

The Evening Telegram

ST. JOHN'S, JANUARY 6, 1888.

WHO STOLE THE CARPETS?

Larceny at the Colonial Building.

SOME OF THE OFFICIALS SUSPECTED

A LARCENY has been committed at the Colonial Building, and one of such a mean and contemptible nature as to bring the utmost disgrace upon every Government official employed there. Certainly it is no new thing to hear of pilfering in connection with that institution. On the contrary it has long been regarded as the local nursery for corruption and fraud—the point at which pollution's stream receives its supply. It will be understood, of course, that we here refer more particularly to the way in which public moneys are disposed of.

Hitherto, with one exception—the larceny of a stove—we have had no reason to suspect the heads of departments, or even the subordinates, of dishonesty with respect to the furniture and fittings of the Legislative chambers. Under previous Governments, it appears, officials had sufficient self-respect to abstain from such "common villainy" as the last mentioned. It remained for the Thorburn administration and their employés to "sound the depths and shoals" of the sneak thieves' culpability, and to do this, too, under the specious disguise of "sound commercial principles."

Exactly to what extent the said thieving has been carried on, or whether "systematically practised" ever since Premier Thorburn assumed office, we are not in a position to say. But this much we do know, namely: that two valuable carpets have been spirited away during the past few months, and although certain prominent officials are suspected, yet nobody seems to know just where to locate the stolen property.

No doubt, if things were now managed as they used to be, the whole matter would have been pushed up and the missing carpets replaced at the public expense. But for obvious reasons it was deemed advisable, some time ago, to deprive the Clerk of the Assembly of some of his opportunities to do wrong, and to place these opportunities within the province of the Contingency Committee. It cannot be said that this was a step in the direction of "political reform," because it increased rather than diminished the number of those who had it in their power to commit abuses and make away with the property of the Commonwealth. Better submit to the irregularities of one unscrupulous servant, than trust to a number of individuals who belong to that class of people who find things before they are lost.

The Contingency Committee met on Wednesday evening for the purpose of making arrangements preparatory to the opening of the Legislature next month. We have not before us a copy of the minutes of that meeting; but our information with respect to the stolen carpets is perfectly correct. When the Colonial Building was "knocked all to pieces" last August, by order of the Government's Jubilee Committee, and turned into a temporary ball room and beer-saloon, the said carpets and other articles of furniture were removed, not only from the Assembly room and Council chamber, but away from the building altogether.

Evidently the thieves were under the impression that when the time came to put things in order again for the session, new carpets and everything else would be provided without any questions as to what had been done with the old ones. But the rogues were astray in their reckoning this time. One member of the Contingency Committee who happened to be a little more scrupulous than the rest, made inquiry about the carpets, when it was ascertained that they had been stolen, as aforesaid. The committee then adjourned, to meet again to-day. What action they will take in the matter, if any at all, remains to be seen. However, we shall continue to watch their proceedings very closely and keep the public well informed respecting the whole disgraceful affair.

SOCIETY OF ARTS.

The Society of Arts has, we understand, decided to open the Art Exhibition early in September next, and will shortly publish a list of prizes to be awarded thereat.

The Society very liberally offers, also, four Scholarships this year, which are to be competed for the third year in January. They will entitle the fortunate winners to one year's free instruction at the School of Art, and are open to any competitor of any age, sex or denomination. Exact particulars may be obtained of the Secretary, Mr. Nichols, at the School of Art, which re-opens on Monday next.

FAREWELL TO 1887.

Some Prominent Features of the Closing Year.

ARTICLE VI.

The difficulty of dealing with the public finances of a country of such vast extent as the United States, with an area invading every zone of temperature, and a natural production almost as various as the requirements of man, is to determine what effect will follow any particular change in the tariff. It by no means follows that a reduction of duty on this or that article will diminish the revenue derivable from that article, as proved in the case of the duties on worsteds some time ago, when a reduction of the duties on this class of goods imported into the United States resulted in nearly doubling the old revenue on the same. The reason for this is the people had been using an inferior article of domestic manufacture, and the moment the equipoise in favor of the domestic article was removed by the change of tariff, a larger volume of its foreign-manufactured substitute was imported, thus producing the phenomenon referred to.

Great improvements have no doubt taken place in many of the U. S. manufactures of late years, and so much so as to displace the British article in neutral markets, as for instance in cutlery, workmen's tools and implements, and certain cotton textile fabrics. This improvement and perfection in manufactures would become general were free trade to displace protection now, for the manufactures being firmly established would be brought directly into competition with the superior goods of the older countries and have to exhibit equal excellence or lose the trade. Thus free trade succeeding protection would perfect manufactured products as it has done in the old country.

