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POOR DOCUMENT

THE EVENING GAZETTE

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JOHN A. BOWES, Editor and Publisher

THE EVENING GAZETTE will be delivered at any house in the cities of St. John and Portland for a month for thirty-five cents. The subscription may be paid at the office, or to any news agent who sells the GAZETTE.

ST. JOHN, N. B., SATURDAY, MAR. 9. 1889.

THE STUMPAGE QUESTION.

Within the past few weeks we have taken occasion to make some enquiries as to the merits of the claim made by lumbermen, in the counties bordering on the Gulf of St. Lawrence, for a reduction in the rate of stumpage charged them for lumber cut on crown lands. So far as the stumpage charge on cedar logs is concerned all must acknowledge that 80 per M. feet board measure, or in other words, from 8 to 10 cents per thousand of shingles is extremely low. We learn from one of the leading operators on the St. John that the Crown land department in Quebec were asking last spring $1.25 per m. feet B. M. for cedar logs. The stumpage on spruce paid to the government, or rather supposed to be paid to them, by the operators at the North, is $1.25 per M. The stumpage paid by log haulers on a Canadian lease, on the head waters of the Saint John, last season per thousand was 65 cents to the Quebec government and 90 cents to the holder of the lease, in all $1.55. These logs had to be driven for a long distance out of branches of the Saint John into the main river. They had also, as a matter of course, to pass the Fredericton boom and be towed to Saint John. Now spruce logs standing on the Miramichi can be reached by portage teams, as well as by river drivers and men employed generally at work in the woods, more easily than timber standing on the far off waters of the Upper Saint John. Consequently, so far as the item of transport is concerned, the Miramichi river with the Northern and Western railway, with its daily service running along its shores for miles, is exceptionally well situated. There was a time when portaging on the Miramichi was an expensive item; now the South West is in general easily and cheaply reached, and were its branches improved by the construction of dams and by the clearing away of rocks, as has been done by Mr. Gibson on the Nashwaak, in order to cheapen the cost of river driving, we have it from good authority, that those streams would be second to none in the Province for the transportation of lumber to the sea. We find that large sales of spruce deals have been made this winter to be delivered at the mouth of the Miramichi in the spring for the sum of $10 per M. feet B. M; just about what deals are now bringing in St. John.

So far as short lumber such as laths is concerned, a market for which has to be sought for in the United States, the North Shore ports must always labor under a disadvantage which however cannot be cured by any reduction of stumpage. In fact laths and pickets which are made out of slabs, are charged no stumpage now, the slab not being measured in the computation of the contents of the log from which they are sawn. Nearly the whole of the revenue resources of the Province, outside of the Dominion subsidy, is confined to the matter of our timber land, and it becomes the government to treat them just as they would any other source of revenue, by protecting them and marketing their products to the best advantage.

The leases of Crown lands now held by individuals, were many of them bought at prices much above the upset figure, and it would be a dishonest act in any government, for them to reduce the stumpage charges in the agreement entered into between the Crown and the individual at the time of the sale. We are informed that so far from some of the leases not being worth what was paid for them, in several instances they have been transferred to others at a much higher rate than was paid. We know of one case in which $800 over and above the original price, was paid for only a few square miles, The gentleman who got the $800 is, we may remark, one of these who is very outspoken in demanding a reduction in stumpage.

THE ST. JOHN PRESBYTERY'S QUARREL WITH THE GOVERNMENT.

We publish elsewhere in this issue the correspondence between St. John Presbytery and Hon. A. G. Blair, in regard to the liability of ministers to obey the law, which requires them to give information to the registrar of every funeral they have attended. The correspondence is incomplete, because the first letter of the Presbytery to the attorney general has been withheld by the Presbytery, although, it should certainly, have been made public. It was, however, we understand, simply a curt and unqualified refusal to obey the law. Had this letter been made public, the community would have been in a better position to understand the justice of the attacks make on the Attorney General at the last meeting of the Presbytery and the characterization of his letter as "discourteous and ungentlemanly." The St. John correspondent of the Toronto Empire telegraphed to that paper that one reverend gentleman, at the meeting of Presbytery called Mr. Blair "A renegade 'Methodist," and we are informed that this was actually said. It is clear that when a body of men, whether ministers or laymen, approach a question in the spirit in which this attack on Mr. Blair seems to have been made their deliberations are not likely to promote the glory of God or to increase the respect in which they should be held as ministers of Christ.

