

THE HERALD

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 30, 1884.

The Water Works Question.

This is, at present, a burning question with the citizens of Charlottetown. It is one which affects their interests very materially, and they have of late years been called upon to grapple with few subjects of greater public importance. It is a matter which has been before the people for a considerable time, but by some means or other, all efforts hitherto made to secure a proper water supply have been frustrated by the efforts of a small party of obstructionists who regard every measure of a progressive nature as an innovation. The recent destruction of a large amount of valuable city property by fire, moved the citizens to a sense of the insecurity of their position, and an effort was made in the direction of organizing a company to provide the town with a sufficient water supply. A Bill was accordingly drawn up and submitted to the Legislature. It met with the approval of the House of Assembly, and was sent for consideration to the Legislative Council. But the members of that body, in the exercise of their legislative wisdom, so nullified the measure that the popular branch of the Legislature would justify themselves by agreeing to their unreasonable amendments. The result was that the Bill, as agreed to by the House of Assembly, was lost, and thus the Legislative Council, in consequence of the act of a majority of its members, has once more displayed its capacity for obstructing the passage of useful and necessary legislation. Another year must, therefore, elapse before any practical steps can be taken to secure a water supply for the city, and perhaps by that time capitalists may not be willing to invest in the undertaking.

We have before us a copy of a petition presented to the Legislative Council against the adoption of the Water Works Bill. This movement was, no doubt, encouraged by a party whose antipathy to water is so well known to our citizens, that it has almost become proverbial. We have nothing to say derogatory to the petitioners. They are very respectable people, but we feel assured that in this instance they are in error. It is well known that it is a very easy matter to obtain signatures to a petition, and its contents happens that the means which are resorted to in order to attain this object, are not the most straightforward. The objections urged against the passage of the Water Bill are sadly lacking the element of force. One of them is that the introduction of Water Works would necessitate an expensive system of sewerage, the cost of providing which would fall upon the citizens. Now, this is a matter about which a difference of opinion exists. They who hold this contention to be correct, back it up by nothing stronger than their own individual opinions. The same may, perhaps, be said respecting those who take the ground that expensive sewerage will not be a necessary consequence of Water Works, but among the latter there is men whose judgment on matters of this kind should be, at least, quite as sound as the opinion of those who are ever ready to oppose any and every scheme having for its object the introduction of a sufficient supply of pure water. For our own part we cannot see why sewerage should follow Water Works in Charlottetown, when it is not required in any other place of equal importance. Again, it is asserted that the death rate in Charlottetown was less last year than in any other city of the Dominion, and this is adduced as one of the principal reasons why our citizens should not have an ample water supply! Well, if this statement is correct, it speaks volumes for the healthfulness of our city. If Charlottetown is so healthy now, when many of our citizens are compelled by circumstances to use water for all domestic purposes that is absolutely poisonous, is it not reasonable to suppose that with an unlimited supply of pure water at our disposal, the already small death-rate of our city would be greatly decreased?

The case of our citizens who can afford to purchase a few gallons daily of Spring Park water from the itinerant vendors is much graver; it is estimated, that the annual cost of an unlimited supply if the city were provided with Water Works. The cost of one hundred gallons there would be no greater than that of two gallons now. But it must be remembered, the Bill proposed by the Legislative Council, would be to incorporate a company to bring water into the city without entailing any expense upon the town, and leaving the citizens free to purchase the water or not, as they choose. Why such a bill should be rejected, seems to us inexplicable.

As a result of the losses sustained by the insurance companies doing business here, in consequence of the recent destructive fire, we understand that the cost of Fire Insurance has about doubled of late. This is a serious matter to property owners, inasmuch as it will take from their pockets not less than \$20,000 a year, until such time as we have an efficient water supply, an amount equal to nearly three times the interest at 5 per cent. on the cost of Water Works, even if constructed at the expense of the city. This is an aspect of the question which demands serious consideration, as one of the first results of the introduction of a plentiful supply of water would be the reduction of insurance rates to a point much lower than they have hitherto reached, and consequently yearly saving of many thousands of dollars to owners of city property.