The immediate effects of American free trade would be to divert a larger proportion of the operative population to the cultivation of the soil and give cheaper grain to Europe. The effects of a diminished revenue at home would be compensated for by new and enlarged markets abroad, with a cheaper scale of living for the domestic workman.

In the case of Canada, on the other hand, the time has not yet come for free trade, her domestic manufactures not being yet sufficiently rooted in the soil to be able to withstand the competitive advantages of the old country manufacturers.

We are told that the keynote for the campaign of 1888 in the United States will be free raw material versus free whiskey, and that a lively interest will be taken in the issue by the populace. "Free whiskey" has very few real friends in the country of Uncle Sam, but anything will do for a war-ticket, and when Prince Apollyon takes sides in the fray, the moral effect of the battle will be either better or worse for the "seat of war."

It is stated on good authority that the natural forests of Ontario are being rapidly cut out, and that there will be a wood famine there within twenty years. We have very inferior timber in Newfoundland to that of the great forests of the neighboring continent, but it must come into use yet as a valuable commercial product, and its comparative value will be greatly increased by the twentieth century. At present there is woodman's and lumbering work enough to do in Terra Nova to occupy twice the number of able-bodied men we have employed during the winter season, and there should be no poverty here while that is the case. Jove reproved the idle waggoner who cried for help to heaven, instead of putting his shoulder to the wheel, and while our woods remain to us for the cutting, the only help the heavenly God will give the beggar is a woodman's axe.

Let idle Newfoundlanders think what will be their feelings twenty years hence, when, under Confederation, every stick of wood will be either private property or carefully "preserved," when every inch of ground will be money in somebody's pocket, and when timber will be no longer available to build houses or ships, far less to burn as fuel, because it is wanted for more precious uses.

The American President characterizes the existing U. S. tariff as "vicious, illogical and inequitable," and so it is. May not the same thing be said of the Canadian tariff, with its vexatious and torturing mode of application, and, in a less degree, of our own? The rate of taxation in Newfoundland now is an average of \$5 per head. But as one-half the heads do not pay the five dollars, the other half have to pay \$10. Thus every family of five persons represents to the general revenue a contributory interest of \$50. Every able-bodied male who emigrates from Newfoundland represents (as the potential head of a family) a loss of \$50. Deducting these combined "losses" from the general sum, the hapless inhabitants who cannot leave their country have to make up the deficiency. Thus poverty breeds poverty, in matters fiscal and financial as everywhere else.

The great question with all enlightened countries, as to their domestic political management, has thus resolved itself nowadays into the economic one, How shall we give our inhabitants the best value for their money? Population is a source of wealth, if rightly governed: how shall we retain and how increase it. The rapid progress and perfection of travelling facilities, or what we may term facilities for the transfer of population, has put all competitive countries on their metal for the best kind of settlers. The tendency will increasingly be to break down restrictive barriers, and by good government supply to the settlers all the outward conditions of a happy and prosperous home. And this being the duty said government obviously owes already to its older population, its business and its ambition would seem to move along parallel lines.

THE CURRENCY QUESTION.

DEAR SIR,—Public indignation over the misconduct of the banks upon the currency question should be clearly expressed. Their action in depreciating the value of American and Canadian silver coin was outrageously dishonest, and was made the more oppressive because of the utter absence of public notice of their intention. They allowed the public to take it at its old value until Saturday night, the 31st December, and then announced that on and after Monday morning it would only be taken by them at an enormous discount, their sole object and the result being to make a large profit for themselves at the expense of every holder of such silver in the colony. Canadian silver, for instance, is really worth within 1 1/2 per cent. of our own, but the banks have depreciated it 10 per cent., thus stealing 8 1/2 per cent. by brute force from its holders. This depreciation is made coincident with, and hinges upon, the Government's much-vaunted currency bill, which was in principle good, but whose action, it now appears, intended it to work, as it has worked, for their own private benefit. The bill was introduced by Receiver General Donnelly, and passed by the Government Party, and it is, therefore, a significant fact that a majority of the directors of the Union Bank, (Messrs. Thorburn, Donnelly and Grieve), and Mr. Goodridge of the Commercial Bank, were responsible for passing the measure of whose coming into operation they have made such dishonest use. I charge these honorable (?) gentlemen (?) with conspiring to pass the Currency Act and to issue the obnoxious bank notices for the purpose of forcing foreign silver into their hands for their own profit. What shall be done about it? Traders have the cure in their own hands. Let them advertise, as some have done, that they will take this silver at par, and let them circulate it publicly, or use it for remitting abroad, at its par value, and then the banks will find that their scheme has miscarried. It seems to me, sir, that the misconduct of the banks in provoking this crisis upon silver, and making a "corner" with a Legislative enactment, should cause public inquiry into the system upon which they are run, and particularly their relations with the public.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

A UNITED SACRAMENTAL Service in connection with the Week of Prayer will be held in Gower Street Church this evening at 7.30 p.m. All the members taking part in the Week of Prayer are expected to take part in this service. All the members of the various churches are invited to take part in this.

