

to the city, aid its growth and develop its trade. It is not in the order of things that St. John should stand still while other cities of Canada are growing in population and importance. If we can ascertain the causes which have prevented the growth of St. John during the last three decades we can perhaps find the remedy. With its situation, in the very centre of the Maritime Provinces, with railroad steamboat communication to every point in the three lower provinces, and with the west of the continent and to Europe St. John ought to be a much greater city than it is. We need not look for a boom but we may reasonably expect steady growth, if every shoulder is placed at some spot on the wheel.

The Finances of St. John are dealt with in a general way in the present issue and another article on the cost of the Schools and County taxation will close this series. Since these articles have been appearing in the *NEW BRUNSWICK MAGAZINE* the Common Council has awakened from its lethargy and acted in one or two most important matters. A commission has been appointed to enquire into the whole question of taxation. This does not settle the question by any means but it is a step in the direction of a new and more equitable assessment law. By a change in the methods of doing the city business a large saving can be annually effected for the tax payers. But at the best a very considerable sum will have to be raised annually and the question is how to obtain the necessary funds to carry on the business of the city without disturbing existing conditions. The inadvisability of taxing small incomes—except a poll tax—is now generally agreed to. This removes one of the very worst features of the present law, as it is notorious that only about 50 per cent. of the taxes on small incomes are collected. The result is that the estimates of the Council are never realized while the expenditures generally exceed the estimate. Consequently the accounts depending solely for their income on the assessment are always short.

Much to the surprise of everybody an alderman actually referred to the charter of the city at a recent meeting of the Council and stated that since that ancient and honorable document was penned in 1785 it has been amended many times and that including the numerous amendments there have been about a thousand acts of Assembly, relating to St.

John, passed through the legislature. These he suggested should be codified. There is certainly nothing unreasonable in this. It has been the custom to regard the charter as a sacred thing that ought never to be touched. We have been told that it was a royal charter but this is fiction, and if even true is no reason why its provisions should not be made to suit the times. The bye-laws of the city are in the same condition as the charter with this advantage, that there are a score or more of them stowed away in the vaults of the Common Clerk's office and entirely forgotten. If brought to light they will make trouble for the citizens and the aldermen alike.

The current issue of the *MAGAZINE* contains the opening chapters of a serial story of unusual interest. This story will be completed in six instalments. There is also a complete story by a native author whose pen name only is given. It is the intention to further strengthen the fiction department of the *MAGAZINE* as space will admit. The current number consists of 64 pages—that for March will be 80 pages and the Easter or April number will contain 96 pages, which will be the limit of size for the present. The contents of the March number will embrace a greater variety of subjects. It is the aim of the Editor to make every issue more interesting than the predecessor. How far he will be successful in this, is for the public to judge. The *NEW BRUNSWICK MAGAZINE* is now fairly floated; and the public has not been unappreciative of what has already been done. A goodly list of subscribers has been obtained, and the number is being constantly added to. There is ample room for a good Monthly Magazine in the Maritime Provinces and that is the field the *NEW BRUNSWICK MAGAZINE* will especially cultivate. Performances are better than promises and it is by what it does that the *NEW BRUNSWICK MAGAZINE* expects to be judged.

The Editor is always willing to consider contributions on any subject particularly from local writers, and such are solicited. Manuscripts that are not available will be returned. We want the assistance of all the people to make the Magazine creditable alike to the community and its publisher. There is a great deal of interesting material available which only requires to be exhumed from its present and brought to light.