

Mr. Timmerman was undoubtedly surprised to find that so strong a feeling existed in Fredericton over a grievance which the railway people could remedy by an insignificant outlay. The inadequate train service affects not Fredericton alone, but Marysville, Gilson and a large part of Sunbury county directly, and the whole province indirectly, and we feel confident that the C. P. R. will stand gratefully in its own light if it does not redress the grievance immediately. All New Brunswick is interested in having prompt mail connections with the capital. The public departments and the supreme court records are of great importance to our local people than to any other number of people in any other county, and it is impossible to justify the continuance of a postal service that renders the answering of letters by return mail an impossibility. Although Mr. Timmerman promised nothing definite, as indeed, no one expected him to, he certainly expressed surprise at the smallness of the additional accommodation asked for, and his promise to meet as far as possible, the reasonable requirements of all places touched by the railway, can hardly be fulfilled by anything short of the restoration of the early morning train from St. John.

WHAT DOES IT SIGNIFY?

A genuine tornado in Maine a fortnight ago and now another one in Massachusetts are enough to set people thinking. Is the wild wind storm of the west to become a part of our weather? Or is the explanation to be looked for in the fact that the atmosphere is becoming more "cyclonic" all over the continent? This has been a wonderful year for wind storms, and the long columns of disasters contained in the papers cannot be explained by saying that our facilities for getting news are better than they used to be. The storms are undoubtedly more prevalent than they used to be. Any one at all familiar with geology knows that the condition of the earth has for many years been one of comparative quiescence. Periods of intense activity have succeeded periods of rest for so many cycles of years that it is useless to try to estimate their number. It is therefore quite conceivable that through great influences, which we do not understand, a change of some kind is being brought about. Reference has already been made in these columns to the possible significance of the presence of so many icebergs in the north Atlantic. Open seasons in arctic regions alone can account for the breaking loose of these vast masses. Whether there is any connection between what may be going on in those high latitudes and the very extraordinary seasons we have been having in the temperate zone, is of course only a matter of conjecture, and what is behind the whole of it is one of nature's most closely veiled mysteries. But while we may recognize the inexplicability of what has occurred and is now taking place, and admit the existence and operation of great unknown forces, not many of us will go the length of the prognostication of a recent writer in the Arena, who tells us that we are approaching a period of unusual disturbance which is to culminate in a quarter of a century in a terrific cataclysm that will destroy the Atlantic seaboard of the United States. A period of cyclones and floods is to be followed by one of earthquakes and tidal waves, and when things are quieted down again, North America will be much smaller than it now is, and the survivors will find it a very satisfactory place to live on. Few of us will accept any such prophesying as reliable, but it is a little singular that a periodical of the standing of the Arena should publish such an article. It is hardly possible that the writer of it is a nineteenth century Noah and that we all ought to go to ark-building.

LATIN-AMERICA.

There is a grin grotesque about the fact that Mr. Blaine's Latin-American proteges had not more than a million dollars home from his Pan-American congress, which was supposed to be nothing if not an international love feast, than the nations they represented fell to fighting. If there was any place in the world where peace and prosperity were supposed to be permanent it was in Argentina. Millions of dollars had been spent in a transcontinental railway and in consequence there was a grand boom. English emigrants were strongly advised to go there. A great many of them did. The country has much to recommend it. Lying under and south of the Tropic of Capricorn, producing therefore nearly everything needed for the support of life from sugar cane to potatoes, splendidly adapted to pastoral purposes and possessed of abundant mineral deposits of great value, with its 841,000 square miles of territory there is undoubtedly room for large and highly flourishing population. The present population is about three millions. What the cause of the recent rebellion is has not yet transpired. It is singular that all the news we get of the happenings in that part of the world comes via London. Nothing more clearly indicates how far off the United States is from having the influence in the republics of South America which its public men consider it should exercise. The latest intelligence is to the effect that there is a reasonable prospect of peace being restored immediately.

