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The Watchman.

ST. JOHN, N. B., SATURDAY, JAN. 20, 1877

THE FUTURE CAPITAL OF THE MARITIME PROVINCES.

According to the Halifax Press, somebody in St. John has been tendering to Halifax St. John's consent to the Nova Scotia capital becoming the capital of the Maritime Union. There will, however, be very grave differences of opinion on this point. The matter is worth discussing in all its bearings, and since the Halifax Press has deemed it worth while to treat individual opinion on the point as worthy of quotation at this early stage of the agitation, it may be well even now to consider the claims of other places. There will, of course, be very strong opposition in St. John to the selection of Halifax as the capital. In Fredericton and on the upper St. John and on the Maine border, as well as in the Northern section of this Province, the opposition will be still more strongly manifested. It will, no doubt, be argued that the larger Province should not be so greedy as to claim the capital, which, if conceded, would still further increase the paramount political influence of that Province; that Halifax is not by any means a central point; that instead of being a railway centre it is the extreme end of a line; that probably more persons would be inconvenienced by going to Halifax on public business than to any other place that can be selected. It may be urged that, unless it is understood beforehand that Halifax is to be the capital, that important city will not sanction Maritime Union, but to this it may be replied that it is not to be expected that smaller towns, such as Fredericton and Charlottetown, will consent to make great sacrifices by surrendering their present prestige as local Capitals, while Halifax will surrender nothing, but, on the contrary, expect to gain by their losses. In this connexion, too, it will be generally considered that Halifax can not lay much stress on Maritime Union if she is not willing to take her chance with other places that aspire to be the Capital.

There is a large body of people in this Province who would favor MONCTON for the Capital of the United Provinces, and there certainly is a great deal to be said in favor of such a choice. A reference to the map of the Maritime Provinces shows most conclusively that Moncton can be reached more readily from all points than any other single town. It is the centre and heart of the Maritime Railway system. Thence lines radiate in all directions,—to Shediac, connecting with Prince Edward Island; to the North Shore counties; to St. John, Charlotte and the up-river country; to Nova Scotia, as far as Halifax in one direction, Yarmouth in another, and Cape Breton (soon to be) in another. Being inland, it is all the better situated for an important Capital, whose public buildings, records and archives should be so placed as to be beyond all possible danger of injury or destruction from the enemies of the country,—and as we shall be building for centuries to come we must consider the possibility of being at some time or other involved in the wars of the Empire. And although Moncton has been assailed and slandered without stint by the Press of Halifax, there is to be said in its favor that in no other part of the Maritime Provinces has there been such marked improvement as in this Westmoreland town,—not merely public improvements but such private improvements as demonstrate the existence of an enterprising, energetic population. The country about and near Moncton is one of the finest in the Maritime Provinces; the soil is fertile and highly cultivated, and the scenery most grateful to the eye. For public buildings there are many charming sites on either side of the Petitcodiac river, and an abundance of land is to be had at reasonable rates; and as the public buildings and offices in an inland town do not need to be erected in as expensive a style as in cities such as St. John and Halifax, where they would be expected to overtop all other edifices in cost and magnificence, the saving to the Union in this respect alone would represent a large sum.

The propriety of locating the Capital at Moncton might be urged with equal strength on other grounds, but as we shall return to the subject at an early day we conclude at present with the remark that it is desirable that all the points and changes involved, all the possible details that enter into this question of Maritime Union, should be fully, freely, candidly discussed by the Press and People immediately interested, in advance of the negotiations which may be expected to be opened before many years, perhaps many months, have passed. It is a question which common people of ordinarily good judgment are as able to pronounce upon as the politicians are. It ought not to be left solely to politicians, who may be more intent on making arrangements for themselves than a good settlement for their Province.

THE RICHIBUCTO BRANCH RAILWAY.

The Legislature of this Province has solemnly pledged itself to appropriate to the construction of a Branch Railway from the Inter-Colonial to the Town of Richibucto the sum of Five Thousand Dollars per mile. It has not, in providing this subsidy, made it dependent upon other lines going forward at the same time. It did not make this subsidy contingent on the success or non-success of financial negotiations at Ottawa. It said nothing about a possible falling short in the Great Road grant or the Bye Road grant. The Legislature had not the most remote idea that this work would be delayed, or the appropriation with-held, until some new financial arrangement was entered into with the Dominion Government. Not one of these possibilities entered, or should have entered, the mind of the Legislature. The only proviso was that the Government of the Province should be satisfied that the road would be built; that is, that there should be placed before the Government reasonable evidence that would satisfy an equal number of business men that the work was being undertaken in good faith and with resources sufficient for its completion. Whenever this was done, the Government were bound to sanction the undertaking, and the funds must be forthcoming from the Provincial Treasury as rapidly as the subsidy was earned. The only question now is: Has the Richibucto Company put itself in a position to claim the subsidy?

