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ST. JOHN STAR.

ST. JOHN, N. B., JANUARY 11, 1909.

THE COUNCIL MEETING.

Hitherto the impression has prevailed that whatever their deficiencies, members of the common council have usually endeavored to conduct public business to the best of their ability. This opinion must now be revised. In view of the utterly ridiculous and deplorable decisions reached yesterday, no other inference can be drawn than that a majority of the board are determined to defy public opinion and to frustrate all attempts at reform. Several important matters are up for consideration. The council was asked to name a date for a vote on license reduction, a vote which would confirm or alter the law as it applies to a few liquor dealers now in business, who are annually subject to whatever conditions may be imposed. It is within the power of the council to name any day in the year and the petitioners desired that civic election day, the only appropriate date, be selected. The course was perfectly clear, yet in order to avoid the animosity of a few dispensers of liquor these advisers balked. They have taken refuge behind the excuse of an opinion from the recorder, endeavoring to make him share the responsibility which rests upon themselves. They knew, and the people knew, that the recorder is inclined to find such weaknesses in the law than the merits of the ordinary man and make him wonder why legislation is ever looked upon with such respect. It is a clear case of dodging the issue, and those dozen advisers who either opposed the temperance petition or who attempted to wriggle out of the corner; those men who have cast their vote with the liquor interests, who admit that they are influenced by saloon-keepers rather than by the general opinion of the electors, will find all kinds of trouble in store for them during the next few months. It has been said that there are only two straight temperance papers in the Maritime Provinces. Such a policy as was pursued by the St. John council yesterday will soon lead to a definite temperance declaration on the part of a majority of the papers in this city. It is not the press and the people are so bitterly opposed to the license law, but that they believe in honest and honorable treatment of all questions. There is only one true opinion on the present question. The aldermen have declared against it. Those men who voted against giving temperance the same fair play or vote unnecessarily to refer the matter to the recorder are all probably to come up for re-election in April.

In the Sun this morning, Ald. Kelley makes a reply to a communication received by the reform committee, from the board of trade. It is evident from this communication that the intention of this committee must have been to so juggle the work of reorganization that the result would be failure. The committee sought an engineer, and having advertised throughout Canada, in those large provinces where engineers could be found, decided afterwards to limit all applications to the Maritime Provinces where no suitable engineers reside. St. John and Halifax are the only cities, under this ruling, from which applications might come. The purpose of the decision was, therefore, to select from two or three local men, one who would enjoy the friendship of a number of the aldermen, who would be properly grateful to these aldermen for his appointment, and who would do as he was told by them. This being the case, why did the committee advertise so extensively? Why not request Mr. Earle or Mr. Holt, or whoever else happened to be available at the time, to apply for Mr. Peters job? Money might have been saved. But under the pretence of seeking a capable engineer the committee advertised in Upper Canada and deluded St. John citizens into the belief that the effort to find a man was really an earnest one. Ald. Kelley criticizes the board of trade for not acting earlier in this matter. It is granted that the board is not reputed for any excessive haste in dealing with public questions, yet there is some difficulty in understanding how that board could have acted more promptly when the report of the committee was not presented until yesterday afternoon. All the board of trade had to go by was the rumor published in the city papers, which was not confirmed by any member of the special committee. The board of trade has spoken soon enough. This question is to come before the council on Wednesday, and the report of the committee should be unanimously adopted, striking out section 7 which recommends the appointment of Mr. Earle, and substituting therefor, another person advising an Upper

Canadian engineer known only by reputation, not a friend of any alderman and not connected with any corporation in St. John, shall be selected.

In the mass of indecision and shuffling, two features stand out clearly. The genial representative of the suburban districts attempted to unburden himself of a lengthy report on street matters. In this effort he was foiled. For this relief, much thanks.

But at another occasion Ald. McGoldrick manfully declared: "Personally I am an ardent temperance man." In the words of the poet, "Who done this?"

THE BAD CHILD.

(From Appleton's Magazine.) Come, little badness, and climb to my knee; Put your head down there and cry on my shoulder. For badness in you is like badness in me, and my own is the older.

If you were a papa and wore a high hat, I wonder if you would be talky and bossy? And then when your little girl answered like that, Would you say she was ugly and saucy?

If you were a mamma and wore a long skirt, I wonder if you would grow weary of service, And then when you scolded and made her feel hurt, Would you say she was "naughty" or "nervous"?

If you were the strong one and I were the weak, When you punished me, then would I thank you? And when I was crying, too sobby to speak, Wouldn't I long to spank you?

The proprietor of an institution professing to cure stuttering tells of the amusement with which a visitor from the interior of the state contemplated the huge gilt sign displayed over the entrance to the place: "Stammering Institute, Trial lesson free!" "Upon my soul!" exclaimed the visitor, "if that don't beat all! I knew they taught 'em everything these days; but who the deuce wants to learn stammering?"

"It must be very nice," said the caller to the author's wife, "to have your husband at home so much of the time." "Yes," replied Mrs. Richard Darlington Spriggles. "It gives me a chance to get out."

Gentlemen (gazing in street car)—Won't you take my seat, madam? The Suffragette—No, sir, I will not. You are entitled to it much more than I am. As we women have something to say about the framing of laws governing public conveyances.