We are utterly at a loss to account for the prejudice that exists in the minds of certain of our citizens against water. Circumstances as we now are, we are certainly at great loss and inconvenience for the want of a good supply of the pure article. We trust that the question will be considered during the recess intelligently and on its merits, and that when our Legislature shall next meet, the passage of a measure for providing Water Works by a company will not be balked by the efforts of a few individuals who win unpopularity citizens over to their cause by dangling imaginary bogymen in their eyes.

Personality.

The Patriot has descended very low indeed, when its columns are placed at the disposal of "stockholders" and "outsiders" to make epigrammatic attacks upon private individuals. It had lately to apologize for something that appeared, and in doing so the editor (Mr. Laird) would not assume the responsibility, but placed it on the shoulders of a "stockholder" and an "outsider." Very likely if the truth were known, and he was compelled to apologize, that he would, in the present case, do the same thing. We entertain the opinion that there was only one paper in this Province that made a practice of assailing private characters, but the Patriot has given us reason to change our views in that respect. In its issue of Saturday last appeared a low and ungentlemanly attack upon Mr. James McLeane, who has lately returned from Ottawa, where he filled the position of clerk during the late session of Parliament. The public do not, as a general thing, take much interest in matters of this kind, and do not appreciate subjecting a man to repeated personal attacks, attributing to him wrong motives, circulating untrue statements concerning him, and sneering at his profession or calling in his name. As many of our readers are aware, Mr. McLeane studied for several years with a view to entering the ecclesiastical state, but owing to ill health, had to suspend his studies, which he yet hopes to pursue to a successful end. While engaged in a business which he found beneficial to his health, he also made time, with profit to himself, to work for the HERALD, which, no doubt, has had something to do with the attacks that have been made upon him. Perhaps the Patriot and its clique are not pleased to see Mr. McLeane, or his co-adjutors occupy any Government position, no matter how trifling. We would consider we were going beyond the bounds of decent journalism if we referred to anyone in the way in which the Patriot refers to Mr. McLeane. Suppose a very worthy young man, a credit to his family and the congregation to which he belonged, began his studies for the Presbyterian ministry, but falling health necessitated his leaving college. On his return to the island this young man considered it would be profitable in many ways to engage in some suitable occupation, and combined with the collection of subscriptions for the Patriot newspaper, and was fairly successful. In what light would we be looked upon if we disparaged and ridiculed the means he undertook to either benefit his health or raise funds to continue his studies? We might even go further and draw a comparison between the position in life of the young man and the contrast it with his connection with the Patriot. This would be a dishonorable and an unjust course, and would subject us to the well-merited censure of every right-thinking man, and matter to what creed or party he belonged. When a public man's actions are criticized he can deal with them as he thinks proper—such criticism cannot be objected to—but it is quite different in Mr. McLeane's case. Once a journal that is supposed to guide public opinion assumes private characters, and contemptuously refers to the calling of any man—no matter how high or how low that calling may be—just to sneer at that journal loses its influence and usefulness.

The Reform party are busily engaged in the operation of whittling to keep up their courage, and we do not begrudge them all the satisfaction they can derive from so harmless a pastime. In its intense enthusiasm, however, the Acadia Recorder, which still drags out a lingering existence in the neighborhood of Halifax, enters into particulars, and after detailing the strength of the Conservative party in the various Provinces, gravely informs us that in Prince Edward Island the Local Administration is upheld by one or two votes, and is tottering to its fall. It is a very little importance what the Recorder says or thinks, but it is just as well to correct any false impression which may exist in regard to the matter. Therefore we say that the Liberal Conservative Government in this Island have not been so strong since the general election as they are today. In three by-elections they have taken place since they have relinquished two seats, and they now have a working majority of six, as many as the Conservative Government possessed at any time during their reign from 1868 to 1877. Furthermore we say that we have never enjoyed the blessings (?) of Grit domination in this Island except for the short period of six months, and that so soon as the Legislature met the Grit Government were overthrown and the present Conservative Administration formed. With the exception of that short period the Liberal Conservative party have held the reins of power continuously since Confederation, and judging from present indications, they probably have no desire for a change.