There is no denying that the Company was duly incorporated and duly organized within the time allowed by the Act and that through its contractor it has commenced operations. Its plans of survey, the location, etc., were duly submitted to and approved of by the Government. The Company is clearly entitled to the subsidy if the remaining condition has been complied with, namely, if it can show the necessary resources for the construction and equipment of the road. This is certainly a very important point, one on which we urged the Government last year to stand firm. THE WATCHMAN holding that as the $5,000 per mile, or about $130,000 in all, was intended by the Legislature to be appropriated for the undoubted, *bona fide* construction of the road in all its length, the Government should make sure that when this large sum was paid the road would absolutely be constructed and operated. We held that this matter should be decided beyond the shadow of a doubt.

As we now understand the resources which the Company will have at its disposal, they are these:—The subsidy of $5,000 per mile, which will grade, sleeper and ballast the road; and rails sufficient (between the old rails which the Dominion Government has offered, and another lot, the purchase of which is arranged,) for the whole length of line. And it is allowed that enough can be raised out of the stock list to provide the few station buildings that will be needed, and the limited equipment in engines and cars that the traffic will demand.

These calculations may not be entirely correct, but there is little doubt that there is at least sufficient to construct and iron the road. There is no doubt, however, that with the subsidy and rails secured the road can be constructed, unless the Company is so entangled in its relations with the contractors, Messrs. Brown and Gillespie, that it can not avail to the utmost of its resources. If the contractors stand in the way of the Company's success, the sooner it makes a change and a new departure the better; for we have little doubt that men can be found who will not only build and equip the Branch, but run it after it is built. In this connexion we would urge that when the Company again applies to the Government for such aid and comfort as are indispensable to the success of the undertaking, it should be certain that there is no weak point in its case, and if its case be as perfect as we believe it can be made, it will be impossible for the Government longer to resist the Company's claims. These must stand or fall on their merits. They should not be mixed up with any other Railway scheme. They should not, if just, be staved off because the Government does not happen to be ready to say yea or nay to the demands of other Companies. Where the letter and intent of the Act authorizing the granting of a subsidy to this Branch are so clear, so binding both in law and equity, further delay would be a gross injustice to an undertaking which has been recognized time and again in the most unequivocal terms and in the most solemn manner.

THE WATCHMAN appears to have stirred up a small tumult in and near the *Farmer* office by suggesting that Mr. Gregory or Mr. Blair might be the author of the political correspondence which has recently been displacing the editorials in that paper. Mr. Blair publishes a card disavowing the authorship on behalf of himself and Mr. Gregory, while the *Farmer* thinks THE WATCHMAN's remarks both "unprofessional and ungentlemanly." We can't see that there is anything improper in speculating on the authorship of papers which are giving a journal widespread, though perhaps not very enviable, notoriety. And although the world may never be agitated over the letters of "New Brunswick," as it has been over those of "Junius," still it is quite in order, and neither unprofessional nor ungentlemanly, to endeavor to throw light on their authorship. If the *Farmer* objects to our description of the writer as a "clever scamp:" if this, indeed, be our full offence, perhaps it will explain how it happens to publish on the same page statements to the following effect:—That Attorney General King resembles Boss Tweed both in features and style; that he is "lazy and indolent," has a temper that is disgraceful; that in Council "he lounges in a half sleepy attitude into his chair;" that he is a poor lawyer; that only during the lifetime of his partner was his legal firm respected; that he rarely forgives an injury, etc. That in regard to Mr. Elder people "wondered how a man with such a face managed to get the Rev. tacked on his name;" that "you might expect to find such a countenance listening at the crack of a door or peeking through a key hole;" besides references to "the conformation of his neck and head," to his having been "in the ministry," etc. That Mr. Wedderburn is described as "the dandy of the House;" as "blushing on interesting occasions," being "particular about his gloves," "susceptible of praise," "fond of ladies," having "killing looks, well parted and well brushed locks," and so on. Each issue of the *Farmer* for some weeks past has contained much of just such stuff, personal hits which the editor declares he prefers to send forth exactly as they are sent to him rather than eliminate and thus make the letters at least decent in tone. It is, of course, the same editor who can't stand THE WATCHMAN's ungentlemanly reference to these very gentlemanly (?) personal attacks!

THE CUSTOMS.—We are authorized to state that there is no foundation whatever for the statement made in THE WATCHMAN and copied by the *Telegraph*, that Mr. Walter Welsh or any body else had been appointed by the Customs Department to travel as an examiner on the International steamers between St. John and Eastport.—*Evening Globe.*

We can't see what interest the *Globe* has in publishing a paragraph so peculiarly constructed as the above. It leaves the impression that Mr. Welsh is not to receive any appointment; still, on examination it will be seen that, after all, the *Globe* only denies that he has been appointed an "examiner" on the Boston steamers. As there was no allegation that he had been appointed an "examiner," the denial really amounts to nothing. It is not denied that Mr. Welsh is to receive an appointment in connexion with the Customs, nor is it denied that this appointment relates to "detective" service on the steamers. Mr. Burpee's handwriting is good for the office any day. The *Globe's* mind is running on an "examiner's" duties, but this is evidently not the way Mr. Welsh has been led to interpret the intention of the Government.

