

General Business.

Miramichi Advance.

CHATHAM, N. B., FEBRUARY 18, 1897.

Our Forests.

A timely letter on the subject of our forests will be found in another column. It will, no doubt, serve to increase the awakening interest of our people in their public lands—their management and preservation. A great improvement has taken place in the methods of lumbermen, compared with those which prevailed a few years ago. They are not so reckless and wasteful in the matter of needlessly destroying young trees as they were, while they leave much less of the tops in the woods than formerly. A good many of them are using the saw instead of the axe in felling trees, so as to save the portion of the butt log formerly wasted by the scarf, and they do not cut large and small logs indiscriminately to the same extent as they did five or six years ago.

This change in the direction of forest-culture is undoubtedly due to the improved system of granting long leases of the public timber areas. The lumberman of former times, who had only a short term of his ground, was anxious to get all the logs he could off before his license expired. His interest was antagonistic to that of the public who owned the soil. Now, his long lease unites his and the public's interests. It is as important to him, as the tenant, holding under a long term lease, as it is to the landlord—the public—that his holding should be husbanded, and not abused. The improvement, therefore, noticeable in the lumberman's methods and the greater care he manifests in cutting his lands judiciously are mainly due to the change made by the government of the Province when they adopted the long-term leasing system.

It is too much to expect that old and wasteful habits, contracted under former bad systems, will be abandoned forthwith, and the fact that there is still much waste going on, and a good deal of carelessness in regard to forest-manifested by those engaged in our forest industries, is perhaps not unnatural. The men who are employed in stream-driving are, perhaps, the most careless of the lumbering class, in the latter regard, although the operators are, we know, doing good work in correcting their thoughtlessness. A certain class of "sportsmen" who are far too responsible for more fires than the stream-drivers are, while the fish-netting class, who hunt remote streams after the open season, are worse still. The farmer and settler, too, are also, much too careless with their spring burnings, forgetting that at all times in the year May is the most dangerous for starting fires near the woods.

When it is understood that, in the aggregate, hundreds of miles of woodland are burned over every year, denuding the soil of its forest growth; and that this waste not only renders the land valueless, but also lessens the capacity for retaining the moisture by which our lakes and streams are supplied, the importance of guarding against forest fires will be better realized. As soon as a country loses its forest growth, its streams cease to be the nurseries of its migratory fishes, and as a consequence its coast and estuary fisheries are impaired and even destroyed.

In this view of the subject, there is force in our correspondent's suggestion respecting wood-rangers. Their work would be very valuable in connection with the lumber industry alone, while the money paid to them would be an investment that would result in a hundredfold advantage in preserving the nurseries of many of our most important commercial fishes. The subject is well worthy of the attention of our legislators, and we hope they will treat it as its importance demands.

The Two "Marks". We have the authority of the Sun for the statement that Hon. Mr. Tweedie isn't fit to be Provincial Secretary.

The same paper enjoyed and expressed a similar view in reference to Hon. Mr. Blair and his fitness for the office of Attorney-General. The Globe practically agrees with the Sun in reference to both of those public men.

They remind us of two well known characters of the name of "Marks"—"Uncle Tom's Cabin."

The smaller papers which take their cue from the Globe and Sun echo their sentiments, of course.

The Fredericton Reporter and Glenora agree with what the Sun and Globe say on the subject, and Mr. Pitts, M. P. E., has been encouraged to give utterance to their sentiments in the Legislature.

It is a coincidence that neither Mr. Tweedie nor Mr. Blair were ever known to go out of their way to conciliate either the Globe or the Sun.

Nearly everybody knows that each paper speaks only for its proprietors and their political interests, which always happen to be other than those of the general public.

The value which the Liberals in the Legislature and Government place upon the praise or blame of the Globe is about equal to that at which the Conservatives in those bodies attach the support or opposition of the Sun.

It is a happy augury for the people of the Province that the members of both Dominion parties in the Legislature insist on intimating to the Sun and Globe that they do not intend to be either led or driven by them. They, no doubt, value their good will and do not despise it, but they do not propose to purchase it at the price of their freedom of representatives.

The Globe and its chief proprietor, Mr. Ellis, M. P., did their best to

undermine the influence of Hon. A. G. Blair when he was premier of the Province, and their envy of him, now that he is a Dominion Minister in spite of them, is ill-concealed. He succeeded the better because the Globe was arrayed against him.