The Patriot and the Legislative Council.

The Patriot has come to the rescue of the Legislative Council. While in their capacity of private citizens we have the highest respect for the gentlemen composing that Chamber, we hold to the opinion that, as a body entrusted with Legislative functions, their usefulness has long since departed, and that as ornaments merely, the finances of the Province do not justify their retention. Public opinion, however, as expressed at the polls, has thought otherwise, and to the role of the people, uttered in a constitutional manner, we bow in submission. It is highly proper that no great change should be made in our constitution without due consideration, and it is well that we should jealously guard our rights and privileges, which, once lost, might never be regained. Public opinion, as we have said, has hitherto supported and favored the Legislative Council, but now that the Patriot has undertaken to champion its cause, the fatal words are written on the wall. No will it fall, when it occurs, by any calamity. Not only are the powers of the Council very considerably circumscribed by the constitution, but its membership is so limited, and parties are so evenly divided there, that its decisions, often depending upon the casting vote of the President, do not command that respect that they should, coming from the representatives, as they allege they are, of the property holders of the Island. But we are told that they are a check upon hasty legislation. Now, if we are to believe all we read in the Patriot, which happily few do, there never was a more hasty or disastrous piece of legislation than the Railway Construction Bill—where was the Council when it was passed? Then many people are disposed to blame all our evils, imaginary and real, upon our connection with Canada, yet the Legislative Council did not save us therefrom. Instead of throwing an aid to save us from drowning, it may be said to have persistently kept our head under water at the time. Had their Honors been asleep at their post their conduct would have been reprehensible indeed, but when we find them awake and doing their best to land us in Confederation on unfavorable terms, what shall we say? Surely when people sometimes speak of the Legislative Council as the safeguard of our liberties, they forget the past. But little more than a dark and dismal future, since late on a dark and dismal Saturday night, a Prime Minister and his Lieutenant stole away from Charlottetown on their mission to sell Prince Edward Island. The terms which they agreed upon the people indignantly rejected. The traitors were hurled from power, and when, in consequence of their management of affairs during their eleven months' reign, Confederation was found to be inevitable, negotiations were reopened that resulted in securing, for the time to come, an increase upon the terms previously offered of \$30,000. What was the action of the Legislative Council then? Did they, as the so-called representatives of the property holders, guard the interests of their constituents by supporting the application for better terms? No. But in their blind, party zeal they passed resolutions declaring that the first offer of the Dominion Government was just and reasonable, and sufficient for the wants of the Island, and they emphatically refused to join with the House of Assembly in securing better terms. Where were the interests of the property holders when a point had to be made against the Liberal Conservative party, and comes down a year or two, and look at their action regarding the emancipation of the treasury. Eight hundred thousand dollars had been allowed as for the purchase of the proprietary estates, and to reach a record of the largest landholders the Compulsory Land Purchase Act had to be passed. But there were a number of small estates whose owners, seeing that the system was doomed, were perfectly willing to sell to the Government upon fair and reasonable terms without being forced into the Court. The House of Assembly three times passed an Act to meet these cases and provide for the purchase of such lands upon terms as might be agreed upon. Each time the Bill was thrown out by the Upper House, and for no other reason than that the Land Question was being settled by the Liberal Conservative Party, and the Legislative Council, or rather the majority of the obstructionists therein, were jealous of the credit which would justly be attached to their political opponents. It is safe to say that thousands of dollars were spent in paying the few commissioners, lawyers and witnesses, which might otherwise have been saved, and that in many cases the awards of the Court were higher than the figures at which the proprietor would have been willing to sell. These are a few of the instances in which the value of the Legislative Council, as the guardian of the rights of the property-holders, has been conspicuous.