In their final reply the committee say: "We call your attention to the fact that no objection is made to an act of parliament as such, but to the terms or conditions of the act which we believe to be arbitrary and unnecessary. This language, if it means anything, signifies that the St. John presbytery, graciously admit the right of the Provincial Parliament to pass acts, subject, however, to the veto of the Presbytery, whose members will refuse to obey such laws if they regard them as arbitrary or unnecessary." The presbytery draw a distinction between their liability to report a marriage, which they say is a civil function, and their liability to report a funeral, which they hold to be a purely religious or ecclesiastical function. This is a distinction worthy of a follower of Ignatius Loyola. The fact that a minister makes a prayer at a man's death bed, or at his grave does not relieve him of the duty, if called upon, of testifying in a court of justice to the fact that the man died or that the man was buried. In Scotland it is the custom of the Presbyterians to bury without any religious service whatever; the minister never opens his mouth at the grave. Do the St. John Presbytery say that, in such case, he is performing a purely religious or ecclesiastical function? The Roman Catholics hold marriage to be a sacrament and the performance of it a purely religious and ecclesiastical function. Would the St. John Presbytery on this ground, justify the refusal of a Roman Catholic priest to make any return of a marriage he had performed? We are quite certain they would be the first to utterly reject such a claim, and would condemn it in no measured terms as rank Popery. The members of the St. John Presbytery must see that they have placed themselves in an entirely untenable position. They are not above the law, but subject to its control, and likewise to its penalties like other men. There was a time when ecclesiastics claimed to control the State in its legislation, but those evil days are past never to return. Ministers of all denominations should know that every attempt on their part to usurp the functions of government, must result in a decline of their proper influence as teachers of religion and exemplars of the life of the Lord Jesus Christ whom they profess to serve.

THE COAL LANDS OF NEW BRUNSWICK.

We were informed, a short time since, that a standing offer had been made to the local government of $3 per acre for all of the coal bearing lands in the vicinity of Grand Lake. When the Central Railway is completed, as we presume it soon will be, these beds of coal, thin though they be, from their proximity to the surface, and the cheapness with which they can be worked, will become of great value. It is a subject for very serious consideration how this matter with regard to their disposal, should be dealt with.

But little capital is required to work a Grand Lake coal mine, and if these valuable deposits are kept out of the hands of large speculators, whose interests demand monopolies, many opportunities will be offered for numerous associations of our own people to operate them on a small scale, the only way indeed by which they can be worked to the greatest advantage. We have looked in vain for a complete and proper description of the Grand Lake coal beds, and of the character of their coals. This should not have been so, for they form the nearest deposit of coal on the line of the railway to Montreal. We should by this time have had an exhaustive description as well of the character of the mineral, in so far as its coking qualities and the uses to which it can be applied, as to the cost of placing it upon the surface ready for delivery. Thus we might be prepared to show Quebec or Montreal manufactures of articles demanding a large amount of fuel, that we had in New Brunswick coal, suitable for fuel, either as raised from the pit or when coked. The fact is the general public know but very little about this coal. One party will tell you that it is very bad, and others, that it is very good. So far as we can learn, while some of the Grand Lake coal is bad, much of it is of excellent quality. The public should know where the good is and where the bad. As these coal lands are largely in the hands of the government, it would appear to be its interest, as well as duty, to have the whole matter fully investigated and reported on in such a practical manner that the manufacturers of the Upper Provinces would be placed in full possession of all the facts necessary to be known regarding the character, extent and value for manufacturing purposes of the Grand Lake coal deposits. This would also be a great benefit to the manufacturers of our own city, some of whom are already directing their attention to Grand Lake as a source of coal supply for works located in Portland.

