

Miramichi Advance.

CHATHAM, APRIL 22, 1880.

The "Telegraph" and the Fisheries.

The "Telegraph" will not improve its reputation as a leading journal, or win respect for its treatment of public matters by its mode of discussing the fishery question. It set out to enlighten its readers respecting the Fishery Award just at the time when a movement was to be made in Parliament for a division of the money among the Maritime Provinces. Instead of dealing with the matter in its broader and more weighty aspects the Telegraph appeared to rest its argument on two points.—One of these was that the Fisheries Officers of the Upper Provinces were better paid than those of the Maritime Provinces and the other, that in the expenditure under the head of Fish Culture, the Upper Provinces were similarly favored. Great prominence was also given to the amount paid to Mr. Samuel Wilmot, head of the Piscuiture branch of the Fisheries service and personal allusions were made to that gentleman which were much out of keeping with the avowed purpose of the Telegraph's article, being conceived in a spirit of personal hostility that could not fail to be evident to any reader. The Telegraph elaborated its complaint respecting the alleged injustice done to the Fisheries Officers of the Maritime Provinces, by giving the names of Officers in both Upper and Maritime Provinces, comparing such numbers with the value of the catch of fish in each province and showing, in its own way, not that the Maritime Provinces were entitled to the greater part of the award secured to Canada by the Halifax Commission, but, simply, that in proportion to the value of the Fisheries of each Province, as shown by the blue books, Ontario and Quebec had a preponderance of Fishery Officers and such Officers, man for man, were better paid than those of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.

In criticizing the Telegraph's article we neither defended nor condemned the excess of expenditure in Ontario for fish culture, but knowing Mr. Samuel Wilmot sufficiently, we deemed it our duty to say that his attack on him, personally, was not justified by any developments within the knowledge of the public.

Respecting the Telegraph's remarks and comparisons of the number and pay of Officers in the respective Provinces we argued that the conditions under which they were appointed, their duties and qualifications were different and it was these elements of difference, which justified the difference of numbers and pay of which the Telegraph complained.

In reply the Telegraph quoted the figures placed in the Fisheries Report for 1878 as representing the cost of protecting the fisheries in each Province, and after arguing that it cost six per cent of the value of the Quebec catch and one and a quarter per cent in Nova Scotia, it claimed such a state of things was "an injustice to the fishery officers of the Maritime Provinces." The facts and figures placed before the Telegraph's readers were as follows:—

But our complaint of the excess of expenditure on fish protection in the Upper Provinces, applied to Quebec as well as to Ontario; and we find that in 1878, two thirds of what they were fourteen years ago. This leaves but \$754,000 worth of deep-sea fish or less than thirteen different kinds, and, as the Advance says, "not subject to the protection of the Department, no less than \$1,000,000 worth of fish caught in Quebec in 1878," subject to the protection of the Department, yet their protection only cost \$18,842 or about one and a quarter per cent, one fourth as much in proportion to the value of the catch as in 1878. Of the fish caught in New Brunswick in 1878, \$1,000,000 worth of deep-sea fish and \$1,000,000 worth of fish of other kinds under the immediate protection of the Department, yet their protection only cost \$12,294 or very little more than one per cent on their value.

Replying to the above we showed that the Telegraph took the Departmental Report for 1878 in preference to that for 1879, which was also at hand, and we asked if it did so because the expenditure on fisheries account was put down, for Quebec at \$40,689.62 in 1878 while it was only \$28,373.44 in 1879. Replying to this the Telegraph says:—

Our only reason for taking the Report of 1878 was that the Report of 1879, just issued, does not give the returns of the several Provinces, and perhaps this omission was purposely made to hide the facts to which we called attention.