THE Post Office did a good stroke of work the past week. The Christmas mail, with its card enclosures in letters and its holiday numbers of newspapers, comes like an avalanche upon the devoted men of that department; but it is pleasant to note that they were equal to the heavy strain. In the English mail sent last week by the Nova Scotian, twenty-three bags were dispatched; yesterday, for the United States and Canada, twenty-two bags were made up; by the Curlew for the Westward on Thursday last, twenty-five bags were the complement, and by the Falcon for the Northward thirty bags were sent off—a total of just one hundred bags. While putting aboard the Falcon's mail one of the bags fell overboard (it was very dark), but was soon fished up, though, of course, the contents got more or less wet. Beside the quantity mentioned, a large variety of mail matter is dispatched daily by train.

Yours truly,
ALFRED B. MORINE.
St. John's, Jan. 5, 1888.

NEWFOUNDLAND: Her Fisheries and Fishermen.

BY REV. R. HOWLEY, D.D.

(Continued.)

For nearly half a century there has been no immigration (sufficient to give any notable impress to the population) to the colony of Newfoundland. Its people therefore stand revealed, among the inhabitants of the American Continent and its islands, as a special type, and a production of their own clime, its constituents and influences. It were untrue to say that they retain no marks of their race, and their descent from the vigorous British stock whence they derive. Nevertheless the brand of a new life and a new land is already set upon them, and the Newfoundlander is as distinct in mental character, in certain points of physique, and tricks of speech, as any separated race can be from the parent source.

Southern Ireland and Western England supplied the main tide of the blood of the present islander. He is a large, often a gigantic man, with heavy bones well clothed with flesh and muscle, but coarse in the joints, cheek bones, and other prominent parts of his structure. He has, usually, a kindly blue-grey eye with the sailor gleam—a sort of reflection of the sea sheen—upon it. He has a rolling gait, walking everywhere as though on deck. He speaks down in his throat with an indistinct far-off utterance. He avoids dental sounds, and all his 't's' are d's. His tongue is decidedly lazy, or perhaps too well employed in turning his "quid," or holding it in position, to bother about the minor business of articulation. He is a long and strong eater of pork, salt beef, fish, and hard biscuit. His favorite beverage is tea, usually sweetened with molasses. By late statistics on the subject it appears that Newfoundland stands, in proportion, at the head of the list, after China and Australia, as a tea-consuming country. We vouch that nowhere else is the plant to be found of better quality or in stronger decoction. The Newfoundland fisherman undoubtedly drinks hard, at times of a less harmless liquid. Rum, and rum only, straight from the West Indies in Spanish and native bottoms, is his beloved invigorator. He is not however a persistent drinker. His habits of life impose upon him lengthened periods of abstemiousness. And he knows how essential it is during "the season" to abstain from intoxication. In earlier times the rum ruled everywhere, on sea as on land. No crew would set out for the seal fishery unless every man had his "keg." The bottle or jar was always to be found stowed snugly away in the stern sheets, on the shorter trips to the ecd fishing grounds. Now all that is changed, and it may be said that the fisherman only drinks on shore, when his voyage is over, or when he comes "to town" for his various supplies. But he drinks thoroughly when about it. He becomes noisy but not usually quarrelsome. No country is more free from acts of crime or violence than Newfoundland. Yet with all his soft "slobbiness" of temperament the Newfoundlander is not a safe animal to exasperate. Like the dog of the country he will bear any amount of teasing and tantalizing from a kind of master or a trusty friend, but is a decided ugly customer for a recognised foe to deal with. The schools of the two chief towns, and the fishery has scant time to devote to them. He is therefore, in our modern sense, ignorant. Yet he can, as a rule, read and write, and no man, after all, is really ignorant who knows his particular calling so thoroughly as the Newfoundlander. Draw those loose lines together. Form a figure clothed in heavy pilot cloth, when ashore and unemployed; in canvas trousers, reezy and oily, and guernsey shirt with fur cap or sou'-wester when at sea; behold a brown, weather-beaten face, smooth, except for the thick muf of hair that grows up from and around the throat, and peaks out from the chin, and you have the Newfoundland fisherman as he is, a healthy, hardy, patient, and somewhat stubborn sea-dog.