Let us enquire what they have done this year to entitle them to the gratitude of the people. The first day of the session they signified themselves by dissenting to appropriate moneys in excess of the estimated ordinary revenue, and by observing that the Patriot pronounced it a "conscience, clear, proper and statesmanlike protest on behalf of the property holders of the Island, whom the Council represented, against the disastrous policy of the Government." This vote, indeed! Let us see what was the result of this protest, and how bravely their Honors followed it up. We have already seen how our trials were happily averted, only, as it would seem, to be followed

in quick and more daily succession by this statesmanlike protest which, carried to its legitimate termination, must surely end in the rejection of the Appropriation Act. Evidently Mr. McKensie's scheme was much deeper than we gave him credit for. To refuse supplies because a paltry return was not brought down might be difficult to justify in the country, but when such refusal was based upon a resolution which had been adopted regarding the financial position of the Province, the question would assume an entirely different aspect. The hour of triumph had apparently arrived, and the Government were as completely humiliated in an hour as Gordon in Khartoum. At the disastrous reign of the Conservative Party was to terminate, and under new management, with a government administration of taxation and exchequer, the country would soon recover itself. What matter if for a time the public service was paralyzed, the schools closed, the wheels of justice stopped? The necessities of the case demanded a desperate remedy. The resolution had been passed, the House went into Committee on the Appropriation Bill, and in less than two hours it was reported that the Bill was passed and returned to the Assembly with as much haste as if it had been one of O'Donovan Rossa's cart-ridges. Again, had the crisis been mercifully averted—we look to see by what concession it was brought about, but without avail—and we are irresistibly reminded of the couplet which informs us that says: "The King of France with thirty horses and men, Marched up the hill, and then marched down again."

Brave men, with the courage of their convictions! Led on by little Benjamin, their ruler, they boldly declared that the Government were not warranted in granting the moneys detailed in the Appropriation Act, and in the same breath they assented to that Act. Having set themselves up as financial critics, we shall dismiss them with this simple question: What would be our financial position today if the Laird-Haythorn terms, which the Legislative Council so ardently got to have introduced, had been adopted in 1875 as the basis of Confederation with Canada?

It is not the most magnanimous motive which prompts England to waste lives and treasure in Egypt. Englishmen do not want Egypt, but they are afraid France would take it. When they have to foot the bill for this dog-in-the-manger policy, they may prefer to let France have it.

MANITOBA demands more territory. It wants its boundaries extended to the Pacific, and it would not be obliged to make this demand. It is already larger than Ontario, and the territories of Assiniboia, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and Athabasca have got to have boundaries too, so Manitoba must not be too covetous.

Mr. DAVIES, M. P., having voted for the Orange Incorporation Bill, is now, we are told, engaged in circulating in certain localities Mr. Blake's speech against that measure, while Mr. Blake is busy writing to Orange, Freeman and other societies, explaining away every objection that is made to it. Mr. Blake is a Grit hero, and we are told also that "the Opposition stood upon their rights," (we were wondering what foothold the Opposition had when McKensie was in possession of the floor, and we are glad of the explanation) and said in effect, no statement—no Appropriation Bill. "We read that on the 17th days of the Christian Church the Amen as pronounced by the congregation resembled the crash of artillery, but it must have been ineffective and weak compared with the thunder of the mighty Opposition (six by actual count) as they 'stood upon their rights' and shouted in effect—no statement—no Appropriation Act." What a trying moment for them to be sure, for should the statement be refused, the only result would be the defeat of the Appropriation Bill, and that would cut off their seasonal allowance. But fortunately the crisis was averted; the innocent little statement, which had lain in the Leader's desk for over a fortnight, was transferred to the Table of the House, and everyone breathed freely once more.

Armed with this document their Honors proceeded to pass a resolution declaring that the Government had no right to appropriate moneys in excess of the estimated ordinary revenue, and by dissenting to the Appropriation Bill, and by observing that the Patriot pronounced it a "conscience, clear, proper and statesmanlike protest on behalf of the property holders of the Island, whom the Council represented, against the disastrous policy of the Government." This vote, indeed! Let us see what was the result of this protest, and how bravely their Honors followed it up. We have already seen how our trials were happily averted, only, as it would seem, to be followed

Voyage Round the World.