The above is a deliberate falsehood and it is a question whether a paper that has no more regard for truth than the Telegraph appears to have in discussing this question, ought to be troubled to at all. That paper says it took the Report for 1878. In doing so it found the Quebec disbursements, which it quoted, in the Commissioner's Report, page lxxxiv, as follows:—

Table with 2 columns: Item and Amount. Includes Fisheries Officers' Salaries (\$13,622.55), Fish breeding (7,609.95), Fisheries protection vessel (14,967.11), and Fisheries protection (40,689.62).

On exactly the same number of page (lxxxv) of the Commissioner's Report in the Departmental Report for 1879 "just issued," the disbursements for the several Provinces are given in exactly the same manner as in the preceding year. The Quebec disbursements are as follows:—

Table with 2 columns: Item and Amount. Includes Fisheries Officers' Salaries and disbursements (\$13,606.06), Fish breeding (7,672.90), Fisheries protection vessel (14,967.11), and Fisheries and lower St. Lawrence (28,373.44).

The Telegraph is, on this point, convicted, on authority that is not controverted, of not only stating a deliberate falsehood for the purpose of covering up the trick by which we showed it sought to secure a mean advantage, but it insinuates that the Commissioner of Fisheries made the alleged omission to hide facts which he made no attempt to hide, and which the Telegraph was only too ready to reveal.

The Telegraph will compare the Report for 1878 with that for 1879 to find that the information contained in each is of the same relative character and there are no omissions—either intentional or ac-

cidental—which prevent the services under the same heads being comparatively presented. When the Commissioner's Supplement to the Tenth Annual Report (that for 1879) is received we shall, doubtless, have the same information in detail as was contained in that of 1878.

The Telegraph seems to discuss this subject, not for the purpose of arriving at just conclusions based on an honest presentation of the facts, but to gain even a seeming advantage, by sustaining a position which we have so successfully shown to be untenable, against the ADVANCE. The Telegraph admits that the matter in its broader and more weighty aspects the Telegraph appeared to rest its argument on two points.—One of these was that the Fisheries Officers of the Upper Provinces were better paid than those of the Maritime Provinces and the other, that in the expenditure under the head of Fish Culture, the Upper Provinces were similarly favored.

Great prominence was also given to the amount paid to Mr. Samuel Wilmot, head of the Piscuiture branch of the Fisheries service and personal allusions were made to that gentleman which were much out of keeping with the avowed purpose of the Telegraph's article, being conceived in a spirit of personal hostility that could not fail to be evident to any reader. The Telegraph elaborated its complaint respecting the alleged injustice done to the Fisheries Officers of the Maritime Provinces, by giving the names of Officers in both Upper and Maritime Provinces, comparing such numbers with the value of the catch of fish in each province and showing, in its own way, not that the Maritime Provinces were entitled to the greater part of the award secured to Canada by the Halifax Commission, but, simply, that in proportion to the value of the Fisheries of each Province, as shown by the blue books, Ontario and Quebec had a preponderance of Fishery Officers and such Officers, man for man, were better paid than those of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.

Value of fish caught in Quebec in 1878, as shown by the Blue Book, \$2,664,055. Cost of Protection, as already stated, 40,689.

These figures show that the cost of fisheries protection in Quebec was a small fraction over one and a half per cent of the total value of the catch, instead of six per cent, as erroneously stated by the Telegraph. Of course we take the ground that if the cost of deep-sea fisheries protection is to enter into the calculation the value of the deep-sea catch must also be reckoned. The Telegraph must, therefore, accept the above, or else the true percentage, rightly applicable under the conditions of the present discussion—which we gave last week, viz.—that based on Officers' pay, less license fees, fines and forfeitures collected by them, compared with the value of tidal and inland river and lake fish protected in each province, and which shows the figures to be but a little over one per cent for Ontario and Quebec and about three quarters of one per cent for New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.

