

MURDER OF THE CZAR.

The Nihilists have at last accomplished their fiendish purpose. On Sunday afternoon they most foully murdered the Czar, in the open street, in the eye of day, and surrounded by a cavalcade of cossacks. The particulars of the horrible tragedy are given in another column.

Our readers know more about the Czar, than they do about any other crowned head in the world. He was the dagger haunted. Over his head by night and day, when he slept, and while awake, the fatal sword, the hidden assassin's dirk before which so many of his predecessors fell dangled. His golden goblet and his spiced wines gave him little comfort, for death may have lurked at the bottom. He was not safe in his bed chamber, because a dagger's point might gleam through the curtains, he was not safe in his room of state, for a train of dynamite might have been prepared beneath it. He could never walk alone, ride alone—and it was sometimes too much to hope that his ever-present escort even contained none who sought his life.

The Czar was born in 1818. In 1855 he succeeded Nicholas I as Alexander II. He was a prince they say of humane feelings, of a broad and liberal mind, healthily developed by extensive travel and keen observation of the world, and an excellent education. It was he who issued the famous ukase that liberated several millions of serfs. But surely in this age when liberty is abroad upon every breeze, that was no great concession. It was a simple measure of a too-long delayed justice, a concession that might have been expected of any King who was not either a barbarian or a tyrant.

Some will lament the Czar's tragic death, but many would grudge a tear drop to his memory. He was the representative of the most odious form of misrule, that ever cursed the earth, and blasted social happiness. He was supreme in Council, ruled as he saw fit, or as his advisers saw fit. There is no Government for the people, and by the people in Russia. The wretches who till the fields, and work in the factories, and fight the battles of the nation, have to submit to the laws, however cruel, however barbarous, imposed by the Czar and his advisers. There is no election in Russia. The Czar does the electing there, lays down whatever policy he pleases, declares war, or makes peace just as he sees fit; all the people have to do is work, pay their taxes and obey. Those who call the dead Czar wise and humane, but mock his memory. If wise, why did he not give his grovelling dominions a constitution like other European countries? If humane why did he recruit the dismal regions of Siberia with wretches who were the victims of the system of which he was the head? Go out into those gloomy mines, wander along the banks of the Lena or the Yenesei, and ask the wretches torn from their homes, scourged by the cruel Knout, condemned to live and die in those gloomy regions, rundered from all they love, how "humane and wise" Czar Alexander was. Let the neglected graves with a rude and faded cross at the head in a neglected spot, give more eloquence to the story if you want it.

No; there is nothing good in the Czars—there is nothing good in Russian autocracy, and the time will come, and that within the present generation when the unhappy nation will arise as one man, and proclaim itself free. We loath the name of Nihilism, yet we would be surprised to hear that the tyranny of Russian Rule, could have a better offspring. Russia needs regeneration—and the Czars blood may be the first step in that direction. But there has to be a struggle between Liberty and Oppression, Apostles of Freedom will have to come to the front, a civil war follow and then the nation will be regenerated, even as a thunderstorm clears up the unwholesome air. Speed the day for the sake of the down-trodden people.

We may inform our readers that steps have been taken to prevent the further publication of that spurious bye-law relating to "cows" which we referred to in our last issue.

Not a word about extending a steam service to Chatham. There was no one to recommend it.

There is no grant for the Escuminac line.—There was no one in the Commons to say we wanted it.

The truce between the British and the Transvaal boers has been extended to the 18th inst.

THE "MONITEUR" ATTACKS THE "STAR."

Come hither my friends till I tell you a tale Of the silly young sprit that made war on a whale.—The Editor.

The *Moniteur Acadian* is a small weekly journal, published in Shediac and edited in *patris*, etc., with here and there a mis-used French word thrown in. It has one hundred and forty-six editors, and eighty nine subscribers. It is a thoroughfare for the public, irrespective of qualification or color. It has very indelicately abused the *Star* in its last issue. It devotes three editorials to the subject. The few French words in its articles we translated, the *patois*, Indian, etc., we guessed at. Here is a sample:—

"The Editor of the North Star is too exacting of his neighbors as is well known. One must be, and act, and think as he does, else he is no man at all, in fact only a mad man. [*L'Un Vitain*] the editor puts in Ed Star, and he is strong in literature, in grammar, in science, in morals, etc., is the *Star* man. No one escapes his criticism and his blows.

He then undertakes to defend the School Inspectors Report which we criticized some time ago, and though he censures us for being "strong in criticism in grammar, in morals," etc., he says himself "The criticism the *Star* man made on Inspector Landry's report is altogether false, \* \* \* for the genius of the English language authorizes the use of the words he objects to Mr Landry using" etc.