The Sun offered Mr. Blair a more open opposition, and never "naked" behind him in the dark to encourage those who would strike him down, as the Globe did.

The lesson to be learned, therefore, from experience of the Globe and Sun's record is that those who have the opposition of those papers are to be congratulated, for while it is evidence that such public men as they oppose have had the courage to refuse to pay the price of questionable support, it is also proof that these men are capable of making a course for themselves in promoting the welfare of the people they represent.

Small-Taking Extended. The Minister of Fisheries has extended the time of small-fishing until the end of the present month.

Officials "Fired". There ought to be some encouragement for those who are looking for other "log" jobs, in the announcement of the Toronto Globe just after the partial burning of one of the Dominion buildings, at Ottawa, which was the last office-holding in the Western Block had been "fired."

The principal objection to the general outpouring was that it was done without previous warning, the preferring of charges, or investigation.

Then and Now. The St. John Record, referring to Provincial Secretary Tweedie's budget speech says:—

"His remarks in praise of Mr. Blair, we consider were in the best of taste. Before the Northumberland deal, Mr. Tweedie was not such a great admirer of the Minister of Railways, but it is wonderful how some people's tastes will change."

Yes! and before, as well as for a good while after the Northumberland deal, the proprietor of the Record was numbered among Mr. Blair's most ardent admirers and defenders, and it is believed that one of the principal objects for which the Record was established was to chastise the praises of the Blair administration, which included Mr. Tweedie and other public men who, it was hoped, would be the "tally" bestowed upon them by the Record, not bring into effect certain changes affecting the office of Queen's Printer. Well! the people know the rest, and in that case understand why some people's, as well as some papers' tastes have changed.

RECALLED.—The St. John Globe of last Thursday, in a laudatory editorial, endeavored to show that it has always treated Premier Mitchell and Mr. Tweedie fairly. Those who read the regularity, however, know better than that and their contempt for its mendacity will only be increased by its denial of the facts. It cannot avail out of the unenviable position in which it has placed itself, and the public would have less contempt for it if it were to have the courage to admit its stand by its true position. It has undertaken, in the most deliberate way, to write Hon. Mr. Tweedie down, to prevent, if possible, his advancement in public life. It did this by relating the case of Hon. Mr. Blair and failed. It will also fail in Mr. Tweedie's case.

Our Valuable Forests. DOAKTOWN, N. B., Feb. 19, 1897.

DEAR SIR:—Please give space in your valuable paper for a few observations on the subject of our forests and their preservation.

Our lumbermen are waking up, which fact that the cutting of logs now being done in a very wasteful manner, by taking what they thought was the very best, namely, the butt of the tree, and leaving the rest to rot in the woods, which being very combustible served to feed forest fires.

Our millmen, also, have been somewhat to blame, as they have discarded too large an amount of the knots. Experience has proved that spruce knots are usually firm and do not impair the lumber for most purposes. Our observation in the United States has been that every spruce tree that is good is trimmed up to the diameter of 3 inches, and nothing left that will make a pocket, or a piece of sawing. Even our balsam firs, which are considered a nuisance, are prized in Maine and other lumber States for fence pickets and many other things, being more durable than spruce.

Our hemlock, which is so lightly esteemed, is next to cedar and perhaps superior for durability as a fence board. We have some hemlock boards on a fence on the premises that were whipsawed before the days of saw mills sixty years ago, and are yet sound and very hard, and for fencing and other purposes, when they are kept clear of the ground, will resist the rust of tropical climates. Fir shingles, hemlock superior to pine, and will last as long as cedar, but in handling it is more liable to split.

Miramichi has value in her forests that has not been appreciated in the past, judging from the way they have been wasted and wantonly destroyed.

A few lines on ways and methods for saving that are coming into use would be in place here.—The chopper used to cut down trees. He is now beginning to cut down trees, in piling up logs, goes one ahead of the other to save cutting wood. Logs that were rejected on account of knots, are found to make good lumber.

But with all this economy, the average lumberman is not thoughtful enough about forest fires, or it may be more the fault of a certain class of persons that forest fires prevail. Many owners of wild meadows burn the forest early in the spring, to encourage a better yield of the forest. We have known, in a dry time, smokers to throw matches down carelessly and create a fire. Blamey-pokers boiling their kettles last summer created a fire south of Doaktown that kept from 30 to 50 men busy fighting it for nearly two weeks. Many irresponsible people are very careless. River-drivers cooking fire last summer did much damage. Such fires are built near the streams and curd, when done with, are thrown into the water. Sometimes excursions from abroad not knowing the value of our forests, and without knowledge of the liability of fires to

spread, start the class of forest fires. Passing trains in dry weather are a constant source of danger and are diminishing their freight stock every year.