The Telegraph, being shown "out of count" on the points in connection with which it entered upon the controversy, now seeks to divert its readers' attention from the fact that it has suffered defeat by bringing in issues entirely foreign to the subject we are discussing. It still claims that the Lady Hood was not in general fisheries service and says that as Quebec has such a service, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick ought to have two steamers because their deep-sea fisheries are so much more valuable than those of Quebec. We shall next be told that the sea-fish which go to make up the great catch credited to Nova Scotia are all taken in Nova Scotia waters, and that Nova Scotia fishermen derive no benefit from the services of the Steamer. We happen to have some practical knowledge of the Nova Scotia Fisheries, and can assure the Telegraph that a very large proportion of the cod, mackerel and herring which appear in the Nova Scotia statistics are taken far away from the shores of that Province. Her cod fishermen are found each season, on the different shoals of the Atlantic, from Georges to the great banks of Newfoundland, and all along the Labrador coast in the Province of Quebec. Her herring fishermen ply their vocation at the Magdallens in the Gulf of St. Lawrence and along the coast of Quebec to the North—at St. John, Capre, Dominio, Ship Harbor, Siquamisset, etc., while her smart mackerel fleet compete in nearly every respect with the American sharp-shooters—save, perhaps, in the matter of being provided with purse seines and similar illegal contrivances—and are found in the Bay Chaleur at the North of P. E. I., the Magdallens, the Labrador, etc.

If the Telegraph, however, desires to discuss the question of protecting our sea and coast fisheries, we may not be found differing from its views respecting the necessity of police vessels to prevent the Americans from destroying the valuable interests in which they are allowed to participate under the Washington Treaty. We are already on record in that matter. It is, however, a branch of the subject which has nothing to do with the Telegraph's alleged "injustice to the Fisheries Officers of the Maritime Provinces," and it was that, and only that on which we arrayed our facts and figures in opposition to our contemporary's position.

We do not propose to be led away from the issues in hand, by the Telegraph's references to what it pleases to imagine we said some years ago in opposition to the extension of the license system, but if that subject is to be discussed we are prepared to stand by anything that may have appeared in these columns. If the Telegraph, however, cannot deal more truthfully with us in that matter than it has with the Report of the Department of Fisheries for 1879 it might be better, for its own credit, to let the subject alone.

The Telegraph, after beating wildly about in its endeavors to make the worse appear the better reasoning, goes on to say that "were the license system applied to these Provinces as it is to those of Ontario and Quebec the result would be that our larger fisheries would be much greater." There's a Jack Bunsby for you! We might say, also, that if pigs could fly the bird crop would be much more valuable to lumbermen than it is, but that would not be a proper argument on which to advocate an increase of stamperage. If the Telegraph will inform itself in reference to the Fisheries and confine its articles to one branch of the subject at a time, and discuss that branch with a view of remedying evils or defects that may exist, we shall be glad to give it such assistance as it may be in our power to render, but if it can or will do no better than endeavor to arrive at

Officers of the different Provinces against each other in a grab for equal pay, irrespective of the work performed, and add to the ignorance already existing respecting this great interest, we must continue to expose its fallacies, even at the risk of impairing its undoubted usefulness as a leading organ of public opinion and vehicle of public information.

As if to render its views and treatment of the subject more ridiculous and absurd, the Telegraph, in its opening article, expressed its unfeigned surprise that no less a personage than Mr. W. H. Vennings, Inspector of Fisheries for New Brunswick, had so long permitted the state of things it had conjured up to exist. The words it used were: "It is remarkable that with so energetic and efficient an officer as Inspector Vennings the claims of New Brunswick have not been better attended to in this particular." And, as if to show the character of the man to whom the Telegraph looked in its dire emergency there appeared, two days after, in its columns, the following arraignment of the Department from the pen of that officer.