Fluffy Young Thing—Id like to prepay the express on this package. Express Company's Agent—What's the value? Fluffy Young Thing—Nothing, sir. It's a bundle of letters I'm sending them back to him.

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CHANGES IN GAMBLING.

The Rules of the Unexpectant at the Tables in Monte Carlo.

There are systems, some will say, that will defeat the bank at Monte Carlo. I have not found one. Two factors, all systems, One is the bank's limit, which prevents the doubling system so often advocated; the second, the extraordinary idiosyncrasy of chance. Red or black will often run in long series. I saw fifteen reds come up in succession on one occasion, seventeen blacks in another. One evening on a losing day I was playing on the first six numbers and persistently for some hours the last twelve numbers invariably turned up. Once I saw it come up four times in succession when mathematically it should have taken 144 chances to make it show that number of times, and still more strange that on this occasion each time it came up a gentleman had picked the number—namely, 139 francs—winning in ten minutes something over 24,000 francs. One readily sees by these instances the unexpected very often happens—in fact, more often than not—Arthur Hewitt in Bohemian Magazine.

AN ARMY DESPATCHED BY TRAIN

If a war broke out tomorrow the London and South Western Railway could convey the entire British army to any given point in less than a week. This is the result of a special system of training their men which the company have adopted, a system which was triumphantly tested during the war with the late South African Republic. Over 200,000 soldiers passed through Waterloo Station, London, in that period, and they were attended to without the slightest inconvenience to the general public.

A VITAL FACTOR.

The transport of troops is a vital factor in the success of a campaign. It would be difficult to exaggerate its importance, and in the case of an invasion of England the work of the staff of the London and South Western Railway would be more important than an army corps. In France and Germany, where the railways are state-owned, and where soldiers and sailors use the lines free of charge, they have a lot to learn of this important art. At Waterloo Station, the headquarters of the London and South Western Railway, the spectacle of troops departing is a very common one, and the company possesses all the requisite rolling stock for ordinary purposes. The staff specially told off for the work is reinforced in cases of emergency, and with a perfect knowledge of the system introduced by the late superintendent of the line, and continued by the present, thousands of men can be despatched all over the country while the man who wants to get to some place near at hand suffers no delay. Many of the staff were soldiers at one time, and at present the company contributes a notable unit to the Territorials; but without these staff work would just as efficiently.

REMS SIMPLE ENOUGH.

In the event of war the methods adopted seem simple enough. The Army Council decides the number of men to be sent off, and immediately the despatch is made to the secretary sends instructions to the manager of the railway. The staff are ready, every available man is pressed into service, and should it happen that he has not sufficient recruits from the other companies. Secondly, he knows that the War Office command carries with it the right over all other trains in the country. Specials and expresses must give way to the army, and immediately the despatch is made to the secretary sends instructions to the manager of the railway. The staff are ready, every available man is pressed into service, and should it happen that he has not sufficient recruits from the other companies.

DEFEATED BY NATURE.

Thus, 5,000 troops leave simultaneously, and they are scattered by the weather before another train can be sent.

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ing dealt with. It must be remembered that such a large number of men as 100,000 carry with them an enormous quantity of baggage. Human beings can be packed like sardines; but horses must have plenty of room; and when kit, food, munitions of war and the rest of the hundred and one things that are necessary to a campaign are considered, the dimensions of the task can be realized fairly.

The enormous armies of the great continental nations can work only in their respective countries. Nature has made it impossible to convey a million men for any great distance at once. Japan discovered that during her war with Russia. She wanted an indemnity, and Russia declined, knowing that Japan could never try to collect the war debt. Nature saved the czar's country on that occasion. Great Britain's feat of conveying over 200,000 men to South Africa is without parallel in the history of the world. Napoleon tried to subdue Russia with an enormous army. Russia stood by and let Nature fight her battles; and, as history record, the invaders were defeated. If a great continental war broke out tomorrow more combatants would die of hunger and disease than wounds. And the nation with the best rolling stock would have no enormous advantage over the others.

IN TIME OF INVASION.

But the efficiency of British railways in this respect would be best illustrated by what would happen in the event of an invasion. Suppose that the first foreign corps landed before the country was apprised—if such a thing could be possible. At the very utmost the combined fleets of France, Germany and Russia could not land more than 20,000 men on British soil within three days. In the same space of time that Nature's invasion as the regular rolling stock of Great Britain to the number of 100,000, and the British navy would see that no more foreigners landed. With an inefficient railway service it might take a week, and in the event of a naval defeat the invaders would have disastrous results.

Secret trainings of troops would be impossible, but only under martial law. With invaders in the country such a measure would be necessary, and with it the railway authorities would have no difficulty in maintaining secrecy. It is very significant that France and Germany have special train drills, recruits being taught how to travel from one place to another with the least possible delay. The French like to test the efficiency of their secret intelligence department by distributing thousands of false reports in multi over many railway stations, bringing all to one spot, and seeing if the ordinary public have noticed anything. Germany would make such a test of paramount importance. Happily, Great Britain need fear nothing of the kind. The continental nations do; but, all the same, it is pleasing to know that in the matter of transport of troops it can beat the world.

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