While on the subject of Government appointments, we notice the *Globe's* "rumor" that Mr. C. D. Thomson (whom the Government did *not* appoint I. C. Railway Cashier at Moncton) is to receive the position of I. C. R. Ticket Agent, to be vacated by Mr. W. H. Olive. The "rumor" was probably thrown out to prevent others pressing their claims for the office which the *Globe's* attacks on Mr. Olive have led many to suppose would be taken from him. Mr. Thomson knows nothing of any movement to appoint him, nor is there the slightest reason for supposing the Government has any such intention. Messrs. George Philips, R. S. Staples and John Melick are applicants for the Ticket Agency; possibly others are urging their claims; but if Mr. Brydges's doctrine holds good, no one but a railway man can get the office, for which Mr. Olive now receives $1500 a year!

LET US SEE! The Province paid out $880,000 in hard cash for the Western Railway. This was "subsidy." The Burpee Ring got all or most of that,—they had their "Associates."—The Province *gave* it.

Next, the Province took $300,000 stock and paid it.—And the Ring and their "Associates" have appropriated the whole of this.

Then they got $60,000 from the City of St. John. This was in stock. The stock was paid up and the same crowd got it.

Then they collected all they possibly could of the private stock subscribed in St. John. What was not paid for voluntarily was sued for. This went the way of the rest, the Ring and their "Associates" profitting.

Then they asked for the St. John Ferries, and these were given them, or rather *sold* to the Ring and their "Associates;" but the city, which owned them, failed to record a mortgage which it took of the steamer and other property that was handed over, and now parties connected with the Ring come in and advertise the sale of this steamer and this ferry under a mortgage of their own!

One of the Ring had already got the whole road, built by the money of the Province, handed over to him as a Trustee, his "Associates" having failed to pay the interest!

To recapitulate:

The Provincial subsidy has gone.

The Provincial stock has gone.

All private stock has gone.

The city stock has gone.

The road itself has gone—that is from Fairville to the Border.

The Ferries are going—they are now advertised for sale in the *Telegraph*.

There only remains a single little lamb which the wolves have not devoured,—the Carleton Branch Railway,—the three miles from the Carleton Ferry to Fairville.

How long does any one suppose this will be left untouched?

And we here in Canada talk of a Boss Tweed and a Jim Fisk, and hold those sinners up as fearful examples of man's cupidity and depravity.

—LT. GOVERNOR TILLEY spoke with great acceptance at the St. Luke's (Church of England) Temperance Society meeting, last evening. His Honor, who is apparently in fine health and spirits, returns to Fredericton this (Saturday) evening.

ST. JOHN AND THE PROVINCIAL PENITENTIARY.

On our first page we have placed the correspondence which has recently passed between Messrs. Mackenzie and Blake, on the one hand, and Robert Marshall, Esq., M. P. P., on the other, in reference to the claim of the city of St. John on the Penitentiary, which is soon to be abandoned, the long term inmates being removed to the new Penitentiary for the Maritime Provinces, which is now being erected at Dorchester. The correspondence deals with a very important subject, important, at least, to the tax-payers of this City. Mr. Marshall, we notice, estimates that the exclusion of the City's short term prisoners from the Penitentiary will impose on the City an annual expenditure of about $8,000 a year, but it would appear that in his desire not to over-state the case he has probably under-estimated the extent of the burthen which the Dominion authorities propose to throw over on the City. There are about 110 short term prisoners in the Penitentiary, nine tenths of whom are from St. John City. The cost of maintaining these in a local prison or House of Correction will probably be nearer $10,000 a year than $8,000. As Mr. Marshall has shown most conclusively, the expense of maintaining the City's short term prisoners was provided for "in perpetuity," in 1841, by the arrangement under which the prison erected by the City was handed over to the Province and became the Provincial Penitentiary. The obligation resting upon the Province to maintain the short term prisoners of St. John is binding on the Dominion and can not be evaded, nor will the proposal to hand over the premises to the City meet the case. There is no call to accept this heavy charge and responsibility, for which the Dominion is bound, nor should it be accepted without the City being properly indemnified. Of course, we do not advise that St. John should oppose that uniformity which is necessary in the treatment of prisoners and the management of the Dominion prisons, and we shall be glad to find that the difficulty has been overcome by candid and generous consideration on the part of the Dominion authorities. At present, matters remain in a very unsatisfactory state, but as the Minister of Justice has called upon his Deputy in this City to send him all the information possible on the subject of Mr. Marshall's claim in behalf of the City, we expect to find something of practical benefit growing out of the correspondence.

