

The Evening Telegram.

ST. JOHN'S, JANUARY 9, 1888.

THIEVING OFFICIALS.

Recent Larcenies at the Colonial Building.

THE ROGUES NOT LIKELY TO BE PUNISHED.

What the Government Organ Says About the Matter.

Of mortal justice if thou scorn the rod, Believe and tremble, thou art judged of God.

The "venerable" upholder of fraud and deceit who controls the Government organ, chuckles over the recent larcenies at the Colonial Building, and sneers at the suggestion that something should be done to bring the offenders to justice. He is not at all displeased because the rogues have declined to stop just where he told them in 1881. While our unfastidious contemporary was then employed by Messrs. Blackman, Hobbs & Co. to write up their railway swindle, it will be remembered how, on several occasions, he publicly declared that "we must scrape, pare and do everything short of stealing" to carry out and complete the said railway swindle. Now, then, is it to be wondered at that the officials to whom he thus addressed himself have gone a little farther and actually ROBBED the public offices of their furniture? No, it is not. And as for the teaching of that pernicious doctrine, — well, the result doesn't seem to affect him a bit, unless it be to tickle his morbid sense of "humor." He simply treats the matter as a joke, and ridicules the idea of interfering with guilty officials at all in their pilfering practices.

At any rate, in his issue of Saturday, the thefts in question are referred to in a manner more calculated to encourage dishonesty on the part of public servants than to reprove their conduct. What more natural than to expect increased boldness in official turpitude on the part of offenders when their dishonesty is only laughed at by heads of departments and by the Premier's own organ! And here again we have another proof of Mr. Thorburn's inconsistency and unfitness for the position he occupies. Would any departmental officer who is not a rogue himself consent to become a passive witness of roguery on the part of his subordinates? We should say not. Nevertheless, this is just the attitude assumed by Premier Thorburn in regard to those carpet-larcenies and other dishonest acts at the Colonial Building.

Again, would Sir Robert Thorburn tolerate similar dishonesty on the part of employes in his mercantile office on Water Street? Would he, as the managing partner in the firm of Walter Grieve & Co., allow his clerks to steal the firm's property, without discharging them or in any way reprovng their dishonesty? We are certain he would not. He would soon have them dragged before the magistrates and "punished with the utmost rigor of the law." We submit that if Premier Thorburn were a consistent, conscientious man he would pursue an honest course and have equal justice done in both cases. In other words, he would redeem his promise to have the affairs of the country conducted on "sound commercial principles."

It may seem all very well, very smart, and very clever in the eyes of the corruptionist organ of Prescott Street to laugh and indulge in childish witticisms whenever reference is made to dishonesty in the public service. But we can tell the editor of the *Mercury* and his advisers that the people take an entirely different view of those things. They look upon such dishonesty as a very serious matter—an index to the character of the men by whom the country is at present governed.

To the mind of any honest person "a theft is a theft," whether committed in the Colonial Building or in a merchant's office—whether the articles stolen belong to the Commonwealth or to the firm of Messrs. Walter Grieve & Co.; and as such it should be treated. This being the case, then, there can be no two opinions with respect to Premier Thorburn's duty in the premises.

One of the carpets stolen from the Colonial Building was a new article, put down in the Assembly Chamber last year at a cost to the colony of something like \$300 (three hundred dollars). Think you, Mr. Thorburn, that the tax-paying people of Newfoundland will consent to be robbed in this manner? We can tell you that they are not prepared to submit to anything of the kind, and you will have practical assurance of the fact, too, when the House opens. Then it will be necessary to talk about the valuable window hangings stolen from the Clerk's Office, and the chairs and desks spirited away from the Assembly Chamber, as well as the carpet just mentioned.

Justice must be done, no matter what positions the guilty officials may occupy. Why should a poor fisherman be sentenced to thirty days' imprisonment with hard labor for stealing a tam o' shanter cap worth only 25 cents, while a sleek and well-paid Government official is allowed to steal valuable property from the people's house with the utmost impunity? Let public sentiment answer this important question at its earliest convenience.

1888.

SOME ASPECTS OF THE NEW YEAR.

As compared with our forebodings, the New Year opens under favorable auspices.

Last year we dreaded the approach of the Asiatic plague, which lurks in secret places, and steals, tiger-like, across the globe. The cholera did manage to reach the quarantine grounds of New York, from which measurable distance it menaced us, but so far and no further. Whether it has now spent its force and will die out again for a season or revive with the hot weather and reach these latitudes, time alone can tell. Meanwhile the plague is stayed.