So it will be seen the "*Star* man" is not the only one "strong in literature, in grammar and in morals." Perhaps however not in *morals*. This is rich. We have heard of Sitting Bull approving of Shakespeare, but he judged it on his knowledge of English. The *Moniteur* man approves the Inspectors reports. But the Inspector's reports are in English and the *Moniteur* man can't speak, and doesn't understand English. Perhaps he judges them on the Indian standard. Judged according to choeklaw canons some of the Inspectors reports would be good. We congratulate the Inspectors on their champion.

He gives a dose on our little rebuke for his theft of the Gloucester Council's report. He says he got this report from the Secretary, though as a matter of fact, he did not. For proof: in the official report, we incorporated a report from our Bathurst correspondent. In pirating the report, the Shediac organ stole official, and non-official matter and now says he got it from the Secretary. His words are, "*C'est de lui que nous tenons les procedes et non du Star.*"

It has a long diatribe written in very indifferent Indian, etc., censuring us for censuring Mons. Johnson, M. P. P. for his stampede in the House of Assembly. He says it would give him pain to see us "return to the fish banks of Newfoundland," though he ought to go there himself and eat some fish to get a different kind of brains from those which the Shediac clans have given him. His *patois* is very bad, all through, and his Indian is not much better.

JUDGE WILKINSON.

We write the above words with a good deal of pleasure. Since our last issue, Mr. Wm. Wilkinson, Q. C. has been elevated to the judgeship of the Counties of Northumberland, Gloucester and Restigouche, *vice* Judge Williston resigned. Sir John McDonald has always with a possible exception or two, had the reputation of being happy in his selection of gentlemen for the judiciary, but we are quite satisfied he never made a happier selection than in the present case. Judge Wilkinson so far as we know him, and from all we ever learn of him will be an ornament to the bench. On the one hand he will make a moral judge, for we believe he will be capable of soaring above prejudices or partiality, and on the other hand we believe he will be a "learned judge," because as a lawyer he has an ornament to his profession, because of his knowledge of law and its principles, and his happy application and construction of both. But while Judge Wilkinson will live above and beyond party, the Conservatives of Chatham will not be able to forget he is their appointment the man of their choice, though we do not think that on the other side either, could one scarcely be found, to say the Government made a mistake in the selection.

His Honor is now attending the court at Bathurst, whither he was called, immediately after he had been sworn in. Long may the Bench have such judges, as Judge Wilkinson.

There were three or four applicant for the position, but only one could get it—that is sure. But had there been two vacancies to fill, we think Northumberland could have filled them and need not have gone outside of the Conservative party either, for another gentleman who would be also a credit to the ermine.

LOCAL AFFAIRS—OUR STREETS.

(No. 3.)

Continuing our remarks on the system of road management, which has resulted in the present disgraceful condition of our streets, sewers and sidewalks, we may again recur to the manifest injustice of the present system. It places the greater burden of the support of the street service on the poorer classes. To show this plainly, we will take the largest amount collected in any one year, which was, we believe, about \$1,000. As each male ratepayer, between the years of 21 and 60, pays a poll tax of ninety cents, estimating the number of these at 600, which is an under-estimate, the poll tax would amount to \$540 or fifty-four per cent. of the whole tax, leaving \$460 or only forty-six per cent. to be levied off the property of the town. As the poorer people are the more numerous they, of course, pay the greater part of the poll tax, so the present system is evidently unjust, in placing an undue proportion of the tax on those less able to pay it, and who receive less benefit from it.

Again the law makes no provision for the proper assessment of this tax. The road commissioner has to levy it, and he has no means of knowing the amount of real and personal property owned by each person. He is not empowered to receive statements. He has to exercise his own judgment, and we do not know if there is any appeal from his assessment. Days are added to people, or struck off, at the simple discretion of the commissioner, who is not amenable to anyone for his acts. The other taxes have to be assessed each year, the list carefully revised, statements of property required, etc., but for the road tax it is simply copied year after year, a day added here, one struck off there, without system or order of any kind.

This unfair and unjust system must be abolished. It is too antiquated for the present necessities of the town. We would suggest that each year an estimate be made of the requirements for the next year. This estimate would provide for a certain amount to be expended on each street, etc., according to its needs; an amount could be left for unforeseen expenses. Let this amount be assessed and levied with the other taxes. The Councillors would then be responsible for this tax, and would have to render an account of it at the election. The commissioner would then only have to see that the amount was properly expended, according to the estimate; and the repairs of the streets could be given out by tender. This would distribute the tax fairly, each man paying his share according to his means. It would give more revenue, it would give better and more economical work. It would give every street in the town a fair chance of getting repaired, and would in fact, do away with the gross injustice and partiality of the present iniquitous system.