It is in doubt as to the cause and issue of the Argentine revolution there is even greater uncertainty as to what is transpiring in Central America. That serious fighting has taken place between the troops of Guatemala and Salvador is understood, but we are told by the latest despatches not to accept any account of the battles as correct, as each party tells the story to suit itself. There is probably one reason underlying all these outbreaks, namely the inequality of the people for self-government. Nature has been prolific in her gifts to these countries and the inhabitants are indolent and not much else than grown up children. If a strong man gets in power he can do about as he pleases. There is no public opinion, as we understand it, to restrain him. So things go on from bad to worse until a revolution at home or a war abroad comes as a matter of course. South America is a country of boundless possibilities; but it needs to be in the hands of Englishmen or Americans. There is a very strong sentiment among leading Peruvians in favor of an English protectorate for that country, and doubtless sooner or later the Anglo-American will have control of the whole southern continent.

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THE ROAD SERVICE.

Our Andover friend, having seated himself in the Gleaner's chair, does not appear to like our reference to the new road law. We drew attention ourselves to what we considered an unwise change in the former highway act, and now the Andover editor who had not heard and did not know anything about the law until his return from the Malawaska county court, thinks he sees a chance to attack Mr. Blair on account of it. He evidently cannot discuss an important question except for the purposes of political partisanship, and does not realize that there are quite a number of people in the country who are willing to allow the present government to carry on affairs and anxious to help them do so to the best advantage. The Andover friend is not now in receipt of any public money for services rendered the government, and therefore his "thoughts by day and dreams by night" are "turn the rascals out." We believe he has felt that way since June '87; he did not feel that way for the four years preceding.

He tells us that our article is an indirect threat of direct taxation for the road service. We do not think it a threat, but if a threat, we question if it can be called indirect. We pointed out that the roads are multiplying, that the bridges are also increasing and that less statute labor is being done this year than ever before, and we candidly confess that we intended to give, not an indirect, but a direct public notice of the amount of money which the legislature has been heretofore able to grant, or will hereafter be able, will keep up the roads, unless more road work is done than people are now required to do.

"This of course," says the Andover editor, "is the result of the wholesale extravagance of Mr. Blair." Well, really, this is quite too remarkable! We did not know a result had been arrived at, and if it had we do not just perceive where the wholesale extravagance comes in. If there has been any extravagance, the Andover friend did not succeed in bringing it to light during the session of the legislature last winter, although he sat just outside the rail with paper, pencil and the auditor general's report in his hand, day after day when the supply was going through.

The forty-second member did not unearth any wholesale extravagance last winter. The only thing he discovered was that the clerk at the lunatic asylum had paid \$20 cents a pound for a half-dozen pair of chickens. But he had been a saving of four and one-half cents a pound made on those chickens, the saving would not have been available for the roads.

The road and bridge grant, we may inform our friend, is as large this year as it ever was any year and was larger last year than the year before. All of which being true, the extravagance could not have been "wholesale" otherwise the grant would have had to be reduced. The extravagance could not have been even retail extravagance without absorbing the road and bridge money to some extent at least, and as we have said it is not reduced. This is the first case of "wholesale extravagance" which has come under our knowledge that has not diminished the sums available for the great services of government.

It would be really interesting to the public, and to be greatly appreciated by us, if the Gleaner and its Andover friend, the forty-second member, would kindly inform its readers what particular extravagance the government is now indulging in, which it was not guilty of during the period it enjoyed their unswerving support.

Here is an opportunity for the party to distinguish itself. Since that convention has been indefinitely postponed and there is nothing particular just now to organize, let the party get to work at the public accounts and show us either a wholesale or retail expenditure, which is thoroughly wrong now that was not thoroughly approved of then—barring the extra price paid for those chickens.

AN ABSURDITY EXPRESSED.

The Woodstock Press tells its readers that Mr. Blair is one of the persons holding the lease of the government tobacco plaster rock, and rather makes the statement as if there was something wrong about it. The Press has not intended to state that which is not true, but someone has been misleading it. Mr. Blair, we are informed on authority, is not interested in the plaster rock either as lessee or otherwise. But we are not so much concerned to set the Press right upon this point, as to ask, assuming what it says to be permanent it was in Argentina. Millions of dollars had been spent in a transcontinental railway and in consequence there was a grand boom. English emigrants were strongly advised to go there. A great many of them did. The country has much to recommend it. Lying under and south of the Tropic of Capricorn, producing therefore nearly everything needed for the support of life from sugar cane to potatoes, splendidly adapted to pastoral purposes and possessed of abundant mineral deposits of great value, with its 841,000 square miles of territory there is undoubtedly room for large and highly flourishing population. The present population is about three millions. What the cause of the recent rebellion is has not yet transpired. It is singular that all the news we get of the happenings in that part of the world comes via London. Nothing more clearly indicates how far off the United States is from having the influence in the republics of South America which its public men consider it should exercise. The latest intelligence is to the effect that there is a reasonable prospect of peace being restored immediately.

