WHERE THE WEARY REST

THE MAGNIFICENT PARK OF THE CELESTIAL CITY.

The Splendid Gift of the Donor of the Park to Mr. Fenety, the Designer—A Capable Description of the Place Which is Fredericton's Pride.

It is admitted that this is not the right season of the year to descant upon rural matters, but rather those that have to do with winter carnivals. It matters not, however, when a good subject presents itself. It was in the month of May last when Mr. Edward H. Wilmot purchased from the O'Dell estate that portion of land at the upper end of the town, now and will to ever be known as the "Wilmott Park" embracing 20 acres of land, perhaps a little more. After having done so he placed the whole property into the hands of Mr. G. E. Fenety — in whom he had the utmost confidence —to lay it out as he might think proper for the purposes of a Park, with a carte blanche to spend as much money as would be required, in order that a fine pleasure ground might be provided for the citizens of Fredericton free of all expense, not only in the making, but perhaps the maintenance hereafter — a boon, the value of which, nosingle individual in the province has ever yet conferred upon the community in which he lived. It has been more a labor of love, as the writer is informed, on the part of the superintendent of the work in his efforts to satisfy his principal, than from any other consideration, unless it be in the great interest he has always taken in horticultural and floral matters in particular. No pecuniary compensation could have induced the work undertaken. Mr. Wilmot was aware of this at the beginning, and that it was the pastime and pleasure and recreation which it afforded.

VIEW IN WILMOT PARK.

It was towards the last of May when the work of planning and laying out the Park began on the western half, but not until late in July when possession could be had of the south part, as it had been under lease until the hay was cut, so that the main roads could not be made and available until rather late in the season. No time was lost after that, for in less than three months upwards of two miles of carriage drives and about a mile of walks were laid out and finished, and by the end of August the Park was fully opened, informally, to the public, and was frequented by hundreds of teams passing along the roads, the occupants apparently taking a great interest and enjoyment within the limits, and giving expressions of praise and gratitude to the very noble donor whose great philanthropy and generosity had afforded so much pleasure. Upwards of 300 small spruce bushes were removed from the rear to the front of the Park, and 550 elms planted all along the carriage drives, and in a couple of years hence when these begin to develope there will be a green fringe presented all along delightful to behold; and in ten years, say, walls of living green may be ridden through of unsurpassed beauty. A number of beds have been laid out for the reception of hardy shrubs to be imported and planted next spring. Then in front of the Park, directly opposite Government House, a space of 150 by 75 feet has been scooped out, in the centre of which has been placed a fountain, the pipes of which have been connected with the main water works pipe on the highway outside the Park. The bottom of the pond is covered with blue clay, and when filled with water a miniature sea is presented to the sight, rendering the landscape very interesting. One of our engravings represents a pavilion or band stand, situated about 300 feet from and opposite Government House entrance. This was erected and beautifully painted at a cost of nearly $400. About 3,000 feet of fencing inclosing the Park and fine double gates on two sides have been built and artistically painted. Upwards of forty seats or benches, each capable of holding 6 or 8 persons, have been made and placed in different parts of the Park—all of which, especially on Sundays, have been filled with visitors. Indeed, there have been times when upwards of 700 or 800 persons have been present (according to calculation) at one time, thus showing the great interest and pleasure the people are already taking in this great treat and retreat provided by Mr. Wilmot.

Early in the season the Cricket club of Fredericton waited upon Mr. Fenety, through their captain, to learn whether or not it was possible to obtain land enough in the park for playing purposes, and the club would prepare the ground at their own expense. Mr. F. said he would have great pleasure in referring the matter to Mr. Wilmot. On doing so, Mr. W. not only gave his consent, but stated that it should not cost the club a cent and that he would have the ground prepared and paid for by himself. Accordingly he directed that over an acre of ground should be ploughed and levelled and sown with grass seed to form a suitable crevasse or perfectly flat award for carrying on the games. Now this work of itself cost about $70.

Names have been given to the avenues during the season, such as Prince of Wales (in the vicinity of which his royal highness passed through when here in 1860), Spruce avenue, Bush, Grove, Wilmot Avenue, &c., all of which in time will be inscribed on sign boards for direction.

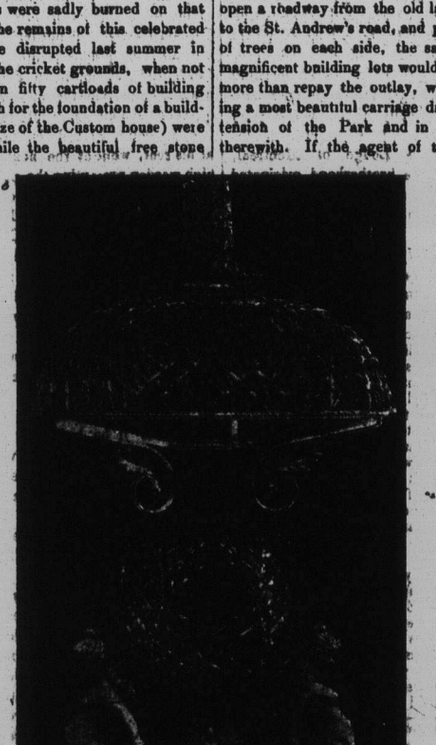
VIEW IN WILMOT PARK.