We of course merely outline the above as our opinion, and will be pleased to receive suggestions from any persons in regard to its our only object is to have some system organized that will do justice to all, that will improve our streets, etc., and that will not increase the taxes to any great extent. We shall still continue to deal with town affairs.

Sir Leonard Tilley is reported to have stated "I can't be blamed for making no provision for Northumberland wants, because I did not know what they were." There was no one to make our wants known, before Sir Leonard brought down his estimates. Our worthless member Snowball was then in England.

The new Czar Alexander III, is said to be popular with the Russian people. He is 35 years old and commands the Imperial guard of 40,000 men—the flower of the Russian army. The Imperial family and court officials have sworn allegiance.

The only county in the Union that has been neglected this session, is Northumberland.

We hold over some matter intended for this issue, unavoidably, till next.

Blair the socialist, is developing into an obstructionist.

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SUMMARY OF THE PROVINCIAL SECRETARY'S BUDGET SPEECH.

The policy of the Government has been to obtain complete possession of the finances so as to bring the expenditure within the income and wipe out any debt that existed. It is a great thing for a country to know that it has a surplus, and that country was the happiest that had the smallest debt. The estimated receipts for 1881 contain subsidies from the Dominion Government of \$379,000. In this the Government have taken the probable increase population into consideration and arrived at what they considered a fair amount of increase. Taking the census from 1824 as a criterion, and making an allowance for probable decrease in certain localities, they arrived at the conclusion that the increase in the population would be 13 per cent, which would give an increased revenue from the Dominion Government of \$15,000. During the past year there was a large increase in the casual and territorial revenue, and it is thought there will be this year from that source \$150,000. The fees of the Supreme Court are placed at \$1,000. In the subsidy as estimated for 1881 are not included in the \$60,000 of any advance obtained by the Government. The other items are almost substantially the same as hitherto. For agriculture there is the usual sum of \$12,000 for the ordinary purposes and \$10,000 for an importation of stock. A committee of the Government had been appointed to consider the matter and the Board of Agriculture reported to the Government recommending an importation which the Government to a large extent, would endeavour to carry out. The amount might not be expended during the year as the disease among cattle on the other side of the water was increasing and there would be the risk of bringing into the country diseases which spread very rapidly, and which has spread, from a few cattle imported from France, all through Great Britain. It had been said the Government made too much fuss over the English delegates, who were said not to be efficient agriculturists, and that the Government had spent from \$1,500 to \$2,000 on the trip, whereas \$518.19 was all it cost the province.

Some of the agricultural reports formerly made were a libel on the Province and the Government intended that these delegates should have every opportunity of seeing its resources. The reports of the tenants farmers delegates and others stamped the Province as almost unfit for settlement and the Government wished a fair and adequate report of the capabilities of the country circulated to counteract the circulation of improper reports and have the true state of the Province known among those interested in emigration from the United Kingdom. He felt that the \$518 would scarcely pay for the reports of the proceedings in certain of the papers which deluded the people of the province, and which were circulated through Canada.

Anyone who had visited the Lunatic Asylum must have seen that an enlargement was imperatively demanded and no expenditure would be more really made than to provide for those unfortunate, for whom it was needed. There was on the continent no such efficient institution conducted at so cheap a rate. It would compare favorably with any on the continent, the only drawback being that hitherto there had not been sufficient room. The expenditure in the administration of justice last year was \$226 31 in excess of the estimate, there being a small excess in criminal prosecutions and quite a large one in juror's fees. The Board of Agriculture, endeavoring to make a better system regarding the societies, withheld some of the money from the societies, which will, no doubt, be paid hereafter.

The expenditure in contingencies was in excess \$3,826, and if there was a question that had given the Government trouble, it was the contingencies. For marriage certificates registration the expenditure in excess of the estimate was \$504. He was glad to hear it stated the other day that there was against the Government no charge of improper appropriation of the public moneys. In justice to the leader of the Opposition, he must say he had never made any such statement. It was a good thing for him (Wedderburn) in his present state of health, that the Attorney General had gone very deeply into the finances of the country, the other day, and shown the expenditures consisted of such things as the Normal School, the Irish relief, the railway subsidies, the donation to the St John Relief & Aid Society, the expenditure on the St John Suspension Bridge, which none would grudge the people of St John; the Woodstock bridge, the consolidation of the statutes, school buildings, amounting to \$31,000, an expenditure which circulated a large amount of money in the poor districts, and also represented the amount expended by the districts themselves; the amount made necessary by the tornado in Kent, and others. He would like it shown which of these expenses should not have been incurred. So long as the Government kept the balance a controllable one, which they are now overtaking, it was better that they should bear the odium of having a balance against them than they should shut down upon the country and prevent these necessary expenses. He had no objection to the finances being fairly discussed, but he did object to have it said, without rhyme or reason, that the accounts were in a wretched condition and bankruptcy was staring the Province in the face! The rise of the premiums on the Provincial debentures did not depend upon the easiness of the market, for they had gone up 4 per cent. before it was known that the market was becoming easier. No bonds now occupy a better position