Great preparations have been made to perfect the nations in the art of war. Italy has added a first-class war-fleet to her navy, and dear old Mrs. Britannia has polished up old, and invented new, weapons, to "wipe out" humanity. No doubt these timely precautions will terrorise the thieves and bloody-minded men of continental Europe into maintaining the public peace, by showing them that they can thus enjoy all the costs of war without any of its carnage.

The five great powers which now keep up large standing armies, namely, Russia, Austria, Germany, France and Britain, have now nothing to quarrel over unless it may be the bounds of territories beyond their own. These armies have increased sixty per cent. within fifty years—a clear proof that the age of peace has come. With their navies, the war-power of Europe employs three millions of men, and annually costs £150,000,000 stg. The annual cost of the war-tax ranges from 6s. to 17s. per inhabitant, and averages ten shillings in Europe, and four shillings in the United States. Whether these "standing armies" might be better employed than in keeping the peace is a moot point we shall allow others to determine. As things are at present, however, it looks like a necessity that Dame Europe should keep her cupboard door locked, and a sentry at hand to enforce the power of the common hangman. Otherwise the wolf may lie down with the lamb and the lion with the kid at the cost of the ultimate disappearance of the smaller quadrupeds.

It is satisfactory to notice the marvellous growth of civilizing agencies, foremost of which we mention that of the press. With the exception of the Chinese, who have had newspapers for ten centuries, the modern press, as we know it, is not much over a hundred years old, when a newspaper took five days to go from London to Glasgow. During the past fifty years the number of newspapers in the United States alone has increased from 830 to 12,000, with a combined circulation of thirty-one millions per issue, while in Europe the increase has been fourfold. When we consider that the newspaper is the workingman's daily companion, and engaged in forming the opinion of the thinking and operative part of the world with ceaseless industry, we cannot but rejoice that the realm of knowledge is thus continually extending both in substance and in sway.

In the absence of any satisfactory system of Education in this island, it is greatly to be desired that the power of the press should be extended here. Outside of St. John's but few people read the newspaper, or take the trouble to acquaint themselves with the movements of the great world around them. Even from the lowest point of view, this darkness of the mind is a general loss to the community, for all history shows us that it is from the ranks of its peasantry the intellectual world is mostly recruited.

A much higher level of prices has ruled here for our leading staple during the past year, the range of prices being from 2s. 6d. to 5s. per quintal better than in 1886. By the enterprise of our leading merchants a sum of not less than £125,000 has been placed in the hands of our fishermen during the past season over and above what they might have expected. This ought to go far towards making up the shortage on last year's catch, and aid the Government by tranquillizing the people.

A similar benefit has resulted from our agricultural operations. Though our principal crops, hay and potatoes, were a failure, a large importation of the former article has given cheap hay to our farmers of foreign growth. An increased rate of duty on both articles has added to the general revenue, which, by reason of the amended tariff of last session, ought to be a very large one. In this way the year 1887 has been a singularly favorable one to the ruling government.

During the past year we have had the first fair chance of ascertaining the practical effect upon our Newfoundland export of fish thither of the duties lately imposed upon it by the United States Government. Notwithstanding a duty on codfish of half a dollar per quintal and on our herrings of a dollar per barrel, we find that the consumption in that country of both these Newfoundland products has been steadily maintained, thus showing the correctness of the political economist's theory that it is the consumer and not the producer who pays the protective tariff. Any unpatriotic proposal to give away any of our territorial rights to Uncle Sam that might be based upon an opposite conclusion is thus refuted.

AS OTHERS SEE US.

A Travelling Commissioner's Views of the Situation.

FRENCH VERSUS BRITISH FISHERMEN.

(Continued.)

ST. JOHN'S, NEWFOUNDLAND, Oct., 1887.

The presence of British ships of war, of civil officers, and the right of popular legislative representation enjoyed by the people of this coast, and its subjection to taxation and Customs' regulations, with the presence here of the Supreme Court of this island and its dependencies, with jurisdiction over the adjacent seas, and with cognisance of offences committed upon the banks of Newfoundland, all attest this position, which is in no wise annulled by the permissive presence of a French naval force for the discipline and protection of their own marine. This is absolutely conclusive, and it is accordingly certain that the French will never become possessed, unless the fortune of war should give it to them as it took it away, of any portion of the Newfoundland coast. They had not the right by treaty, even if they have allowed it to lapse by default, and now they are clearly not inclined to insist upon it. A pamphlet upon the subject, which takes on a semi-official character from being handed to me by the French Consul as an accurate expression of French views, declares this openly, and concludes with the mild but significant reproach—"Pour obtenir la cession d'un droit, c'est un mauvais point de départ que d'en nier l'existence."

