation at the seal-fishery is gone, and because they want to get employment for them at the expense of the tax-paying fisherman and the public treasury. Already, we believe, the matter of a subsidy to the proprietors of said old steamers has been discussed by members of the Executive, and we shouldn't be surprised to find two or three of these "ancient hulks" haunting the West Coast, like phantom ships, next summer, and scaring the finny tribes from their accustomed resorts and trying places along the shore, out into deep water.

The other day a West Coast correspondent informed us that the people of Fortune Bay were organizing and making other preparations with a view to resist the enforcement of the Bait Act. Now, we would suggest that all the districts, north and west, organize at once, not only to resist the obnoxious measure mentioned, but, primarily, to resist the present universally-obnoxious Government. It is absurd to expect anything but obnoxious measures from the men who now direct the public affairs of this monopoly-cursed colony. A corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit! Obviously, then, our only remedy for existing evils is a change of Administration. We want

honest, competent men in office. Otherwise things will go on from bad to worse, until the "dark demon of Ruin"—as Carlyle calls it—shall erect his throne in the market place and grin at our bankrupt traders and bare-armed laborers as they drag their emaciated limbs through the almost deserted streets, looking in vain for the wherewithal to prevent body and soul from bidding farewell to each other forever.

CHRISTIAN UNITY.

PROFESSOR BLACKIE of Edinburgh never opens his mouth but he says something, and that something, though often whimsical, is always broad and good. On Sunday, the 4th ultimo, he delivered a lecture in St. Cuthbert's Church, Edinburgh, on "Christian Unity." After devotional exercises had been conducted Professor Blackie ascended into the pulpit. He said that he would speak about three words—unity, uniformity and union. He had not chosen a text, as he was not asked to preach a sermon, but to deliver a lecture; and he would therefore give them a philosophical and theological discourse. After defining unity as oneness, the lecturer remarked that the complete likeness in a number of combined units of the same composition and character was called uniformity or sameness. This occurred very rarely in nature, and always less and less as the range of creative energy rose. The sky-terrier—(laughter)—and the St. Bernard were of the same type, but of a different variety. The Englishman was proud and dignified; the Scotchman was thoughtful, sober-minded, sensible—(laughter)—the Irishman was lively and humorous, the Frenchman vain and wicked—(renewed laughter)—the German was serious, thoughtful, systematic and speculative. In religion they found the same variety. The Episcopalians had too much the religion of the clerical gentlemanship. Their form of prayers caused humdrum and routine, and there was nothing more tame than the Episcopal preaching. (Laughter.) Don't laugh at that. The same thing occurred in the Presbyteries. They preached right into the prayers, and were sometimes preaching when they ought to have been praying to Almighty God. (Laughter.) A good thundering sermon once a fortnight would be much better than one once a week from those who could not preach. (Laughter.) The fact was that a man preached two sermons a week, when one would be far too much for his brains. (Laughter.)

As to the question of union and co-operation among Christian churches, the Professor said he would abolish no church. Union was not uniformity, Christian churches ought to cooperate in the "unity of the spirit." Christian men were bound to interchange pulpits; secondly, they were bound to sit down together at the Holy Communion; thirdly, they were bound to administer baptism indiscriminately for Christian parents; fourthly, they were bound to work together in all missionary schemes for evangelising the heathen; fifthly, they were bound to take part heartily in all social movements having a tendency to promote the happiness and to elevate the tone of their human brethren; and sixthly, they were bound to cultivate in every possible way the society of those of antagonistic persuasions. Now, he thought that was a bit of a sermon. (Laughter.) Why these things were not done was one of three reasons—either from official self-glorification in the shape of an exclusive priesthood; or, again, it resulted from a weakness of intellect and narrowness of view which prevented their distinguishing the essential from the accidental forms that Christianity had assumed; or, again, it might proceed from some moral weakness or corrupt motive, such as vanity, self-conceit, or it might be from a worship of form and fashion. In concluding, Professor Blackie read several passages from the New Testament bearing on the subject of his lecture.

JUDGE PROWSE AND CITIZENS KEAN AND FOGARTY.

A Claim that was Previously Settled.