It is possible that the Province will be called upon at an early day to provide elsewhere than in County Gaols for minor criminals whose proper destination is a House of Correction or Industrial School. There is also a growing feeling that a general Reformatory is needed for the Province, instead of County Reformatories, as provided by the Reformatory Act recently passed. And although there has been a good deal of talk in the Saint John Sessions about a County Reformatory, and the Sessions have been authorized to expend $20,000 on such an institution, there is comparatively little desire among the rate-payers for a County institution. It is well known that $20,000 will not build the institution, and the County is averse to an increased expenditure. The plans, which have been approved by the Sessions' Reformatory Committee, are such as to involve an expenditure of $32,000 or $33,000,—a sum which the rate-payers can not be induced to sanction. As a matter of public policy, this Reformatory should be a Provincial affair; and there would seem to be an opening now to deal with this subject in connexion with that of one Central Prison for the minor offenders of the whole Province. We have little doubt that if the Legislature of the Province were to authorize the erection of a general prison or House of Correction, with a Reformatory attached, the County of St. John would cheerfully contribute $20,000 or thereabouts of County bonds towards this general institution. The matter, we think, is worthy of consideration. And, seeing the uncertainty that surrounds the future disposition of our minor criminals, the Sessions' Reformatory Committee will do well to take no step that will prevent such a settlement of the difficulty as will be for the best interests of all parts of the Province.

SHIPS AND SHIP-BUILDING.

One of our old shipbuilders is *en route* for the golden shores of California. Mr. Simon Baizley, of Portland, who has built quite a fleet of ships for the Messrs. Scammell Bros. and others of this city, took his departure hence for San Francisco on Monday last. We regret the loss of such men to our community.

Mr. Joseph Rowan, of Indiantown, is about laying down a keel for a ship of 1,100 tons, 8 years class in English Lloyds, for Messrs. Mills & Jago of this port. Success, we say, to the spirit of enterprise which this firm is showing.

At Douglastown, N. B., Mr. Henderson has a vessel Bell advanced for C. C. Watt, Esq., of Newcastle. She will be barque rigged and rate high at English Lloyds.

At Bathurst, John E. O'Brien, Esq., is preparing to construct a large vessel for Messrs. DeVeber and Son, of this city. Mr. John Frederickson, of our city, is foreman of the yard. This vessel under way will have all the latest improvements and seek the highest class given colonial ships by English Lloyds.

At Richibucto, Henry O'Leary, Esq., M. P. P., has a fine vessel in frame, ready for ceiling. She is to be owned by the builder and several other gentlemen. She is under English Lloyds survey.

Messrs. J. & T. Jardine, of Kingston, Kent, have two vessels, of about 800 and 900 tons each, well advanced, in class in English Lloyds. One of the vessels will be launched in early spring, the other in midsummer. The Messrs. Jardine not only build their own vessels, but load and send them off on their account.

Robert Brown, Esq., of Weldford, Kent, expects to have his ship ready for launching in June next. This vessel, agreeably to English Lloyds rules, is being constructed under a substantial and efficient roof, projecting at each end beyond the length and on each side beyond the breadth, a distance equal to half the breadth of the vessel. The protection afforded by such a structure to the work and materials from the vicissitudes and inclemencies of seasons, gives the vessel the advantage of one year in her classification, it being a *desideratum*, however, that the period of construction should extend to twelve months. At present, this is the only exceptional case in the Dominion. The object is to have all the parts well seasoned. The vessel is not hurriedly put together and sent off with green and unseasoned material in her construction. The advantages are apparent, apart from the extension of class which the vessel receives beyond that which she might otherwise be entitled to. The ship under notice is said to be in many points superior to any hitherto built in the Province, this remark being specially applicable to the frame, fastening, finish, etc. Her middle line fastening, extremities, bilges and planking externally up to one fifth the depth of hold is of yellow metal, above which height galvanized iron is used, imported for the purpose. The keelsons, stringers, beams, waterways, sheerstrakes, planksheers and planking in waist, are of Southern hard pine, the topsides, bulwarks, etc., of pitch pine and oak worked very narrow. Parties from various sections of the Dominion, competent to speak on ship construction, have visited the vessel and pronounce her alike creditable to the builder and the Province,—excellent in model, combining the smart appearance of an Aberdeen craft with the carrying qualities of a St. John vessel. The fastening is seen to good advantage in this vessel; it is most extensive and thorough. She has two strong deck frames, the beams and carlings of which are well squared, the former securely kneed. The ends of the ships are strongly connected, and the workmanship is unexceptionable. In a word, she is said to be one of the most valuable ships of her tonnage, comparatively, that has been turned out of builders' hands in the Province, the fire risk alone, on her, having been placed in the early inception of her progress at $100,000. A Mr. Jenkins, of St. John, is the foreman of the yard. The vessel is under contract for a leading shipping firm in Scotland. We congratulate them on this their new acquisition to their fleet, and give Mr. Brown every credit for his spirit of enterprise. This fine ship is building to register 10 years A 1 in English Lloyds.