The question of territorial rights being thus disposed of, we come to the second question of French and English fishing relations, that is to the Bait Bill.

The Bait Bill has become law and is to come into force on January 1 next. Any discussion of it must therefore be of an *ex post facto* kind. First, however, what is it? As was explained in the letter upon the Canadian fishery question, to catch cod upon the Banks of Newfoundland it is necessary to have bait, and, to secure good catches, fresh bait. This varies for different times of the year, but consists chiefly of herring. Now these herring are caught for the most part in Fortune Bay, the great bay in the middle of the southern coast of Newfoundland, and the inhabitants along the shores have been in the habit of selling to the French all the bait they desired as soon as they reached St. Pierre at the opening of the fishing season. (The "Bankers," it must be remembered, do not carry the proper nets and appliances for catching these small fish.) Upwards of 1,600 people, with £10,000 invested in nets and other implements, make a living by this trade with the French. Now, the numbers and catches of the French fishing fleet have recently increased to an alarming extent. In 1879 the number of vessels was 177, their aggregate tonnage 27,000, and their catch in quintals of cod (say *wt.*) was 369,000. In 1884 the same figures were 290, 27,000, and 700,000; in 1885 323, 30,000, and 1,000,000; and last year again there was a corresponding increase. Moreover, the French fishermen have the advantage of enormous bounties, which may be roughly stated as follows—first, a duty of 12*f.* a quintal upon all foreign caught fish; second, a bounty called "prime d'exportation" varying from 6*f.* to 10*f.* on all dry cod-fish exported to the chief ports of the trade; and, third, a bounty of 50*f.* a man for each man employed in the Newfoundland fisheries. These bounties amount roughly to about 60 per cent., and accordingly the French fishermen are able to sell their fish at a good profit for a price below the actual cost of production. The ultimate result of such a state of things upon the fishing industry of the Newfoundlanders may readily be imagined; Newfoundland fish are gradually being driven out of the markets of the world; for example, in 1886 French exports of cod into Spain and North Italy amounted to 500,000 quintals, while the total export from Newfoundland into the whole of Spain, Portugal, and North Italy did not exceed a million quintals. To quote only one opinion upon facts which are so clear, Sir Ambrose Shea, who accompanied the Bait Bill to England, said to me, "I told Lord Salisbury that we appreciated perfectly the relations of England and France, and the reluctance he must naturally feel to take any step which would be annoying to the French Government, and that, therefore, we should not come to him except as the very last resort. But this, I added, was simply a question of life and death for us, and that he had to choose between seeing the colony wiped out before his eyes and securing the assent to our self-protective measure." This measure was the now famous Bait Bill, and it is certainly legislation of the most stringent character. In fact it resembles an Irish Coercion Bill in some of its features. Condensed into a few words this "Act to regulate the exportation of herring, caplin, squid, and other bait-fishes" simply prohibits the catching, possessing, selling, or exporting of a single fish of this kind without

a special licence from the Receiver-General of the Colony. Any person having such a fish in his possession may be brought before a stipendiary magistrate and his vessel be seized. Crying herring in the streets of St. John's will thus be a penal offence after January 1 next. The bill was passed the first time on May 18, 1886; the Queen's assent was refused; it was then passed a second time February 21, 1887, and received the Royal assent several months later. The Government of Newfoundland are at this moment building and equipping three small steamers to enforce it.

(To be continued.)

THE POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT.

A Few Observations from "Humanity."

Editor Evening Telegram.