THE only case of note in the Magistrates Court to-day was one between Mr. Owen Kean and Mr. Joseph Fogarty. Seven dollars and eighty cents was the bone of contention between them, and how it happened that they should relegate the settlement of such a paltry difference to Police Justice Prowse, considering that they are near neighbors, good friends and usually drink each other's health on Shelah's Day, it would be difficult to determine. The plaintiff, too, occupied one of Mr. Fogarty's houses in Adelaide Street and always found him a good landlord, as the defendant had always found Mr. Kean a good tenant. When the latter left he paid his rent—£22 10s. per half year—in right shape to defendant, and the latter says that the settlement at that time wiped off all scores between them, including the amount now sued for. His Worship took that view of the case, and thought it was pretty ticklish to decide as between two such litigants, yet the "law of probabilities" (Justice Prowse is a great stickler for the "law of probabilities") favored defendant that the claim was previously satisfied. He added that "he felt he never gave a more equitable judgment in his life," which is saying a great deal.

The Present State of Newfoundland

CONFEDERATION.

OUR TRADE.

Great as are the defects of our trade system, they do not depend entirely upon the merchant, but chiefly on the nature of our produce and the peculiar occupation of the people. The whole trade is precarious—it is a lottery in which there are many blanks, and it is hard to insist upon any rule for it except what guides the science of chance. The merchants are undoubtedly the most important body of our community, and in the circumstances in which they are placed, have, as a body, done their part fairly and honourably enough. Profit is the very life, the first cause and final end of the business they are embarked in; but while regarding that keenly, they have certainly done more for the people and the country than any other set of men in the community—besides the benefit that results from their business transactions, they are ever found foremost among contributors to works of charity and civilization. To them, then, I appeal as the true arbiters of the question of Confederation from the point of view of trade—Do they believe that the Union of this Colony with Canada will injure them or their dependents? What one advantage they now possess can be wrested from them by Union with Canada? What project they may contemplate can be frustrated, what course they may choose to take can be checked, by the interference of the Dominion Government? Must not our trade, on the contrary, like that of all other countries known to history, be improved by extension of dominion, by a free influx of all the commodities by which trade is sustained, by an intelligent and careful examination of the channels towards which it should be directed, and by those guarantees of wealth and power which alone can protect its honor and secure its success? Under Confederation nations will open their markets cheerfully to us which would hardly trust us at present, and inter-commercial treaties will be available from which now we are precluded. To prove this I have but to instance two facts—the one that Confederation, besides giving us a market duty free in Canada for our produce, and free importation of all commodities from any part of the Dominion we may choose to trade with—besides all this, will ensure for us a benefit of Reciprocity of trade with the United States, a benefit we are now deprived of, and not likely to regain if we remain in isolation and obscurity. It won't pay for large countries to be entering into inter-commercial treaties with petty communities, especially such as this which has but one species of produce; and the reason is that such petty communities must export to their rich neighbors who need make no concessions to them such as are always contained in Reciprocity treaties. Canada can exist without the States, and the States without Canada, but Newfoundland cannot exist one instant without dependence on food-producing countries, so the sooner she becomes part of such a country the better for herself; and unless her legislators and her people set to work to force from her soil all they require for food, and conjure up somehow fleecy herds and busy factories to supply them with clothing, unless they can do this (and I admit it were better than Confederation or anything else) all bluster about independence and our liberties is simply ridiculous. The second fact that shews how our trade would improve under Union is drawn from the visit of a Canadian Commission to the Brazils and West Indies a few years ago. We were not represented on that commission, though its object, as shown by the very report of the Canadians, was incomparably more important to us than to any Province of North America. Magnificent concessions were made by the Southern Empire and the Colonies to Canada, brilliant prospects of trade were opened up, concessions and prospects that would since have more largely benefitted Newfoundland, whose name made such a figure in the report, if she had been Canada or a part of Canada, as she will become by Confederation. I have no time to refer accurately to the report, but it is in the hands of most of our leading citizens, and it proves that Canada is prepared to exert intelligence and expend money (what we could not do) for the encouragement and extension of her mercantile interests.

(Concluded to-morrow.)

PROGRESS OF THE BILLIARD TOURNAMENT.

The billiard tournament between cues representing the Metropolitan and the Academia Clubs was continued last evening on the table of the former, between Mr. Arthur Hiscock for the Mets, and Mr. Thomas Edens for the Academia, the game being a closely contested one, Mr. Hiscock, however, scoring one ahead of his adversary at the close. So far, there is only the trifling difference of 13 points between both sides, but there yet remain six pairs of cues to play off before the final issue is determined.