NOTE AND COMMENT.

Our New Brunswick Supreme Court Judges will be gratified by the proposed increase of their salaries to the extent of $1,000 a year for each of them, a measure of justice they should have received long ago. The Nova Scotia judges obtain a similar increase, but we observe that their judge in Equity is to receive $6,000 after the retirement of the present incumbent. Why is this?

This is a season of great legislative activity. Not only is Parliament sitting, but the legislatures of Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick are all in session, and presumably working for the benefit of the country. With so much legislation going on the interests of Canada ought to be quite safe.

Up to the time of writing there is no confirmation or otherwise, of the story which comes from German sources, of a conflict between the German corvette Olga and an American man-of-war, in which the latter was blown up by a torpedo with all hands. Such an occurrence would inevitably lead to a war between Germany and the United States, but it is difficult to say what such a contest would amount to, or how it could be conducted. The United States have no ships capable of coping with the ironclads of Germany and would be at once placed on the defensive.

A Globe editorial now consists of three lines of introduction and three quarters of a column of clippings from the official debates or from the Toronto Globe's Parliamentary reports. The Globe last evening gave its readers, in lieu of an editorial, a large part of Sir Richard Cartwright's speech in the budget debate, but it carefully omitted his condemnation of the government subsidy to the Short Line Railway, the line in which St. John is so deeply interested.

It is reported that the Ontario elections will take place this year, owing to the manhood suffrage act having greatly enlarged the franchise, thus affording a pretext for the ministry to appeal to the people before the term of the legislature runs out. This intelligence is by no means improbable, for Mr. Mowat feels that his majority will be in great danger should the result of a dominion election be to confirm the present government in their present strong position before the country.

Mr. Alfred Jones, of Halifax, makes a charge against the present government that they have given a subsidy to the Baie Verte Ship Railway. It was the Grit government of Mr. Mackenzie which killed the Baie Verte canal, a public work in the interest of St. John, by hiring that old fraud, now deceased, the Hon. John Young, to make a report against it. Do the St. John Grits, when they complain of the expenditure of public money in the North-west, remember that the Grit government during its four years lease of power, systematically frowned down every project for the benefit of the trade of St. John?

St. John Liberals will please take notice that one of the charges brought against the government by Sir Richard Cartwright is that they granted a subsidy to the Short Line which will bring this city within fifteen hours of Montreal. Do the St John Liberals indorse Sir Richard in this view of of the case? Yet the contention against the Short Line seems to be about on a par with all Sir Richard's arguments.

HERE AND THERE.

A Georgia man has a hen which lays double eggs, each one having an egg with in an egg, as it were.

Some Japanese chestnut trees at Santa Rosa, Cal., yield enormous fruit. One dozen nuts weigh a pound.

Tuscumbia Ala., was excited the other day over a negro who could drink whole pailfuls of cold water and eat glass with an evident relish.

A young lady of our city (whose name I shall not mention) had a caller not long since, and he lost no time in revealing to her the object of his visit. He said: "Miss ——, I called this evening to ask you a question, and have brought a handsome ring with me. Now, I want you to be candid with me, and before I give it to you I want to know if you are only inclined to be a sister to me I will have to take the ring back, as my father objects to my sister wearing such an attractive and expensive ring." Whereupon his girl decided to take the ring and let her lover keep her heart. Listen for the wedding bells.

At a recent dance in Chicago two young men led a german and then engineered a fox hunt. A small boy was dressed to represent the fox, the hounds in full cry being represented by 20 young ladies, who chased the fox madly following him twice around the room. Then all the men, then, mounted on hobby horses, came dashing in "at the death," after clearing gates hurdles and other obstacles encountered in their mad career. The first man in got the "brush" a fox's tail which he bestowed upon the young lady with whom he wished to dance.