The picture where the large trees are presented in the back ground shows the pitch for the cricketers. The trees therein contained are of unusual size and magnificence, supposed to have been planted by the late Senator O'Dell's father, who died in 1842, as Provincial secretary. These have been turned to good account in the laying out of the Park, roadways have been worked through them to suit the purpose. On the right hand of the figures exhibited is where the Prince of Wales' fountain once stood—a work of genius and no little expense, not so much to the boss or originator, as to the workmen whose fingers were sadly burned on that occasion. The remains of this celebrated fountain were disrupted last summer in laying out the cricket grounds, when not much less than fifty cartloads of building stone (enough for the foundation of a building half the size of the Custom house) were exhumed, while the beautiful free stone coping was removed to the front of the Park to serve as a margin for a future flower bed—diameter about 90 feet.

Although a great amount of work was done during the past season (costing about $2,000) much remains yet before the Park is completed. It all goes well by next fall the "Wilmot Park" will be a thing of beauty and a joy forever to the inhabitants of Fredericton for it is believed all time to come.

In what way Mr. Wilmot intends to hand the Park over when finished, the writer is not informed, whether as in Truro, N. S., it will be placed in the hands of a commission or handed over direct to the city council, it rests with himself to decide—very likely the commission government with the mayor, ex-officio, will be the plan. But in whatever way managed it will be for the benefit of the citizens and in their interests exclusively. Its maintenance is not yet clearly defined, but it is believed that Mr. Wilmot having already done such a magnificent thing, will not stop short of making or suggesting some mode for keeping the work going which cannot amount to much more than enough to keep the Park in order, inasmuch as like a private garden, it will all have been finished as before stated by the fall of 1895.

In order to extend the drives, if the owners of the land stretching above would open a roadway from the old lane through to the St. Andrew's road, and plant a row of trees on each side, the sale of many magnificent building lots would in time far more than repay the outlay, while providing a most beautiful carriage drive in extension of the Park and in connection therewith. If the agent of the estate in New Brunswick would consider this suggestion and bring it to the attention of his principals the object might be carried into effect.



Presented by Edward H. Wilmot to Geo. E. Fenety.

So much then for the Park. And now for another edition of Mr. Wilmot's great thoughtfulness. Having placed the laying out of the Park in the hands of Mr. Fenety and feeling satisfied with the work done, he could not rest contented without exhibiting his feelings for services rendered, by the presentation to him of a memento worthy of the acceptance of a prince—viz, a piece of plate, embossed in gold, which cost over than one hundred dollars, an illustration of which we here give, although it does not convey a full idea of the original. As the Fredericton Gleaner in its editorial columns gives a description of this beautiful work of art, the writer thinks he cannot do better than copy it: "The lamp was imported from New York and is one of the handsomest designs and costliest ever imported to this city. The lamp stands about 3½ feet high, the base being ball-shaped about 10 inches in diameter, with two handsomely carved figures standing out from either side. The entire base is finished in gold. On one side of the ball is the inscription "Presented by Edward H. Wilmot to his friend George E. Fenety." On the other side: "A Memento of Wilmot Park, 1894." Above the base is a heavily cut glass oval which contains the cup for holding the fluid, and above this a duplex burner of the most modern pattern, the whole surmounted by an elegant heavily cut glass shade some 16 inches in diameter setting in a substantial gold rim. Needless to say Mr. Fenety is highly delighted with this substantial recognition on the part of Mr. Wilmot of his efforts to beautify Wilmot Park, and placed along side of the handsome Epergne, presented to Mr. Fenety by the citizens some years ago, when mayor, makes two very valuable and attractive house ornaments of which Mr. Fenety feels justly proud."

It is to be hoped that both gentlemen will live to enjoy for many years the work of their hands—the one for his great patriotism and generosity in performing such an unprecedented act in the interests of his fellow citizens, costing up to the present time, the writer learns, something like $10,000, and to cost much more before he has turned it over; and the other for his fine taste in designing and laying out the Park which when finished will reflect upon him much credit.

The above article by your correspondent was written after a lengthy and interesting interview had with Mr. Fenety, who appeared to be full of life and enthusiasm in the work he has undertaken.

The engravings of the Park are made from photographs taken by Mr. George Taylor, artist of Fredericton.

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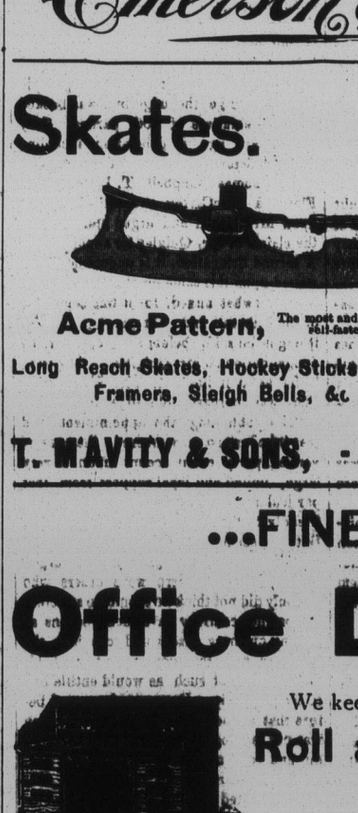

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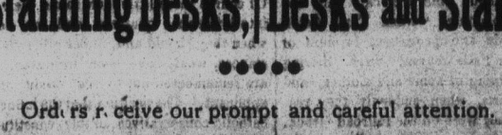

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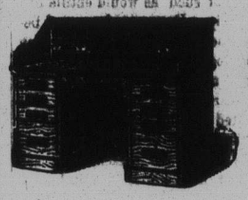

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