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MAINTENANCE OF BRIDGES.

It appears, according to the Gleaner, that rotten bridges are increasing and that government works are tumbling down all over the country. In support of this we are told that three bridges in different parts of the province have recently fallen, one of them, and the only one of which we have any information, being the Durham bridge on the Nashwaak. This dismal howl is made the prelude to the startling inquiry: How long will the public be compelled to endure this state of things?

The inference to be drawn from this indefinite question of course is, that if a bridge should chance to fall down it is the best evidence in the world that the government shall be pulled down with it, and that if only the Gleaner's friends were in power, no bridge would under any circumstance be allowed suddenly to give out. The new government, under the able but outside assistance of our friend from Andover, coupled with the moral support of the Gleaner, would make larger grants for roads and bridges than any government ever has made heretofore, and doubtless would augment the provincial appropriation by liberal contributions from their own pockets.

The general public have little, if any, idea of the strain upon the department of public works during the past three years. Not speaking of the riots and freshets, which have been most destructive upon roads and bridges, there has been a total giving out of all those inferior bridges built under the Kelly administration of the department. We do not wish to revive public recollection of that unglorious period of our public works administration; but it is necessary to mention it in order that the people may appreciate the extreme demands Mr. Ryan has had to grapple with.

We think when the administration of the present chief commissioner comes to be judged calmly and free from the prejudice of party rancor, it will be conceded that his management of the department, efficiently and honestly done, and that he has accomplished splendidly what he has undertaken to do. He has not only kept the roads and bridges in good repair, but he has also kept the public accounts in good order, and he has also kept the public accounts in good order, and he has also kept the public accounts in good order.

One span of the Durham bridge, referred to above, it is true did fall down, but through no neglect of the department. Persons in the neighborhood say that the span fell in consequence of having been lifted out of place by a whirlwind. That the bridge had not been neglected is certain, as only last year no less than eight hundred dollars were expended in repairing two piers, which was all that in the opinion of competent persons needed repairing. Had the Gleaner waited a few days to make its dismal wail, it would have found the span replaced in good safe condition and everybody well satisfied.

Whatever other complaints the grumblers may make in this county, they cannot say that the government is not constantly rebuilding and repairing our bridges. The work when it is done is done, and if it may be said that the department is slow in rebuilding in some cases, it is not due, in the slightest degree, to indifference or neglect. The work is often much better done, the character of the bridge improved, and the public than if more satisfaction given the public than if the department had undertaken the work when crowded with other pressing demands.

POLITICAL NOTES.

"It is an old and trite proverb that abusing another will not make the abuser clean." Our readers will be surprised to learn that at one time the Gleaner, from a recent editorial in the Gleaner, and, yet, perhaps, they will not be so greatly surprised when it is considered that even the Gleaner may learn, by experience. It has been for years both scurrilous and defamatory in its attacks upon the attorney general, yet it has become either spotless or pure. It has taken a long time to learn the lesson. To the credit of journalism let us hope it is a case of lasting and genuine conversion.

This conviction, respecting a long forgotten convention "old and trite proverb," has very suddenly and recently seized upon the Gleaner, as will appear by a reference to its latest publications. In the small compass of less than a dozen lines, Mr. Blair is charged with having private interest in all the public subsidies granted by the local government. He is also said to be guilty of peculation, which means the embezzlement or stealing of public funds. The charges of Mr. Blair's side, the Leary contract is again repeated, and although the hope is expressed that these gross breaches of office and public trust may cease, it contends that the sale of the public interests for private gain is still to be carried on by him.

To call a man a swindler and embezzler, to say that he is guilty of peculation of government moneys, to charge him with selling public contracts, and to charge him with gross abuse of his public trust, is according to the Gleaner and the vindictive persecuting coteries surrounding it, not to be abusive. It is fair comment and honest criticism of the official conduct of public officers. To say that the patron of the Gleaner and "our friend from Andover" are one and the same, and that he and his organ are spiteful and malicious is to be abusive; but to call a member of the government an embezzler of the public funds is mild criticism. 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