Queen Victoria has a great fondness for china, and buys a new selection every year. Some of these are purchased for presentation, but the majority goes to her majesty's table. She is said to show excellent taste, and generally broad cups in ivory and gold or ivory and blue. So keen is the desire in London nowadays, however, to have something different from other people that customers are not influenced in the least by the information that the Queen has bought such and such a pattern. Indeed, it acts as a deterrent against their buying the same thing.

An eagle that measured twelve feet from tip to tip, and a buzzard, had a big fight the other day. They fought in the air until the buzzard was killed and fell to the ground. Then the eagle flew away and brought four young eaglets as large as hawks that began dining upon the buzzard. Then a ground hog feeding near by and no doubt smelling the blood trotted up to where the eagles were. The old mother eagle screamed and struck the hog, cutting one of its ears off even with its head. The hog retreated and the eagle struck at it again, this time taking off part of its tail. Then the ground hog made its escape not to reappear.

After all, Volapuk will have its uses, and after its introduction no more "English" circulars, such as the following, which comes from a merchant firm at La Rochelle, will be "wrote:"

"We have the honor to inform you that our haven with profound water, at La Fallice, will be opened, according to probability, by the commencement of year 1890. In provision of the important affairs, that will be treated here soon, we offer to execute, ourselves, your orders for the transit, the landing of merchandises and your commissions relating to the produces of your tradehouse. If you wish already some informations, we will give them to you with pleasure and immediately."

ST. JOHN PRESBYTERY.

Correspondence With the Attorney General on the Registration Question.

The following letters written by the St. John Presbytery to the Attorney General have been made public. To make them understandable we republish the letter of Mr. Blair which appeared in our Legislative report yesterday. The letter of the Presbytery to which Mr. Blair's letter is an answer has not been given to the press.

FREDERICTON, Feb. 7, 1889.

Rev. Geo, Bruce, St. John—

MY DEAR SIR—I am in receipt of your favor of the 26th ult., with enclosed resolutions adopted at a meeting of the Presbytery of St. John on the 15th ult. Touching the second resolution, which deals with the subject of marriage by others than ministers in connection with congregations, the government has had this matter under consideration, and I think it is not improbable that the legislature will be moved to pass an act which will probably cover all the ground desired by your recommendation.

As respects the subjects of Reports on Vital Statistics and the resolution adopted thereon—"That you decline compliance with the terms of the act requiring you to furnish statistics of deaths," etc.—I am very much surprised and indeed disappointed. The effect of the conclusion at which you arrived is that you, as a presbytery, have determined that you will not obey the law. Of course you assign a reason for it, which may be or may not be a good reason for amending the law, if you had approached us with that view, but I certainly do feel that the example which your presbytery have set of defying the legislature, saying that you will not observe the duty which the law imposes upon you, will not tend to stimulate obedience to the law generally in the community. I would have expected at the most from your presbytery that you would have presented the objections to the law remaining as it is, and would have urged perhaps very strenuously, that it should be to a greater or less extent modified or removed altogether, but I would not have believed if any person had told me that your body would have, in formal session, resolved to decline compliance with the terms of any act of parliament. I think, perhaps, that I ought to add that what the Presbytery of St. John have declined to do is being done, as far as they are capable of doing it, by clergymen of other denominations, notably of the Roman Catholic denomination throughout the province, and that the provisions of the law to which you have refused obedience are identical with acts which have been in operation for many years in the other provinces of Canada, in the mother country, and in the United States. I would be very sorry, indeed, for many reasons, if the government should be driven, through the willingness of either the physicians or clergy of the province to defeat the successful operation of the act, to have to incorporate provisions of a more penal character than those which the act now contains.

If the accumulation and preservation of vital statistics, admittedly so important and necessary to all civilized communities cannot be otherwise enforced in this province. I am afraid, much as I would regret our having to do it, that we would have to resort to extreme measures. It is a serious matter when any body of men in a community openly express their defiance of the law. It is more than serious when that body of men are members of the profession to which you belong.

