

Our space will not permit a short *resumé* of the various interesting articles contained in the volume before us. Mr. Gossip by his paper on the rocks in our vicinity will charm those amongst us who can see beyond their nose and behind their tail. Mr. Gilpin, in his remarks upon Sable Island ponies, called "Introduced species" hardly fulfils the expectation raised by the heading of his article. The latter rather suggests an acclimatization dinner, than a dissertation upon beasts only brought in small numbers once a quarter to our shores. Let us have an acclimatization dinner; and Mr. Gilpin will no doubt be as much at home in the Natural History of any cooked creature brought before him as he is in that of the Sable Island ponies. Mr. Ambrose on the "Sea Serpent" will be read with interest although we think he makes a mistake in likening the fin of the Sea Serpent to that of any recognized species as he does when comparing it to the "Thymus Vulgaris." Appearing to know too much about such a recondite creature as a Sea Serpent smacks of presumption, a defect however which we cannot find in any other portion of Mr. Ambrose's paper.

It is cheerful to learn from Capt. Hardy, that the flavour of the Caplin reminds him of the Thames Whitebait. Is not this sufficient ground for an annual ministerial dinner at the four mile house? From the same paper we learn that, as we have done with our Salmon, the Newfoundlanders have done with their caplin, thus killing the goose that lays the golden egg, wasting their fish and using the caplin for manure. Captain Hardy concludes thus.

In conclusion, it appears that the Caplin, though its range is too great and its spawning ground too far extended to render extinction of the species possible, yet, in the baiting places whence it is obtained for the use of the neighbouring codfisheries, it has been in many instances rendered exceedingly scarce; and its final total departure from these resorts must ensue, unless it is protected from being hauled before or in the act of spawning, and for such a wasteful purpose as that of manuring the land. The total absence of bait will at once ruin the fisheries in a most direct manner; the immediate effect of which must be the ruin, starvation, and abandonment of their present residence, on the part of thousands; and to such a state the affairs of the Newfoundland fisheries, including its very vitality as a colony, seem rapidly drifting.

Regretting that our space will not allow any further remarks upon this interesting book, we must again congratulate the Society upon the success which has attained its labours, and look forward with hope to an equally interesting volume of proceedings next year.

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OUR PROVINCIAL REVENUE.

The *Express* of Monday last informs us that the excise duties collected at the port of Halifax, during the first nine months of the current year, shew an excess of nearly £30,000, over those collected in a corresponding period last year. This is highly satisfactory, and had the *Express* rested content with merely noticing this fact, we should have been well pleased. But our contemporary, like most of our city contemporaries, makes use of our present prosperity for purposes purely political, and in so doing argues upon, what seems to us, a false hypothesis. The *Express* states that two-thirds of our entire revenue, is derived from excise duties, and, on the strength of the lately increased returns in this department, argues that the Province is going steadily ahead. That our prosperity is yearly increasing, we gladly admit, but that our present returns can be relied upon as applicable to our probable future, is more than problematical. Situated as we are at present, it is most unwise to quote the present prosperity of the port of Halifax as indicative of increased commercial enterprise on the part of Nova Scotians. Had the Provincial revenue shewed the above stated increase within any ordinary period, the reasoning of the *Express* would be sound and logical;—but, as matters now stand, we think our contemporary takes for granted assumptions the falsity of which may at any moment become apparent. It must not be forgotten that, during the last few months, Halifax has been reaping all the advantages consequent upon a war being carried on in our immediate neighbourhood. We are, for the time being, invested with some of that commercial importance which in happier days was almost exclusively vouchsafed to New York. A comparison of the latter city and Bermuda having been inter-

eral government, this Province has naturally been called upon to supply the deficiency, and parties that had, prior to the war, traded with New York, now trade with this city, not from choice, but from necessity. It must likewise be remembered that during the nine months of the present year, so triumphantly quoted by the *Express*, the port of Halifax has reaped rich profits from a source of traffic which a cessation of hostilities would at once dry up. Blockade running, is a novel line of business to which Halifax is largely indebted for its present prosperity. The constant presence of Blockade Runners in our harbour for some months back, has given to trade an almost unprecedented activity, and has caused an almost unprecedented rise in the prices of almost every article of daily consumption. The lamented outbreak of Yellow fever at Bermuda, Nassau, &c., has also been productive of much indirect benefit to Halifax. When we come to consider the demand for, and quality of heavily taxed goods, supplied by Halifax traders to Blockade Runners within the last six months, we can readily account for a large increase in the excise revenue. Those engaged in the business of Blockade Running, are, from the very nature of their adopted profession, men prone to indulge in every extravagance. Two or three successful trips are equivalent to the profits of twenty years in a business less hazardous, and as money hastily gained is generally freely expended, we may infer that the excise duties collected upon luxuries imported for the Blockade Running market have, within the last nine months, been unusually large. Nor must we forget that, since the Trent affair, we have been materially benefited, both as regards a military and naval expenditure.

Now, all these circumstances should be carefully considered when we come to note our advancement in a purely monetary light. We have been in luck of late. "It is an ill wind that blows nobody good," and the American war has been highly beneficial to us,—but what earthly object can the *Express* hope to gain by making our luck a subject wherewith to taunt the Opposition? The *Express* says, with perfect fairness,—"the present year has been one of unprecedented commercial activity, and this activity has given an impulse and vitality to every department of industry throughout the Province,"—and then,—instead of congratulating the Province,—it goes off at a tangent upon the excellencies of the present Financial Secretary, as opposed to the ineffectives of the men in Opposition. What the financial abilities of Mr. Le Visconte can possibly have to do with the uncertain benefits accruing to Halifax from the American civil war, we are at a loss to comprehend. Does the *Express* mean to insinuate that our excise returns would have been less had the Liberal party been in power? Are the laws which regulate supply and demand based upon no firmer foundation than the individuality of the Financial Secretary for the time being? Such reasoning may pass muster with juvenile Mic-Macs, but it will hardly convince any intelligent Halifaxian school-boy. But we suppose it is in strict accordance with the general tone of our political warfare. The revenue has increased therefore, let us says the *Express*, note the fact, not as illustrative of our good fortune, but as a point whereon to confound the Opposition with whom—as a matter of course—"no petty intrigue was too small—no insinuation too mean or malicious," &c., &c., in the usual style. Let it not be supposed that we in any way wish to detract from the merits of the present Provincial Secretary, or to cry up one party at the other's expense—far from it—our readers have learned ere this, the opinions we entertain of both Provincial parties. What we mean to say is this—that any attempt to make use of our present prosperity as a party cry is simply—ridiculous.

The *Express* starts upon a somewhat novel theory. "There can be no more satisfactory proof of a healthy and prosperous state of public affairs than an increasing revenue without an increased taxation. The financial returns of a country are indeed the only reliable barometer by which we may judge as to its real progress." The writer of this paragraph should go through a rudimentary course of history. Rome, under Heliogabalus, had probably a greater national revenue than at the time of Cincinnatus, but we should hardly assert that her public affairs were in a more "healthy and prosperous state" at the period of her decline than that of her early greatness. The lands of the latter year an enormous mass of gold, but as