In view of the dangers of blotting out the chief resources of our country, the Government ought to be asked to help in some way to guard its interests by appointing wood rangers, as in some of the best preserved lumber regions of the U. S., whose duties in dry weather would be to watch the woods, visit the blueberry plains, warn the pickers, visit the owners of wild meadows, point out the liability of fire spreading, hand them printed sections of the law and point out their liability to prosecute; speak to the foremen of log drives and hold them responsible for the spread of fire—handing to them printed sections of the law to read in their own homes, and see that they are careful and prosecute their carelessness when necessary, and in many other ways carry out the intentions of the Government to save the growing timber.

If it were not for the rapid growth of the spruce forest, every year would be scarce in New Brunswick to-day. We know of parties operating this year on ground that was swept by the great Miramichi fire, and we have hunted logs, this year, on ground burned over 10 years ago in the Miramichi River. The lowest estimate of value of growth on lumber land is an increase of 20 cents annually per acre, which is a very low estimate in favor of the plan. Trees increase in value by growth 10 per cent yearly. On Carleton Place River, 20 years ago, it was estimated that the log supply would be exhausted in five years. Since that time over 100 millions of feet of lumber have been cut and the supply is good by growth and care for 20 years more.

By all means, let the Government save, and devote means to preserve our forests. Our people need educating in this line and are awakening to obvious necessities.

Let the Government be to the front in this important matter. Perhaps we will hear more of this matter soon.

Yours, RICHARD AITKEN.

The Provincial Secretary's Budget Speech. As one of two papers have addressed themselves to the work of denouncing Mr. Tweedie's Budget speech, it will not be amiss for the ADVANCE to show that "there are others," which differ from those interested and vicious critics.—

Protestors' Remarks. "While the Provincial Secretary, in the course of his remarks yesterday, expressed himself as being satisfied with the budget speech, the manner in which he acquitted himself of that traditional duty was the most possible reflection of his theory.

It is not easy to recall the occasion when a more original, pointed, and at the same time, laud and comprehensive budget speech, has been delivered in this province exactly as it was, frankly admitted the increase in the tax on land, and gave in detail the reasons for such an increase. His appeal to the practical business men of the House to oppose the increase of the tax on land, is a responsive echo in the minds of those to whom it was addressed.

We congratulate Mr. Tweedie upon the very fair and candid manner in which he has made his budget speech, and straight-forward address to the House, and the important office of Provincial Secretary in this province, who gives long and fair notice of the public men who have occupied that office.

The Legislature. Hon. Provincial Secretary Tweedie submitted the following:—

Consolidated Fund, including Public Debt, 8,000,000; Provincial Debt, 1,000,000; Provincial Revenue, 1,000,000; Provincial Expenditure, 1,000,000; Provincial Surplus, 1,000,000; Provincial Deficit, 1,000,000; Provincial Balance, 1,000,000.

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[hear! hear!] At three general elections, 1890, 1892 and 1895, as well as at a considerable number of bye elections, the financial condition of the government had been endorsed by the people.

IT WAS EASY and it was usual for an opposition to criticize the party in power by accusing them of extravagance or of wrong-doing, just as it was to affect the reputation of a private individual by slanders and falsehood. The most feasible way to attack a government was to cause a deficit, if by any legitimate means, is to accuse it of extravagance. He thought, however, that the statement he would make to-day would make it very easy for the opposition of the government in the House and out of it to justify their allegations.

When the Conservatives were in power in the Dominion, they were charged with extravagance and corruption, and now that the position of matters is reversed, the same charge will assuredly be laid at the door of the Liberals. But with the limited resources of the government of this province, EXTRAVAGANCE WAS ALTOGETHER IMPOSSIBLE, for they could place their finger upon every item of expenditure. The revenue was not from fixed sources and varied little from year to year. The territorial was government neither by government nor opposition but by the forces of nature. The surveyor general, after consulting the staff in his department, would estimate the amount of the work to be done, and the amount of money to be expended, and the amount of money to be expended, and the amount of money to be expended.

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50th Victoria, chapter 3. They had 40 years to run, and had no provision for optional redemption before maturity.