The importance and recognized superiority of the use of galvanized iron for fittings and fastenings of ships, being generally conceded, Mr. Wm. McAfee, of Water street, has in connexion with his other business entered largely into the manufacture of galvanized iron work, and for the purpose of galvanizing iron bolts, and has erected zinc baths and imported zinc specially for the purpose. He is at present filling a large order for a 1600 ton ship building for G. Carvill, Esq., and Capt. McAfee, at the Marsh Bridge. This description of fastening is required by Lloyds' Register Rules in vessels seeking a high class, for mixed fastenings. The ship under notice will be built to claim eleven years A 1, the longest period ever assigned to a colonial built ship having a spruce frame, by British Lloyds.

[FOR THE WATCHMAN.]

FASHION NOTES.

Although we have for a long time been patient and silent concerning it, the course of our local and foreign correspondence has been completely unimpeded, and questions from parts far and near have accumulated to such an extent that at last, from their very persistency, we are forced into replying to them, though by so doing we shall have to forego our usually connected style and betake ourselves to mere jottings. The questions *in toto* we can not undertake to publish, and even the signatures are in almost every case too personal for reproduction, but we shall do our best in the way of answers, and then if our correspondents do not possess wit enough to discern what is meant as a reply to his or her particular question we can do no more for them, there being in our pharmacy no cure for such utter stupidity.

In point of fashion, velvet as a material for mantles is entirely behind the season, while even for dresses there is a dim prophecy that it will soon subside into disfavor. Tradition partly and partly custom causes many brides to still choose a black velvet sacque for the all important occasion of appearing out, but those who disregard tradition and cling feverishly to what is truly the height of style, prefer long paletots of gros grain, lined and trimmed in some one of many elaborate and fanciful methods, rich fur or feather bands being for those mid winter mantles among the choicest and most suitable.

In altering or replacing the trimmings of hats chosen in the earlier part of the season cardinal red is being gradually superseded by paler tints, such as pale rose, having a yellow tinge of pink coral, tilleul green, ivory white, or a very light shade of Indienne blue. Plush in each of the above [illegible] is handsomer and more stylish than velvet, and in many cases satin is preferred to either plush or velvet. For retrimming black bonnets of either felt or velvet, black satin has a very freshening effect, while for dresse hats, such as those worn at the opera or at weddings, white felt, trimmed with lustrous folds of white satin, is particularly brilliant and stylish.

Lacing is most emphatically "all the rage" this winter, so much so, in fact, that the young lady who interrogates us on the subject need have no fear of bringing herself into disrepute, however extravagantly she may adopt the prevailing fancy. Long ago, when the verb to lace meant a liberal disregard for the doctors commands and open disrespect for all sanitary dogmas, sensible people never looked upon it with an eye of approval, but now the verb is subjected to so many conjugations that every one of them is innocent. Thus, for example, bodices in the Renaissance style are laced before and behind; overskirts are laced down one side and have the pockets trimmed to match; basques are buttoned in front and laced at the back; laced boots are more fashionable than those which are buttoned; French ladies wear gloves furnished with eyelets, laced like a corset with silk cord, which is trimmed on the ends by soft fluffy tassels of silk combed out and crimped; and now, lastly, we find linen collars with high English bands, to which are added in front two pieces of linen as long as a collarette and laced together with fine silk cord, either white, cardinal or any other color which the wearer may prefer.

As the January sun begins to gather a feeble increase of strength, ladies who are fearful of the ravages he works upon their complexion are beginning to adopt the usage of veils, though, as those ravages are as yet far from severe, the material chosen for veiling is seldom more substantial than black silk net or tulle. Black and white tulle are equally fashionable, but spotted or figured net is very little worn, the reason being perhaps that at a very little distance the figuring upon it has somewhat the same effect as the black patches in which the *belles* of the seventeenth and later centuries were wont to delight. True, of course, we have never seen a veil ornamented with half moons, coaches and fours, or any of those heathenish designs which historians describe as belonging to that period, but even when simply figured with flowers or vines this style of veil does not commonly produce a pleasing effect.

Catagon nets have gone almost completely out of fashion. Catagon braids are slowly following in their wake; and now the probability seems to be that in a very short time the hair will be mounted to an extreme height exactly on the top of the head. The most fashionable shade for hair just at present is a red gold tint, called Titian red, Titian by courtesy, but otherwise the positive, aggressive red so popular in the days of Queen Elizabeth. Young ladies possessing auburn hair by nature are, for the time at least, fortunate in their possessions, while, on the other hand, we are credibly informed that many who are not so gifted are dying their unfashionable locks so that they may fall in with the popular caprice. For gray hair, however, whether natural or premature, there is no dye used, this shade having also become an object of admiration rather than a defect. The Pompadour coiffiure, rolled back from the forehead, with finger puffs on top and either a twist or chatelaine braid behind, is an especially stylish way of putting up gray hair, that is, where the color is premature, very old ladies still adhering to the fashion of three pretty puffs on each side of the face and a braided coil behind.

Old fashioned long purses are in use again and are made just as fancifully as those wherein our grandmothers deposited their shillings, pence and farthings. Some are made of gold threads, knitted in with blue silk and held by silver rings ornamented with blue enamel; others are of dark green or seal brown purse silk, held by gold rings, while others again are made of Spanish silver wire and suspended as a chatelaine from the belt. Either of the styles specified can be bought, but the neat fingered class of womanhood, to whom we are so constantly appealing, will find very little difficulty in enrolling those purses upon the list of their articles for home manufacture.