TWENTY-SEVENTH ANNUAL REPORT

Of the St. John's Athenaeum.

THE committee of the St. John's Athenaeum, in reporting the result of the operations and condition of the society, regret that they cannot present a favorable record for the past year.

For the past few years the committee has, in its Annual Report, been compelled to draw attention to the constantly decreasing interest exhibited by the public in the fortunes of the one general literary institute of the city. The St. John's Athenaeum has now, for the first time for many years, to contemplate the fact that the receipts for 1887 did not meet the expenditure by £48. The causes of this condition of affairs may be sought for in a variety of circumstances. The establishment of various associations, having a mixed literary and social scope, without the wide and more liberal objects at which this society aims, has largely trespassed on our domain. The cheapness of general literature, brought about by American printed reproductions of the best British authors, has been a secondary cause, which, together with the listlessness and indifference to the efforts of our most talented lecturers, accounts for the deficiency in our exchequer. That deficiency can be better understood by a perusal of the following figures shewing the receipts for lectures and entertainments for the past several years, viz.:

1882.....	£123 19 9
1883.....	92 12 10
1884.....	75 18 1
1885.....	43 13 7
1886.....	88 15 6

1887, £30 10s. 4d. was the nett result of the course. From the Lecture Course alone, which had on its platform the most distinguished talent, lay and clerical, that the city can boast of, the nett earnings were only five pounds.

The gross income for the past year has been much below that of former years, as will be seen by a comparison of the receipts, which in 1886 gave..... £541 11 0
" expenditure..... 529 19 4
against the receipt of

In 1887.....	£440 0 3
Expenditure.....	472 9 9

leaving a balance against the Institute for the year of £32 9s. 6d. The subscription list to the Reading Room and Library has also been reduced from 339 in 1886 to 293 in 1887. The latter item betrays a greater danger to the stability of the Institution than even the decline in the receipts for the Lecture Course, which depend somewhat on weather and rivalry of entertainment.

Upon a review of these circumstances your committee would venture to suggest, as a subject for deliberate consideration, whether it might be advisable to still further relax, without injury to its usefulness, the literary tone of the Institution, so as to bring it more in accordance with the tastes developed and sustained by its more distinctly social and less strictly literary competitors. Failing such alterations in its constitution, the question suggests itself how far the Athenaeum would be justified in contending with the enormous expenditure which it is forced to bear, paying, as it does, to the Athenaeum Joint Stock Company for its lodgment in the building £220 a year, as will be seen by the following items:—

Rent of Library Reading Room.....	£145 0 0
Coal.....	32 14 6
Salary of Keeper.....	12 10 0
Rent of Hall.....	30 0 0
	£220 4 6

Your committee do not feel warranted in recommending any radical change, but merely take the liberty of suggesting the subject for the consideration of the Society. In this connection the committee entertain high hopes for the success of the coming course of lectures and entertainments, relying on the fact, of which they feel flattered, that His Excellency Governor Blake has consented to open the series by a lecture on the 30th instant. His Excellency's literary reputation, of which the world of letters has already had a proof, apart from the dignity of his exalted position in this colony, will be certain to secure a liberal patronage for our lecture hall this season.

The committee have to thank the following gentlemen for their talented services on the lecture platform in aid of the society, viz.: Hon. Mr. Justice Pinsent, D.C.L., Dr. Tait, Dr. Rendell, Rev. W. S. Lalor, Rev. Mr. Currie, and Thomas McDowell, Esq., B.A.; and we also tender the thanks of the institution to those ladies and gentlemen who so kindly and generously lent their talents and time in the entertainments.

The committee have to record with deep regret the death, during the past year, of Wm. Boyd, Esq. Mr. Boyd was one of the original founders of the Athenaeum, and his connection with the society terminated only with his death; and the want created by the loss of his experience and ability in the management of its business will be very difficult to fill.

In conclusion, we earnestly recommend the condition of the association to the thoughtful consideration of its subscribers and support-

ers, believing that nothing but a vigorous and enlightened patronage will maintain, in its efficiency, the oldest and most meritorious institution of which the colony can boast.