I beg permission to say that the state of things described in your editorial was, years ago, pointed out to the Department in numerous reports and letters now on file at Ottawa. I have never received even an acknowledgment of their receipt, and I have not been able to ascertain if they were ever taken into consideration. Of course I have no means of knowing whether they ever came under the Minister's notice, or whether they were carefully kept from his knowledge by those whose interests are opposed to their justice; but the fact is undeniable that the state of things you describe was allowed to continue. Though I repeatedly begged for such an investigation of facts, as would show the true cause of the failure, for three years, of the Miramichi Hatching House, the "Ontario officers" managed to have my request refused, and the blame was actively shifted from the man whose neglect was the cause of the failure, to those who faithfully carried out the instructions they received from a superior, and utterly ignorant of our salt water salmon, who resides over a thousand miles from the scene of his most important duties.

The present head of the department has not yet had time to fully understand the manner in which the details of his bureau have been managed by the "Ontario officers" who have heretofore been allowed to manipulate things to suit their own views and interests.

It was clear to us that the Telegraph's first article was simply an arraignment of the "Ontario Officers," with particular reference to Mr. Wilmot, who had investigated a charge against the management of the Miramichi Hatching House, which resulted in developing the fact that the Telegraph's "energetic and efficient" Inspector had guilty of the frauds charged against his management and which led to his being relieved of the supervision of that establishment. Indeed, we know that this same Inspector had an official history which made the Telegraph's reference to him seem very ridiculous. When the first Minister of Fisheries was in office he made him Inspector for both Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. In the spring of 1875 Mr. Vennings' resignation was terminated in Nova Scotia. In 1876, the investigation already referred to led to his being relieved of his duties as a fish culturist in the Miramichi. Even the present Minister has recognized what the Telegraph styles "energetic and efficient" discharge of duty on the part of Vennings by relieving him of his work of managing the Restigouche Hatchery. His history as a shad culturist and essays on "black backed," "silver backed" and other varieties of the shad, and reports on the spawning time of bass, together with his personal encounters on the streets and general reputation as a profane brawler among fishermen, rendered reference to his influence in such matters as those with which the Telegraph professed to deal a rather unfortunate one for that paper. That an Officer with such a record should endorse the Telegraph's attack on Mr. Wilmot is not to be wondered at, but it was refreshing to note the manner in which he presumed to refer to the other officers, "whose interests are opposed to their duties," those "Ontario Officers" who "managed to leave his requests refused," the "utterly ignorant Superintendent," and even the "present head of the Department" who "allows the Ontario Officers to manipulate things to suit their own views and interests," etc. When a subordinate is thus permitted to snarl at those above him in the Department to which he belongs we confess that it tends to lessen our respect for his head, but that is Mr. Pope's own affair, and if he chooses to allow himself to be soiled by the Inspector, the latter may be pardoned for enjoying his privilege, especially as it tends to bear out what has often been asserted in certain quarters, viz., that this "energetic and efficient" officer is both Inspector and Minister in New Brunswick. When the Minister of Fisheries—either Mr. Pope or his successor—shall decide that this rather singular officer's regime shall close, and that it is his duty to enquire into the condition of the service, there can be little doubt that some of Mr. Vennings' "energetic and efficient" doings will be cancelled and privileges of which he has been the cause of robbing the fishermen will be restored. It will not be the "injustice done to officers," as the Telegraph puts it, that will cry for remedy but the outrages perpetrated by the Vennings, the Hogs, the Wyses, the Blakes and such officers upon the fishermen and interested communities. Then we may expect relief from bass fishery prohibition in our lower bays and rivers, as well as from the licensed destruction that is carried on in more favored localities; the restoration of our gaspereaux fishery rights may be expected and a class of officers may exist who shall be above the "small bass trick" by which, it was sought to secure the prohibition of bag-net fishing for smelts, and such chicanery as that by which the Department was cheated, through Inspector Vennings and Overseer Wyse out of a portion of the Fox Island Salmon net license fees which it was rightfully entitled. We fancy the Telegraph is not fully posted in all the examples that might be furnished of the "energy and efficiency" of its fishery Hercules, upon whom it called to secure a remedy for the "injustice done to the Fishery Officers of the Maritime Provinces."