The most popular dress trimmings in vogue at present are fancy and embroidered braids, passementerie and fringes of all kinds. Embroidered braids, however, threaten to become vulgar, when, of course, they will instantly fall into disuse. The explanation of their vulgarity is that they are growing cheap, but if this explanation be true, the same catastrophe will never overtake the chenille and satin bands which are so much worn at present and which never can be anything else but extremely expensive. Stamped velvet bands are also coming into very strong favor, though not to the extent of either chenille or satin. In self-made trimmings, the rose leaf plaiting is still the choicest style, that is for rich fabrics, but in woollen materials a novelty, rather more noticeable for its oddity than its beauty, consists of cloth cut like fringe at the edge and laid in three or four rows, one above the other, there being as many different shades of the same color as there are rows of cloth.

It is in Paris principally, if not altogether, that flowers are considered secondary in point of adornment. In every other fashionable city they are regarded as the most beautiful embellishment a girlish toilette can possess and are worn in the most lavish profusion, not only upon the hair and corsage, but upon the main part of the dress as well, whole overskirts being frequently composed of them. Thus our correspondent, whom we know to be young and suppose to be fair, can understand that to be "Queen rose of the rose-bud garden of girls" has a deeper meaning nowadays than at the time when "Maud" was so christened, the term being now capable of the most literal application. For overskirts, vines are prettier than ruffles, though this altogether depends upon the nature and trimming of the dress, ruffles being the most suitable with draperies of heavy silk, while, for soft, transparent fabrics, hanging sprays are by far more appropriate. Cardinal flowers are becoming to almost every one, and yet in flowers, as in all other trimmings, paler tints are now more popular, especially for more than ordinary gala occasions. All the millinery and dry goods establishments in the city keep party flowers on hand, but among the very choicest we have seen were those shown us at Manchester, Robertson & Allison's.

In fans, those most fashionable are of ivory or tortoise shell, mounted with ostrich feathers. Many are made of cock's plumes, but the ostrich feathers are, of course, far more elegant and stylish, being preferable even to the Japanese oddities which are drugging the markets at this present time. Brides use fans of white silk, satin or kid, some of which are painted in Louis Quatorze style by such artists as Albert and Deschamps, while others again, belonging to ladies who prefer their own individuality to those of the greatest celebrities, are simply ornamented with the owner's monogram in very large letters. In size, all styles have dwindled down to a happy medium, being neither so large as those lately used, nor so small as those of former seasons. As it has passed into truism with the French that a lady's character can be very accurately discerned by the manner in which she manipulates her fan, and as a small or medium sized fan is certainly easier to manipulate than those of last season, we suppose there are many who will rejoice at their diminution, even while the greater majority would, if fashion so permitted, still cling to those movable screens which were such effectual and prettily coquettish shields from firelight, moulight, or, above all things, the "battery of soft glances." A pretty girl's armor and ammunition is almost beyond enumeration, but on exhibition occasions there are few times when she looks prettier than when seen

"Smiling soft, perhaps, and dreamy
Through the wavings of her fan."

And, of course, if the fan is large and handsome the effect is so much better.

Having settled, or, at least, tried to settle this question, we are forced to conclude, though, as our answers are not more than half finished, we have still a batch of correspondents to attend to in our next issue.

LETTER FROM OTTAWA.

(SPECIAL CORRESPONDENCE OF "THE WATCHMAN")

Where is the special correspondent of THE WATCHMAN who entered the sacred Council Chamber and published to the world the secrets of "Our Rulers?" The Council has been in session several times of late, and yet we have had from your ubiquitous Reporter only a preliminary "meeting," which simply whetted the appetite for what was expected to follow. Up here we are relying on THE WATCHMAN to keep us informed of what goes on in the Grit *sanctum sanctorum*, and we all beg of you not to go back on us in this particular. Many had surmised that there were heartburnings and squabbles among the Great Reform leaders, but until we read those WATCHMAN reports, giving the very words of Blake, Mackenzie, Cauchon, Burpee and "all that sort of people," we did not believe that the leading spirits carried their known quarrelsome dispositions to such extremes. It is well the country has one faithful newspaper, and one bold journalist who will adventure even into the lions' den and with lifelike fidelity describe what there he sees and hears. All honor to THE WATCHMAN'S Secret Agent. Let him but continue in the good course he has mapped out and generations to come will rise up and call him Blessed.