Yours, faithfully,

(Signed) ANDREW G. BLAIR.

ST. JOHN, N. B., March 1, 1889.

Hon. A. G. Blair:

MY DEAR SIR—Your favor of the 7th ult. was duly received. I have no authority to make any reply on behalf of the presbytery, as it has not met here since your letter was received; still I may take the liberty of breifly stating my own view in the meantime, in the hope that it may be found to express in some measure the mind of the presbytery when your communication is laid before it.

Permit me in the first place to acknowledge the fullness and candor of your reply, and in the second place to thank you for the promise of early action in regard to the matter of marriages celebrated by others than ministers in charge of congregations.

With regard to the resolution of presbytery declining compliance with the terms of the act concerning the registration of deaths, let me say that I am sure the presbytery had no thought of taking a position of antagonism to the legislature or of defiance of the law. Members of presbytery thoroughly appreciate the object of the legislature in framing the act and the presbytery had prepared certain recommendations to be communicated to the government. It was thought best, however, to not volunteer to give advice in the matter, but in the meantime at least, to state as briefly as possible the objection to the terms and requirements of the act. The ground taken by presbytery was that the information asked for is not, except in very few cases in the possession of the minister, and in many cases, owing to circumstances, the information is not to be had without the expenditure of considerable time and trouble.

And now permit me respectfully to call your attention to one or two facts which no doubt were present to the mind of presbytery in making this representation. In the first place you will note that no exception is taken to the law as such, nor to the duty reasonably devolving upon ministers in regard thereto but to the terms of the law whereby ministers are required, under penalty, to perform services which in the opinion of presbytery cannot fairly be required of them.

The act sets forth—sec. 6—"that every clergyman, teacher, minister, or other person authorized by law to baptize, marry, or perform the funeral service in New Brunswick shall be, etc." Permit me to call your attention to the terms of this section, and to do so not technically but in the persuasion that they reveal a misconception which has led to the insertion of the requirement of the act to which serious exception is taken, not by the presbytery alone but by other bodies and by a large number of persons indeed. Clergymen are authorized to celebrate marriage and in this they exercise a function of officers of the state, but I am not aware that they have, or require to have, any authorization from the legislature to baptize or perform a funeral service. These are purely religious or ecclesiastical functions. The person performing them is not, to my knowledge, exercising any legal function whatever. The law does not confer upon him any special authority or privilege in the matter, and does not recognize him in the performance of either of these duties, except to afford him the common protection extended to any citizen in the performance of any duty, or the enjoyment of any lawful privilege.

Upon what grounds then are ministers conducting a religious service at a funeral required, on account of doing this, to perform in addition a somewhat complex act in connection with the civil service under the penalty of a fine? I am well aware that the government may require service for a manifest public good of any citizen or any class of citizens, where a special privilege or authority has been granted in connection therewith, or where the public welfare evidently demands such service, but I respectfully submit that the collection of vital statistics as an ordinary department of the civil service, for which the government may employ regular officers with such remuneration as may be necessary, does not appear to be of a nature to justify the imposition of that duty upon a certain class of citizens who are to be held as criminals in default of compliance.

In regard to the law in other places, you will pardon me for saying that if I am correctly informed, the assistance asked from ministers is, in some cases at least, simply sufficient to enable the government officers to obtain the necessary information, while similar laws to our own in other places are practically disregarded on the ground that the service required is an unnecessary and unfair discrimination.

I shall lay your communication before the presbytery at its first meeting, and its action will, no doubt, be duly forwarded to you.

I am dear sir, yours very sincerely,

G. BRUCE.

REPLY

to the communication of the Hon. A. G. Blair to the Presbytery of St. John on the matter of the collection of vital statistics: To the Hon. A. G. Blair:

SIR—The committee of Presbytery, to whom was referred the duty of replying to your communication to presbytery in the matter of the collection of vital statistics, beg leave to state:

1st. That we have been appointed by presbytery with full power to represent the presbytery in this reply.