If, again, it shows a disposition to dignify that huge Inspectorial Fishery fraud, by hinting that fishery wrongs could, possibly, be righted through his agency, we shall feel called upon to give

some facts which may enlighten it in reference to a person who, but for his official position, would not be considered worthy of anything but contempt in respectable quarters where he is known.

The British Wood Market.

The arrivals from British North America during the past month have been 3 vessels, 2,770 tons, against none during the like period last year. Business during the past month has been very quiet, and the consumption has been small of nearly all kinds of wood. This, perhaps, is no more than might have been expected during the extension of contested Elections all over the country, but it has had the effect of checking the demand, and we cannot expect any improvement to take place until the present excitement has subsided.

Of Pine timber very few sales have taken place, and these chiefly in retail quantities, and the yards, but there is no change in prices. For Oak there continues a fair demand, and for prime quality—of which there is very little in stock—higher prices are demanded; for inferior qualities there is not much inquiry. In Elm, Ash, and Red Pine there have been no recent transactions. For Pine Deals there has been a fair demand, but sales have been chiefly through the dealers. Staves are in good demand, and the stock is much reduced. The consumption of Spruce deals has been very small and prices have declined, the arrivals being almost sufficient to supply the present limited demand, so that very little impression has lately been made on the yard stocks; it is very desirable that imports should be moderate or altogether cease during the next few months, in order that the yard stocks may be cleared off and leave a healthy market open for the next season's shipments. Pine deals are but little inquired for. Of Birch there have been several large parcels landing from St. John which have mostly been disposed of by auction at fair prices; the stock is quite sufficient.

The event of the week has been THE DEBATE ON THE PACIFIC RAILWAY. It was begun on Thursday by Sir Charles Tupper, who made what may be considered on the whole, one of his best speeches in support of the ministerial policy on this subject. He argued the national necessity of the work, that the faith was pledged to British Columbia, that the road should be built, and that the opening up and settlement of the Northwest was of such importance as to justify the large expenditure necessary to this large work. As Sir Charles' greatest strength is best shown in rejoinder, and he had, on this occasion, to open the debate, he labored more than usual in his opening. Indeed, it was not till after the first half hour that he got well under way. For an hour after he gave a well-sustained argument from the ministerial point of view, endeavoring to prove that both political parties were committed to the work. He sought to fasten this responsibility upon the late Government, by the fact of their having spent some money on the western end of the work, and having agreed to the Carnarvon terms. From this he passed to a glowing picture of the results that would follow the opening up of the great Northwest. On this subject he became quite enthusiastic, and even claimed that a great revolution of feeling in favor of the construction of the Railway had sprung up in Canada. From being enthusiastic, he passed into his usual vein of hostile comment upon the Opposition. Sir Charles usually is nothing if not denunciations, and though he began by expressing the desire to avoid party without imputing improper and unpatriotic motives to the Opposition, and he accordingly charged them with an attempt to prostitute their engagements, with "arranging the fair game of Canada" and with a want of patriotism generally. He went on to say that Mr. Blake followed in one of his greatest speeches—probably the best of his life. He reviewed the entire history of the work, placing fairly on the shoulders of the Tory party the responsibility of the mad scheme. And he brought out in bold relief that in 1871, at the very outset of the undertaking, the Liberal Opposition had compelled the adoption of the saving clause that the work should only be proceeded with in such a manner as would not increase the burdens of taxation on the people. He showed how from time to time this great reservation had been affirmed and re-affirmed by the Canadian Parliament. He showed how the Liberal Government when in power sought for an amelioration of the terms, but failing in this, had proceeded to take steps to secure communication with the Northwest, subject always to the condition of not increasing taxation.

He brought out very clearly and forcibly the fact, that admitting the desirability of opening up and peopling the Northwest, the building of the Pacific end of the road would do nothing toward this end, while at the same time it would entail a vast expenditure of money. He proceeded to deal with Sir John's figures as to the probable influx of population to the Northwest, and the amount of money to be received from land sales. In a masterly manner, he proved conclusively that these estimates were not only absurd but delusive as well, and deduced the conclusion that the result of sales of land would not keep down the interest on the railway expenditure during the period of construction, much less pay the capital cost, or anything toward it.