Your readers have heard of the efforts the office-holders here are making to induce Parliament and the Government to insure their lives and pay the premium out of the public funds,—for this is really what the movement means. These folks call themselves "the Civil Service," Canada's Civil Service, apparently, being confined to office-holders in Ottawa. They talk about a deduction being made from their salaries, regularly, to meet the premium charge, but we all understand how the affair will be operated. The Government is to constitute itself a life insurance office, and is to insure at a much less rate than private companies would take the risk for. As a matter of course, we shall have salaries increased so that officials may not feel the deductions. Of late years, we have had "bonuses" for officials and increases of salaries, and an immense amount of special work given out to clerks to enable them to meet the outlays induced by their extravagant personal expenditures. It is surely a nice state of things. There are now in Ottawa twice as many clerks as are needed; the salaries of a great majority of them are out of all proportion to their labor, although a number of really deserving officials are underpaid; and yet for this great army and all who are to succeed them the tax-payers of the Dominion are to be taxed to provide for their widows and orphans! This very exclusive Civil Service Life Insurance arrangement, it appears, is to be confined for the present to Ottawa, and, if I mistake not, it comes on top of the existing provision for a Superannuation allowance, and of the claim of all Dominion Government officials to be exempt from local taxes such as their fellow citizens everywhere pay!! If this is not a step in the direction of building up an aristocracy, it is certainly creating a privileged class to be fastened on the back of the country and maintained for all time to come. What do your New Brunswick merchants, professional men, mechanics and farmers think of such an arrangement? Perhaps some of them do not know that at the present moment they are paying a large proportion of the life insurance premiums of the Inter-Colonial Railway officials, besides paying the premium on their bonds to the Canada Guarantee Company; but such is the fact, nevertheless—a fresh tax for which we have to thank Brydges and the Grits. It almost seems as if all this country is good for is to support officials,—to be ridden to death by officials,—to allow officials to fix their own salaries and perquisites and constitute themselves the supreme authority in the State. Happy Canada which enjoys the advantage of so much "official" care for purely "official" ends! What the "sum total of the whole" will be when those two or three thousand Grits, whose applications are on file in the Departments and in Ministerial pigeon holes, reach the offices they are clamoring for, who can tell?

J. W. S.

MANAGEMENT OF THE INTER-COLONIAL RAILWAY.

ACCIDENTS.

At least, three accidents have occurred on the Inter-Colonial during the past ten days, only one of which has been mentioned in the Government papers. There may have been more, but we have heard of these. At or near Bloomfield Station, a freight train of fifteen cars jumped the track, and an accident of some kind occurred at or near Macean. There is no reference to either of these in the Government Press. The accident between Dorchester and Sackville on Thursday of this week is this referred to in the *Telegraph*:—

ANOTHER INTERCOLONIAL RAILWAY ACCIDENT.—Five miles south of Dorchester there was a railway accident yesterday morning. The express that left Moncton about 5.30, to connect with the northern train, ran into a special proceeding ahead of it, and telescoped a freight train on the rear of the leading train (?). No one was hurt. The snow was flying about at the time and drifting badly.

How an express leaving Moncton to connect with a northern train could find itself "five miles south of Dorchester" we can not understand. A correspondent of THE WATCHMAN writes:—

"The train which leaves Moncton at 5.45 a. m. for Halifax ran to-day into a freight train (also going east) somewhere near Dorchester. The freight train, which left Moncton about 3 a. m. had got stuck by snow, and when the Express came along she tried to pass the "freight" on the same track, but it would not budge. Considerable damage. No doubt, the *Telegraph's* report will belittle the affair, and perhaps some poor brakesman will stand the blunt for a month's pay."

Another correspondent, nearer the scene, writes us:—

"This morning the St. John freight from Moncton stuck on the grade about five miles west of Sackville. The Canadian express, due at Sackville at 7.21, came along at a thundering pace and telescoped into the freight. Two passengers in the freight passenger car saw the express coming and jumped for their lives and thereby saved them. Their car was demolished, and the beautiful new engine of the express, said to be one of the best on the road, is reported entirely demolished."

From the facts here stated, the public will be able to form some estimate of the way in which railway news is cooked for the Government organs.—Another correspondent of THE WATCHMAN very properly remarks "that under Mr. Brydges' 'purely economical principles' management, the I. C. R. will soon be as well strewn with the debris of wrecked trains as the Grand Trunk used to be in days gone by."

[From the Moncton Times.]

At Bloomfield, below Hampton, on Thursday night last, fifteen coal cars of the Moncton freight train left the track, and ninety tons of coal were laid down at Bloomfield. There was not coal enough at St. John to admit of an engine being sent there to clear the track, and the work had to be done from this end. In Mr. Carvell's time sufficient coal was always kept at St. John, but it is different now.

On the next day (Friday) four hoppers and three flat cars left the track at Maccan, and, rolling down the bank, 54 tons of coal were discharged in the expeditious manner common on the Inter-Colonial. Cause—broken axle.

[Halifax Chronicle of Thursday.]

DELAYED.—The Inter-Colonial train last night was delayed for a couple of hours by the breaking down of the engine at River Phillip.

THE I. C. R. TICKET AGENCY.

[From the Globe, Jan. 22.]