2nd. That we have your communication before us as also a copy of the letter addressed to you in reply by Rev. G. Bruce, the convener of this committee, in his private capacity, and that we express our entire approval of that letter as an expression of the mind of the presbytery in the case.

3rd, That we again call your attention to the exact terms of the resolution of presbytery, namely "that we decline compliance with the terms of the act requiring us to furnish statistics of deaths on the ground that our functions in regard to funerals are not of a nature enabling us to furnish the information to procure which the act was designed:" that we call your attention to the fact that no objection is made to an act of parliament as such, but, to the terms or conditions of the act which we believe to be arbitrary and unnecessary; that we willingly accede to the terms of the act in regard to the registration of marriages, as ministers, acting in this service under the special authorization of the government, become, for the time being, agents of the government in a public function accepted by them, and that it is only in regard to the statistics of deaths that presbytery takes exception to the terms of the act, not refusing assistance even in this department, but declining to be held responsible for the rendering of a service not within their reach and which cannot be fairly required of them, as has been fully pointed out in the letter of the convener.

4th. That with regard to the closing paragraph of your letter we should express our regret that you should have thought it advisable, in addressing the presbytery, to allude to penal consequences.

In the name and on behalf of the presbytery,

Yours, very sincerely,

G. BRUCE, convener,
D. MACRAE,
T. F. FOTHERINGHAM,
L. G. MACNEIL,
A. MACDOUGALL,
WM. STUART,
} Committee of Presbytery.

St. John, N. B., March 8th, 1889.

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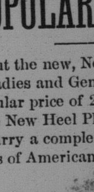

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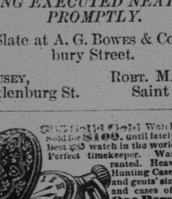

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LONDON, 2nd January, 1889.

TO ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

We have pleasure in intimating that we have this day appointed **MR. M. A. FINN, St. John, N. B.,** to act as our sole agent and responsible representative in the provinces of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island, for the sale of our several brands of Scotch Wiskey.

As we frequently receive from wholesale firms in these provinces orders both direct and through London and Liverpool Houses we take this opportunity of advising the trade generally that in future we can only receive and execute those orders that come to us through and on account of our accredited agent Mr. M. A. Finn.

JAMES BUCHANAN & CO.

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A SURE CURE

FOR BILIOUSNESS, CONSTIPATION, INDIGESTION, DIZZINESS, SICK HEADACHE, AND DISEASES OF THE STOMACH, LIVER AND BOWELS. THEY ARE MILD, THOROUGH AND PROMPT IN ACTION, AND FORM A VALUABLE AID TO BURDOCK BLOOD BITTERS IN THE TREATMENT AND CURE OF CHRONIC AND OBSTINATE DISEASES.

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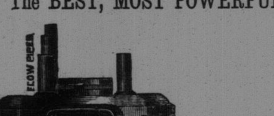

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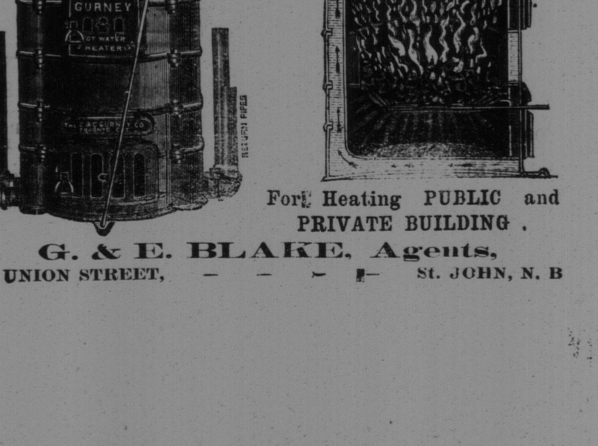

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