There are about 30,238 such men employed in prosecuting the fisheries of Newfoundland and 52,000 engaged in the handling of fish, either for its catch or cure.* They are portion of a population that amounted in 1874 to over 160,000 souls, and that probably reaches to-day the figure of 200,000. More than one-third of all the fish taken in North American waters is caught by those men. The entire catch by Americans, French, and Newfoundlanders averages annually 3,700,000 cwt., or about 150,000,000 fish. The average annual catch made by Newfoundland resident fishermen alone is 1,326,259 cwt. The value of the whole average catch in those waters is about \$14,800,000. The annual value of fish caught, exported and consumed by Newfoundlanders alone, is \$6,364,000.

* Statistics from Special Catalogue International Fisheries Exhibition, London, 1883. (Concluded to-morrow.)

A FANCY dress juvenile dancing assembly was given last evening in Government House by Governor and Mrs. Blake. A hundred children of both sexes took part, their dresses—which represented a multitude of different characters—maids of honor, pages in waiting, Swiss peasants, huntsmen, &c., making a picturesque *mise en scene*. A band furnished dance music, and a bountiful refreshment table was spread. The pleasant entertainment was kept up till half-past ten o'clock.

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DEATH OF MR. JAMES MILLEY.

MR. JAMES MILLEY, barrister-at-law, quietly passed away from this world of care at 11 o'clock this morning. For some time back he had been ailing. He caught a heavy cold from sitting at a directors' meeting of the Metropolitan Club in wet clothes. It terminated in paralysis of the right side of the body. He was unconscious for some days before he died.

Mr. Milley was a hard-working, painstaking young man. While at the drapery business, which he commenced very young, he laid up sufficient money to educate himself for the bar. He studied law with the late lamented Mr. Boone, and was a fellow-student of Mr. T. J. Murphy, the present popular radical member for the East End. His (Mr. Milley's) early training being thus in such good hands, and that experience which he had acquired in his business behind the counter, gave indications of his becoming one of our most successful lawyers. Application, honesty and sobriety are qualities which always ensure success at the bar, and our dead barrister possessed these in an eminent degree. In politics, so far as he was connected with them, he was a Liberal and a supporter of Sir W. V. Whiteway. It will be remembered that he was the solicited Whiteway candidate for St. Barbe just before Sir William retired in 1885. In public life his good common sense would undoubtedly win for him a front place. To his sorrowing relatives we tender our sincere sympathy in this their hour of affliction.

Friend after friend departs;
Who hath not lost a friend?
There is no union here of hearts,
That finds not here an end.
Were this frail world our only rest,
Living or dying, none were blest.
Beyond the flight of time,
Beyond this vale of death,
There surely is some blessed clime
Where life is not a breath,
Nor life's affections transient fire,
Whose sparks fly upward and expire.

SHOOTING AFFAIR IN BARNES' LANE.

A SHOCKING occurrence took place this afternoon in Barnes' Lane. A youth named Larkin, living with a woman named Lacey, fired a revolver at her. The bullet lodged in the woman's face, and the wound is so serious that the patient has been ordered to hospital by Doctor Shea. It appears that the occurrence was accidental. The two were playing, the loaded revolver being the play-toy, when in some way or other it exploded, the bullet lodging in the woman's face. The arm is a very small one, its ball being only the size of a swan shot. The doctor probed for the missile but could not extract it; the wound, however, is not thought to be dangerous. It is supposed to have lodged in one of the facial bones or muscles, and that an operation will result in its being extracted.

LOCAL VARIETIES.

THE Girls' Primary Department of the Methodist College will resume work on Monday next, and the boys' on Wednesday, at 9.30 a.m.

THE steamer "Curlew" left Trepassey during the night for the next port of call west. The "Falcon" left Catalinas at ten o'clock this morning, bound north.

THE boys of St. Mary's Sunday School are requested to meet at their school-room to-morrow, at 2.15 o'clock, for the purpose of attending the funeral of their late schoolmate, Corbett Pittman.

DIED.

Last evening, of brain fever, Corbett, son of James and Mary Jane Pittman, aged 8 years and 3 months. Funeral to-morrow (Saturday) at 3 o'clock, from his late residence, No. 62 Henry Street.

This morning, James John Milley, aged 28 years. Funeral will take place on Sunday next, at 2.30 p.m., from his late residence, South West Street.