There is a rumor that Mr. Charles D. Thomson has been appointed to the position of Ticket Agent for the Inter-Colonial Railway in Saint John, at present filled by Mr. W. H. Olive. We have been unable to have the rumor verified; and perhaps there is no other foundation for it than that as Mr. Thomson is now a sort of supernumerary, and as there has been some talk of Mr. Olive's removal, the prudence and the economical principles of the Government would dictate such a course. Mr. Thomson's appointment would be well received.

"A sort of supernumerary," says the *Globe!* For shame! Did not the *Freeman* say the other day that Mr. Thomson had received the appointment of assistant to Freight Agent Pick at head-quarters on account of the bewildering, overwhelming rush in the freight business, the great increase in which had exceeded the most sanguine expectations of the most sanguine of railway managers? And now another Government organ steps to the front and declares, in effect, that the *Freeman's* pretty theory is all nonsense and that the country is really paying a salary to an official without duties! It is, indeed, to the disgrace of the Government that Mr. Thomson, who is a first-rate officer and occupied a position which he had no desire to leave, finds himself without duties or fixed position simply because of a whim of the powers that be.

THE RAILWAY CAR CONTRACT.

The *Telegraph* has not a word to say about the very suspicious manner in which the contract for 300 railway freight cars was given to an Ontario firm who, by some wonderful prescience, managed to tender just *one dollar* per car lower than anybody else. Nor has the *News*; nor yet the *Globe*. All are silent, except the *Freeman*, and it might as well have remained silent for all the light it sheds on the transaction. It says:—

THE WATCHMAN appears to think it a grievance that a contract for a number of cars for the Intercolonial was given to the person whose tender was lowest, that person not being Mr. Harris, of Portland. THE WATCHMAN is, perhaps, not much astray in assuming that tenders for so important a contract should have been asked by public advertisement; but to publish such an advertisement in all the Provinces would cost no inconsiderable amount.

It does not appear to have struck the *Freeman* that the Minister of Public Works might properly have divided the contract and allotted a portion to a St. John contractor, when the difference was only one to five dollars per car. It appears to have overlooked the fact that when, as in the case of the Goderich Harbor Improvement contract, it suited the interests of the Government to reject the lowest tender, it was rejected and two other low offers rejected and the very highest accepted, although the lowest contractor was a first-class man, and his securities undoubted,—the Government losing Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars for the country by the operation. Even though Mr. Harris's offer had been accepted, say, for 150 of the cars, the Government would only be paying in cash $750 more than if the very lowest tender had been accepted; but, as a matter of fact, there would really be nothing extra paid out, since these cars would at once be placed on a portion of the line where they will be sadly needed before they rre ready. The truth is,—and the *Freeman* might as well admit the fact at once,—the contract has been placed where it will do the most good, in a political sense.

The *Freeman's* reference to the cost of advertising a Government contract in the Government Press calls for explanation. What does the *Freeman* mean? This car contract actually involves an expenditure of about $160,000—it was expected to call for a good deal more. Why should the Government newspapers charge such prices that the Government of nearly four millions of people, with an annual income of twenty millions of dollars, can not afford to invite tenders for a $160,000 contract for public work through their columns? Light is wanted here, if the *Freeman* suggests a valid reason for not putting up the work to public competition. The *Freeman* can not very well let the matter rest where it leaves it. The country should know the full meaning of what the *Freeman* hints at. It ought to have the matter solved: the interest of the public and the reputation of the Government journals call for it. The *Freeman* evidently knows more than it has stated, and it ought to share its information with the public.

DETENTIONS.

Says the Fredericton *Reporter*, of Wednesday:—

Perhaps this [the *Freeman's*] want of rolling stock theory accounts for the delay of 17 hours experienced between Moncton and Campbellton a few days ago.

Scarcely. Freight cars are probably wanted for the business that is to be transacted at some future date, but of engines there is an abundance and of the most expensive description.

MOLSON'S BANK AND THE I. C. R.

[From the Moncton Times.]

Molsons' bills suffer a discount of one per cent. at the Bank of Montreal here and checks on Molson's Bank, given to employes in payment of wages, are *shunned at one per cent. by the Railway itself* when paid at head quarters here. When an employe on the Northern Division comes to town to get his month's pay, he is given a check on Molson's Bank, and when he takes that check to the Cashier to exchange for current funds, he finds that instead of $50 his month's wages amount to only $49.50.

This idea of starting a Government shaving shop at head quarters must be Brydges's own, and it might not be improper to enquire whether the general profits are likewise his, or if they are to go towards making up Cartwright's annual deficit. Anyhow, the business is a disgrace to somebody, and shows how quick purification is being carried on.

PREVENTING ACCIDENTS.

[From the Miramichi Gleaner.]

We learn from the St. John *Globe* that a collision occurred upon the Intercolonial, near Humphrey's, on Saturday last, in consequence of the brakesman, who was sent out from a disabled train to stop another which was approaching, having neglected to take his signals with him. Surely the Managers of the Intercolonial are very neglectful of the public safety, if they permit their employes to remain in ignorance of the mode of stopping an approaching train without the use of the "flag." Under the old management there was not a railway official who did not know that by standing in the centre of the track, and holding both arms upward in view