The accounts for the year 1887 have been duly audited and are herewith submitted.

Respectfully,
CHAS. BOWRING, President,
J. J. FLANNERY, Secretary.

It was moved by Mr. Thomas Mitchell and seconded by Mr. J. R. McCowen, that the above report be adopted.

The following officers were then elected to serve for the ensuing year:—President, Hon. Charles Bowring; Vice-Presidents, Hon. M. Monroe, James Baird, Esq.; Secretary, J. J. Flannery, Esq., B.L.; Committee, Hon. J. S. Pitts, Col. Fawcett, G. H. Emerson, Esq., B.L., James Furlong, Esq., John Pye, Esq., Dr. Rendell, M. H. Carty, Esq., B.L., W. D. Halley, Esq., Thomas Mitchell, Esq., Jno. McDougall, Esq., Richard Neyle, Esq.

Quick Passage of the "Adamantine."

THE barquentine Adamantine, Capt. Clarke, arrived at half-past five o'clock this morning to Messrs. Bowring Brothers, from New York, having made the run in less than seven days and a half. This is, so far as we remember, the fastest winter passage by a sailing vessel, and is all the more remarkable from the fact of the ship being detained off the port of departure, by an easterly wind, for three days; so that her free running time was four and a half days. She got the wind at last from the N.N.W., and it "drove her here like fun." The Adamantine is an iron ship, and shews the effect of the present frosty spell in being thickly iced up.

MISSIONARY MEETING AT TOPSAIL.

A MORE than ordinarily interesting missionary meeting will be held in the Methodist Church at Topsail to-morrow evening. Rev. M. Fenwick, the pastor, has thoughtfully arranged for the accommodation of his numerous city friends, a large number of whom have made up their minds to be present. At 4 p.m. a special train will leave the depot for Topsail, and at the close of the meeting the train will start for home. Tea, for the nominal sum of 30 cents, will await all who wish to partake thereof at the Mission House.

LOCAL VARIETIES.

THE harbor here froze over last night for the first time this season; the thermometer marking 3 degrees above.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.—"No Sneak"—Your letter respecting the escape of Whelan and that incident at the annual meeting of the Athenaeum last evening has been received. But we must decline giving it publicity because of its intensely personal and sectarian tone. You are right in saying that "those who patronize the Athenaeum should be above such reprehensible acts." But what can you do when they are not? That's the question.

AN amateur minstrel troupe have been agreeably entertaining the citizens of Harbor Grace, as we notice by the Standard, with negro farces, songs, break-downs, piano-forte performances, the execution of the programme, and especially the acting of some members of the troupe, being spoken of as uncommonly fine—so much so that the town is awaiting a repetition of the treat with considerable interest. The title rôles on the programme are suggestive of droll comicities, and most agreeable is it to observe that the energies of young Harbor Grace are directed in channels that, as the "Mikado" would observe, are "a source of innocent merriment to all."

THERE was very little speech-making at the annual meeting of subscribers to the Athenaeum, last evening, owing, no doubt, to various causes. Even the "presiding officer's" oration was away behind previous efforts of the kind. Some eloquent speaking, it is said, was done before the meeting took place and after; but, of course that's, only natural on such occasions. The attendance was small—only about twenty-six or twenty-eight persons being present, the result being that the officers and most of the committee for the past year were re-elected. The President—Hon. Charles Bowring—was absent in consequence of an "unavoidable indisposition," but we are delighted to hear that the honorable gentleman had sufficiently recovered by noon to-day to be able to attend the one-o'clock meeting in the Commercial Rooms. The Secretary's report reveals the unpleasant fact that the financial affairs of the institution are not in an entirely satisfactory condition. It is hoped, however, that the current year will prove a prosperous one, and that, at its close, the affairs of the Athenaeum will wear a more encouraging aspect.

BIRTH.
On Friday last, the wife of Thomas Brennock, Goulds road, of a daughter.

HIPPING INTELLIGENCE.

LOADING.
July 18—Carpasian, Brazil, W. Griève & Co.
18—Hebe, Brazil, Baine, Johnston & Co.
19—Lillian, Europe, Job, Bros & Co.
20—Fanny, Brazil, Job, Bros & Co.
Helen Isabel, Brazil, Baine, Johnston & Co.
21—Prince LeBoo, Liverpool, J. Murray.