than those of New Brunswick and they stand on a firm basis and will always command a reasonable fair premium. He saw it stated in an editorial in a leading newspaper, that if the debenture account was called annual expenditure, it would be an average excess of expenditure of \$81,000 over the income. He thought such statements could only be made with a malicious intention to injure the Government. From 1877 to 1879 there was a total reduction of over \$58,000, and last year there was a reduction of \$6,460, when there were special expenditures of \$36,218 during the year. If the special expenditures were taken out the expenditure would have been \$573,453. While the estimated expenditure was \$597,895.36 in 1870, the expenditure was \$75,845, in 1876, \$95,417, and in 1880 \$93,112, so that there was an actual saving in 1880 of \$2,304. He thanked the House for the attention that had been accorded him on this occasion as on all others, and moved that the Speaker leave the chair.

OUR LOCAL LEGISLATURE IN SESSION.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY. FRIDAYS PROCEEDINGS.

With reference to the division of Nelson Parish, the discussion on which we held over last issue, Hon Mr Adams said the new parish would be seven miles in width and included the main Rodgerville and other settlements, which are now from 12 to 15 miles distant from the polling places. The bill establishes new polling places for Kirk's and Lower Nelson, as well as for the new parish. The number of people in the settlements to be effected is over 300 and the improvements, houses, etc., are worth over \$30,000 and the settlers are in reality isolated from Nelson proper.

Mr Davidson thought the object might be attained by placing a polling place in the center of the district. He asked that progress be reported, in order that the bill might be talked over.

Mr Hutchison said the way to get over the difficulty would be to create a new polling place. A parish with property amounting to \$35,000, and with such few ratepayers should not be placed on the same basis as one with property worth several millions.

Hon Mr Adams said he presented a petition from the settlers themselves in favor of the bill. In order to get to the polling place the people have to go a certain distance by rail and then walk a certain distance. No portion of any other parish stood in the same position as these settlements and there are 149 electors from them on the revised list now.

Mr Johnson said he hoped the House would agree with the bill.

We suppose the bill passed, though we have not seen it stated it did.

MONDAY'S PROCEEDINGS.

Mr Marshall gave notice of a resolution on Thursday next providing that the House of Assembly deal no further with the St John Bridge Bill till it receive information as to the site, till it see profiles of the bridge, height proposed, etc., etc. This is a wise resolution and a credit to Mr Marshall.

The House passed Mr Livingston's bill providing no duck or ducks eggs shall be destroyed from May 1st to September 4th in any year.

The House agreed to the South West Driving Co's Bill.

On the Order of the Day being called Mr Blair obstructed proceedings in the following way. He called the attention of the house to the Grand Southern Charter matter, and contended that the government in receiving the charter were acting outside their jurisdiction and betraying the confidence of the House. He moved a resolution as long as to day and to morrow.

Mr Fraser followed him in a speech remarkable for the legal ability it showed; defending the governments conduct. A Judge of the Supreme Court, Mr Fraser said, had declared the government's act lawful; and the best legal ability in the Dominion had advised it.

Hanington followed making great fun of Blair's legal contentions and turning the laugh against him. Elder and others spoke in favor of the Gov't act.

Mr Fraser moved an amendment to Blair's amendment in effect that the House do not now express an opinion on the legality of the extension as proceedings *inter alia* in reference to the same matter are now pending in the Courts.

The debate on the question still continues; but the governments act will be sustained.

Communications.

THE PORTWARDENS

To the Editor of the STAR. Sir,—Your article in a late issue about "Portwardens" is deserving of attention by the proper parties. There does not seem to be any reason why Chatham should not come under the general act. Senator Muirhead, who knows all about the port, and who has a good knowledge of its requirements as any man, should exert his influence to have the order in Council passed, and a proper person appointed portwarden. The interests of merchants, ship owners and of the Insurance companies, would be better looked after, and discussion concerning surveys such as took place last autumn would be avoided. Trusting that your suggestions will be carried out

I remain, A MARINER.

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