DEAR SIR,—I was very much pleased to see that, in your issue of the 6th inst., you gave a few words of well-merited praise to the hard-worked officials of the Postal Department. You have given them some pretty hard knocks in the past, and perhaps they were not wholly undeserved, and therefore your tribute of praise this time is, in my opinion, only giving "honor to whom honor is due." How seldom, while enjoying the blessings of civilization, do we pause to consider the large amount of toil and care that have been expended in conveying those blessings to us. When we step up to our Post Office box in the morning or answer the carrier's welcome knock, and receive the kind messages of loved friends beyond the sea, or when we drop into the receiving box, the missives containing our inmost thoughts—secrets, perhaps that all the wealth of Golconda could not buy—we very seldom give a moment's thought to the fact that while we were comfortably enjoying our rest the whole staff of the Post Office were busily engaged in carefully sorting and arranging this correspondence for our convenience. We never think of the magnitude of the trust thus placed in the hands of those unobtrusive public servants, or the serious consequences that might possibly ensue were that trust betrayed. And yet, strange to say, these same public servants, though the hardest worked, are the worst paid of all our public officials. Compared with those of other departments their salaries were always ridiculously small, and, by way of encouragement, I presume, in this glorious jubilee year just passed, when feasting and merriment were the order of the day, they were treated to a reduction of their salaries of about 25 per cent. I noticed, a few days ago, that the letter-carrier who delivers my correspondence, had in his possession no less than twenty-five or thirty registered letters, besides other kinds of mail matter, and I found, upon inquiry, that this man received at the end of three months' constant work in all weathers the magnificent sum of FORTY DOLLARS. Truly, in this case at all events "the labor is worthy of his hire." I don't think any further comment necessary at present, but I feel that such a state of things should not be, and I am confident that the sympathy of a *thoughtless*, perhaps, but not *ungrateful* public, will not fail to awaken and find expression in your popular paper. Sincerely yours, HUMANITY. St. John's, Jan. 9, 1888.

ALL "A BIG MISTAKE."

Editor Evening Telegram.

DEAR SIR,—In your Saturday's issue I notice a reference to (I presume) the Rev. Moses Harvey in connection with his congregation. Although personally and politically opposed to M. H.—on general grounds, I think it not exactly judicious to bring in the affairs of the church with which he is connected. Nobody who knows him would ever suppose he (M. H.) would belong to a congregation and not "manage" it to suit himself. Why, doesn't he manage the government, the colony, the universe,—why then not one little congregation? If, therefore, such be the case and they consent to be "managed," I do not see that it is anybody's business but their own, as if they are satisfied to bear the consequences, why should others object. Perhaps he manages them well for aught I know—or care; but any way if he does manage, and with their consent, whose else's business is it but theirs and his.

For my own part I would say, though opposed to M. H., I am not vindictively opposed to him, for vindictiveness is not a part of my disposition. I regret, for his own sake, that one who is in many respects a clever and able man, should entertain such a poor idea of the intrinsic value of his gifts as to consider it necessary to use them in any wrong connection or sinuous way. He seems to set store by that sort of thing, but, to my mind, it is all A BIG MISTAKE. St. John's, Jan. 9, 1888.

We are requested to state that "at a meeting of the rate-payers, held on Tuesday evening last, 3rd instant, of which Mr. Shannon Clift was appointed Chairman and Mr. F. St. John, Secretary, *pro tem.*, it was arranged to call a public meeting this evening for the purpose set down in the advertisement."

By Telegraph

FROM HARBOR BRITON.

First Load of Frozen Herrings.

THE BAIT ACT BITTERLY DENOUNCED.

People Determined to Resist.

(Special to the Evening Telegram.)

HARBOR BRITON, THIS AFTERNOON.

The first American schooner for the season has loaded with frozen herrings and taken her departure. Herrings are not so plentiful as sometimes at this season. The people were in distressed circumstances before the arrival of the French and Americans. All hands are now busy loading vessels and getting them ready for sea. Herrings are selling at six shillings a barrels green, cash down. The threatened enforcement of the Bait Act has caused quite a panic here. The conduct of the Government in this connection is bitterly denounced, and people are determined to resist the Act. They say, to enforce it now means nothing less than starvation.

THE POLICE COURT.

In the Police or Magistrates' Court on Saturday morning, James Dalton sued Thomas Tobin for damages (\$86) arising out of breach of contract. It appears that defendant was engaged by Messrs. Smallwood, Hutchins & Smith to open up their silver mine in Placentia. The mine afforded possibilities of being a big Placentia bonanza, and visions of untold millions of dollars in silver floated before the minds of the daring speculators. Three hundred and fifty dollars was the amount for which defendant contracted to open up the mine and perhaps lay bare the glittering store beneath. He engaged plaintiff to assist him at one dollar a day, plaintiff understanding (the agreement was verbal only) that his term of service would extend over two to three months. After working for twenty-four days, defendant discharged him, hence the suit. The amount earned by plaintiff, a professional miner, scarcely covered the cost of his month's board and other expenses in Placentia. Both parties testified, but plaintiff was overborne by the weight of defendant's testimony and accepted a non-suit, his worship declaring that plaintiff's declarations contained the greater weight and made manifest a case of great hardship which, however, he (the magistrate) regretted that he couldn't redress, mainly because the agreement was not in writing.