He proceeded to show how our debt and taxation had both increased since 1871, largely by construction of unproductive Public Works. He instituted comparisons with European States, to show that our debt and annual expenditure were increasing in two fold proportion to those of the old world, while as compared with the Republic beside us, the debt was being rapidly increased. In the face of these facts, he held we could not expect to compete with our neighbors for the immigration

of the Province was able to carry on the public services, he felt that an economical management of its finances was necessary. It was time its finances were entrusted to other hands. The expenditure for the income for the year 1879, besides the amount of \$1,000,000, was about \$106,175 greater than the income. Our income was \$816,000 and our expenditure was \$922,175. The amount struck the members with surprise and pain to find that the Secretary, notwithstanding his boasts of the state of the finances, had been forced to apply to the Bank for money and pay interest on it. This showed that the Secretary had not taken the people's representatives into account in the public accounts, or the real state of the finances of the Province. The Government had not looked down the particulars of these loans, but had been forced to apply to the Bank for the return of the money on the 31st October. The Government owed the People's Bank \$93,000. Would the members have thought, after listening to the Secretary's statement last session, that the Government would have been forced to go to a bank and borrow \$93,000 before a reply from him? The public accounts showed a balance of \$48,900 against us, while this return showed a balance of \$89,000 against us, a difference of \$40,100. The Secretary had had a balance of \$48,900 against us, a difference of \$40,100. The Secretary had had a balance of \$48,900 against us, a difference of \$40,100.

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He proceeded to show how our debt and taxation had both increased since 1871, largely by construction of unproductive Public Works. He instituted comparisons with European States, to show that our debt and annual expenditure were increasing in two fold proportion to those of the old world, while as compared with the Republic beside us, the debt was being rapidly increased. In the face of these facts, he held we could not expect to compete with our neighbors for the immigration

of the Province was able to carry on the public services, he felt that an economical management of its finances was necessary. It was time its finances were entrusted to other hands. The expenditure for the income for the year 1879, besides the amount of \$1,000,000, was about \$106,175 greater than the income. Our income was \$816,000 and our expenditure was \$922,175. The amount struck the members with surprise and pain to find that the Secretary, notwithstanding his boasts of the state of the finances, had been forced to apply to the Bank for money and pay interest on it. This showed that the Secretary had not taken the people's representatives into account in the public accounts, or the real state of the finances of the Province. The Government had not looked down the particulars of these loans, but had been forced to apply to the Bank for the return of the money on the 31st October. The Government owed the People's Bank \$93,000. Would the members have thought, after listening to the Secretary's statement last session, that the Government would have been forced to go to a bank and borrow \$93,000 before a reply from him? The public accounts showed a balance of \$48,900 against us, while this return showed a balance of \$89,000 against us, a difference of \$40,100. The Secretary had had a balance of \$48,900 against us, a difference of \$40,100.

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He brought out very clearly and forcibly the fact, that admitting the desirability of opening up and peopling the Northwest, the building of the Pacific end of the road would do nothing toward this end, while at the same time it would entail a vast expenditure of money. He proceeded to deal with Sir John's figures as to the probable influx of population to the Northwest, and the amount of money to be received from land sales. In a masterly manner, he proved conclusively that these estimates were not only absurd but delusive as well, and deduced the conclusion that the result of sales of land would not keep down the interest on the railway expenditure during the period of construction, much less pay the capital cost, or anything toward it.

He proceeded to show how our debt and taxation had both increased since 1871, largely by construction of unproductive Public Works. He instituted comparisons with European States, to show that our debt and annual expenditure were increasing in two fold proportion to those of the old world, while as compared with the Republic beside us, the debt was being rapidly increased. In the face of these facts, he held we could not expect to compete with our neighbors for the immigration

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