Robert Bannan, of New York, left London on Monday last, on a voyage round the world. The Gloucester steamer had just sailed on Monday last, and he was the first to start. He is expected to return in about six months.

English soldiers distributed the idea of serving alongside of Egyptians in an expedition to Khartoum. The territory of New Mexico has a population of 2,000,000 and is looking for admission as a state. When the lines now under construction are completed Canada will have nearly 14,000 miles of railway. A halibut, weighing 425 lbs., was landed at Gloucester, Mass., last week. It was the largest ever seen there. Sanguine Dakota prospectors are predicting that the oil fields of that territory will this year amount to 300,000.

New York city Republicans favor the re-nomination of President Arthur. The first of the state is for Blaine or Edmunds. It is stated that Sir Charles Tupper will shortly visit Canada, and will resume the duties of the High Commissioner. Archbishop Taché, of Quebec, called from Halifax for Rome on Saturday last in connection, it is stated, with the university question. An eminent French statistician computes that 3,200,000 men are kept in idleness in Europe to prevent royal rogues from robbing each other. The agricultural outlook is improving in England, the crops of preserved farms having considerably diminished during the last three years. Admiral Leppin, commander of the French squadron in Chinese waters, reports April 25th, that he has just returned from Foo Choo and Shanghai.

The Pope has decided to create another Cardinal in the United States. It is intended to always have two in the States and also to have one in South America. Prince Victor of Wales, the eldest son of the Prince of Wales, will, it is reported, on attaining his majority next year, be created Duke of Dublin, and will reside in Ireland. Alliances to be made at the National League convention at Killybegs last week. Subscribers to the fund for paying Irish members of Parliament were also present.

The expenditure of \$800,000,000 in the United States yearly for liquor, and only \$100,000,000 for sermons, is what drives more young men into the grog than into the ministry, or any other profession. "Dynamite is a blessing sent from God," said Wm. M. Brewster, in Philadelphia last Sunday. If the preacher could but feel the force of the explosion, he would not be so full of himself. The Allan Stewart New System, which arrived at Halifax last week from Liverpool, brought 1 captain, 2 lieutenants and 77 recruits for the Royal Irish Rifles, and a sergeant-major for the Royal Engineers.

The ship owners of the north of England will hold a meeting to arrange for the withdrawal of their vessels from the coasting trade. The vessels of that coast, with the purpose of reaching rates in the steam freight market. In the United States House of Representatives a bill has been introduced which provides that all newspapers heretofore published in the several states and territories shall be carried free of postage through the mail.

Mr. John Boyle O'Reilly will spend the summer in Europe. He has been invited to accompany the Duke of Devonshire, because he and the Duke are both Catholics, and he is a member of the same church. There were 176 failures in the United States and Canada last week, against 214 the previous week. The decrease was particularly noticeable in Canada, where the suspensions were fewer than in any week for many months. Mr. Robert McConnell, of the Truro Guardian, has accepted the position of editor of the Truro Standard, and has been taken into custody by the police of Mr. O'Connell, who will, it is reported, assume the editorial management of a new daily paper in St. John.

Arrangements have been made for a seventy days cruise, starting from Liverpool, and ending at London, in the steamer "The British Queen," which will be commanded by Captain Sir John Lubbock. The cruise will be a most interesting one, and will include a visit to the Cape of Good Hope, the East Indies, and the South Sea Islands. The ship will be accompanied by a fleet of gunboats, and will be under the command of a British admiral. The cruise will be a most interesting one, and will include a visit to the Cape of Good Hope, the East Indies, and the South Sea Islands.

Local and Other News.

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Latest Telegrams.

London, April 29. Of the beautiful building known as the Louvre, which is now being reconstructed, the work is progressing rapidly. The reconstruction of the Louvre is a most interesting project, and will result in a most magnificent building.

London, April 29. The British Government has decided to send a fleet of gunboats to the Cape of Good Hope, in order to protect the British trade routes in the Indian Ocean. The fleet will be commanded by Admiral Sir John Lubbock, and will include a number of the latest British warships.

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