LOCAL VARIETIES.

PASSENGERS per steamer *Miranda* from Halifax—R. Torpey, James Sutton.

THE brigantine *Lillian*, Captain Mealey, twenty-three days from Cadiz, for this port, passed Cape Race this morning.

BUT two foreign arrivals are to be noted at this port since Saturday night—one from Pernambuco in ballast, and one from New York with general cargo.

THE two lotteries at No. 1 Table, remaining open since the Bazaar, were drawn on Saturday last. The provisions, flour, coal, &c., were won by Mr. J. Carroll, Riverhead, and the handsome drawing-room screen by R. J. Parsons, Esq.

THE ladies of the St. Vincent de Paul Society beg to announce that they intend having a children's fancy dress entertainment, on or about the 18th inst., in aid of their funds for the relief of the poor; and they trust that the object for which the entertainment is to be given will secure for it the same kindly and generous support which has always been accorded by the benevolent and charitable to their efforts for a like purpose on many previous occasions.

BIRTH. This morning, the wife of Capt. J. Callahan, of a son.

DIED. Yesterday morning, after a lingering illness, Ann Bates, aged 52 years. Funeral will take place from her brother's residence, Good View Street, near Lime Kiln Hill, to-morrow (Tuesday), at 2.15 o'clock; friends will please attend without further notice.

Yesterday, after a protracted illness, John, third son of Ellen and the late William Finn, aged 28 years. Funeral on to-morrow (Tuesday) at 2.30 p.m., from his late residence, 72 Patrick Street; friends are invited to attend without further notice.

Yesterday morning, at No. 52 Victoria Street, Mrs. Hanora Kelly, aged 70 years. Funeral to-morrow (Tuesday), at 2.30 p.m.—R.I.P.

On Friday last, at Cape Broyley, after a long and painful illness, Ellen, aged 18 years, fourth daughter of Joseph and Elizabeth Morrissey.

At New York, on Wednesday, 28th Dec., after a short but painful illness, Edgar Strling, Esq., aged 67 years.

SHIPPING INTELLIGENCE.

ENTERED. 6—Cleddu Belle, Bransfield, Boston, 8 days, Harvey & Co.—875 bris flour, part cargo for Carbonear, Jubilee, Monser, Boston via Liverpool, 15 days, Harvey & Co.—500 bris flour, 250 bris cornmeal, 9 bris oil, 3 bris pork. Miriam, Manning, Barbados, 28 days, A Goodridge & Sons—ballast.

7—Dora, May, Oporto, 20 days, Job, Bros & Co.—4 hds, 4 ogaves, 1 pipe wine. Lotie, Scanlan, Boston, 8 days, M Thorburn—555 bris, 20 cases oil, 50 bris pitch.

CLEARED. 6—Robie M. O'Neill, St. John, P.R., F & L Tessier—975 qts fish.

LOADING. 30—Crystal Stream, Europe, Baine, Johnston & Co. Sphaway, Europe, J Murray. 31—Stella, Europe, J & W Stewart. Little Vixen, Europe, P & L Tessler. 6—Devon, Europe, Baine, Johnston & Co. Royal Home, West Indies, Job, Bros & Co. 7—Dora, Brazil, Job, Bros. & Co.

By
Russia
troops
is consid
Lord
Russia
fleet to
Hartie
ference
Liberal
The r
and the
day from
leum, er
The B
in the
drowned
The C
of Janua
Wind
weather
since las
N
Auction—
Auction—
Auction—
Oatmeal
Boston ke
Price adv
For sale—
Gluten
Cheap so
Curlers' p
Sociable
Notice to
Tea-meet
GLUT
excellen
wheat, an
sia, Indes
to. Make
half-and-h
App
jan10, p
GOLD
Pa
Spoons,
Wedding
Eyeglass
Spectacl
log, Wat
To-Mo
CL
100 qu
20 ca
5 ca
150 G
jan10
To Mo
On
40b
10
jan10
On TH
BY
One I
1 DOUB
Sleigh, 3
Horse R
BO
On Sa
Bos
jan10
Thre
HE
3s. 6d.
at B
jan9, p
T
Gi
On
FR
Engl
Beech
Teach
ticular
jan7, 21
WA
Referen