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POOR DOCUMENT

THE EVENING GAZETTE

is published every evening (Sundays excepted) at No. 21 Canterbury Street.

JOHN A. BOWES, Editor and Publisher

THE EVENING GAZETTE will be delivered at any house in the cities of St. John and Portland for a month for thirty-five cents. The subscription may be paid at the office, or to any news agent who sells the GAZETTE.

ST. JOHN, N. B., FRIDAY, MAR. 29, 1889

THE SOLICTOR GENERAL'S EXPLANATION

If any reader of the GAZETTE desires an explanation of the remarkable fact that a single article published in this paper, should so utterly demoralize the opponents to the St. John and Portland emergency bill that they should, one and all, hasten to declare themselves its supporters, they will find a complete one in the consideration that every word of that article, so far as it related to what had occurred in St. John, was strictly true. We might indeed have gone much further and disclosed the influences which were used to affect the Provincial Secretary and Mr. Quinton but as these gentlemen had not finally yielded to these influences, such a course was not deemed necessary. The Solicitor General on the contrary did yield to the pressure which was brought to bear upon him, and he alone of all the St. John members was found objecting to the suspension, of the rule of the House which requires publication of a private bill. But for this objection the bill might have been passed on Tuesday, and, as it was absolutely necessary that it should become law before Saturday, when nominations had to be filed, Mr. Ritchie's opposition, if persisted in, might have defeated it and postponed the consummation of the union of St. John and Portland for another year. That this was the little game of the opponents of union is now as clear as day, but the whole scheme was unmasked by the GAZETTE, the plot suddenly collapsed and the conspirators, who had been secretly working the wires, hastened to hide themselves away in holes and corners, from which they will emerge, looking as innocent as doves, and declaring that they always were the friends of union.

We publish today the explanation which Mr. Ritchie deemed necessary to make while the emergency bill was being passed yesterday, and we think that, when he comes to consider what he has said, the Solicitor General in his cooler moments will come to the conclusion that it would have been better for him to have remained silent. For a law officer of the crown Mr. Ritchie permits himself much too easily too fall into the evil habit of calling names. His speech would have been altogether better and more to the purpose if he had stated explicitly why he opposed the suspension of the rule with regard to the bill on Tuesday, and had abstained from the use of such epithets as "narrow minded bigot" and others of a similar character. There was no bigotry involved in the attack on Mr. Ritchie. The same hand that penned the article of which he complains, deposited a ballot for him at his first election, and although it has written many articles for the press never wrote one in which voters were asked to vote against the Solicitor General or any other man because he was a Roman Catholic. But when a canvass is made through a large city ward for a man who is a candidate for Alderman, on the ground that he is a Roman Catholic and when it is arranged that every Roman Catholic voter in the ward is to plump the Roman Catholic candidate; when the candidature of this young man is made the moving cause which impelled Mr. Ritchie to impede and obstruct union; then it is time for those who are not Roman Catholics to be on the alert; then it is time for a fearless and independent newspaper like THE GAZETTE to cry "To your tents, O Israel"; then it is right to warn the electors of St. John that their wishes are likely to be defeated by a petty intrigue originating in bigotry, and carried on for objects so contemptible that they are unworthy to be named.

Mr. Ritchie says he is not opposed to union and that he was not opposed to the emergency bill. If so, he has a singular way of disclosing his sentiments. He seems to have impressed Dr. Alward, Dr. Stockton, and several other gentlemen, with the idea that he was opposed to the bill. And if he was friendly to the bill, why should he have taken such mortal offence at the visit of Messrs. McMillan, Robertson and Thorne to Fredericton, or why should he now speak of them in such terms of contempt as a "self-constituted committee," and as of no more account than "any other three respectable men from Saint John." The three gentlemen thus spoken of in such light terms by the Solicitor General, were by no means a self-constituted committee. They are among the leading business men of St. John, members of the Council of the Board of of Trade, and they represent the business men of this city. It was certainly a very public spirited act on their part to drop their own avocations and go to Fredericton to look after the public interests, and we can assure the public that their arrival in Fredericton had a most important influence on the union question. It convinced the Attorney General, on whom everything depended, the people of St. John were in earnest, and it wholly neutralized the effect of about two bushels of letters which Messrs. McLellan and Quinton had received from people who had private reasons of their own for wishing to see union retarded or defeated. Another public spirited citizen Mr. James Manchester, had intended to accompany the three others to Fredericton, so that the delegation would have stood two Liberals and two Conservatives, but at the last moment, Mr. Manchester found that his private business would not permit him to go. Mr. Howard D. Troop was also to have been a member of the committee, but private business also interfered in his case and, at the last moment, Mr. George Robertson was requested to go in his place. We do not think that the Solicitor General can afford to deal in low sneers at such gentlemen as Messrs. Manchester, McMillan, Troop, Thorne and Robertson. The fact that one of these gentlemen owns a newspaper, and that they all occupy prominent positions and have large bank accounts, would not strike the ordinary reader as a reason why their representations should not be listened to, although the Solicitor General apparently thinks otherwise. In this, as in other ways connected with this business, Mr. Ritchie seems to have put himself very decidedly in the wrong. The time has not yet come when wealth, respectability and ability have to bow to ignorance and bigotry, although the Solicitor General apparently looks for such a day.

UNION IS ASSURED.

The emergency bill, postponing the civic elections in St. John and Portland, having been passed in the House yesterday and assented to by the Lieutenant Governor, the union of St. John and Portland into one city is now assured. The Common Clerk, whose knowledge of matters connected with the charter and the acts in amendment of it is greater than that of any man living, is making good progress with the work of drafting the union bill, and the prospects are that it will be ready for the Legislature early next week or by the time the franchise bill and the other government measures have been disposed of. Should the bill be introduced by the 3rd of April it should, unless very defective indeed, have passed both houses by the 10th, and if this can be accomplished the elections for the united city may be brought on at a very early day, possibly by the 30th April, which would be a convenient time for all parties. It is the opinion of the GAZETTE that the sooner the elections are held the better and, in this view of the case, the public generally concur. The extreme desire the GAZETTE has shown for union and immediate union, has been prompted by a wish to advance the interests of St. John and to see this city great and flourishing. It is a source of pride and gratification to be able to say that the views of the GAZETTE on this matter have been the views of the people of St. John, and that they have been endorsed and carried out by the Legislature. The representatives of New Brunswick generally, have viewed with favor a measure designed to take away the reproach, under which we have so long labored, of having two seperate cities at the mouth of this river, and to reveal St. John in its true proportions as the largest city in the Maritime Provinces and the fourth in Canada. To the members from other counties it has been long a subject of regret that St. John and Portland were not united and they will heartily assist in the work of making them one.

It will be necessary, we presume, for a strong delegation to go up from St. John to assist the committee of the legislature in perfecting any details of the bill that may require amendment, and such a committee would properly include the Common Clerk and the Recorder, and three or four of the oldest aldermen. These, with the commissioners, should be able to give the legislature all the help they will need in passing the act of union.

NOTE AND COMMENT.

A prominent Roman Catholic, who is a very active supporter of Mr. Ritchie at elections, was about Chubb's corner yesterday and made himself very conspicuous by comparing Messrs McMillan, Thorne and Robertson, the three gentlemen who went to Fredericton to see the St. John members, to the three tailors of Tooley Street, who in a memorial to the Czar styled themselves "We, the people of England." The comparison, however, was not a happy one, for while the three tailors spoke merely for the Peace Society, the three gentlemen named voiced the wishes of more than two thousand voters in this city and county. Nor are the three tailors themselves to be despised for it would have been better for the Czar and the people of both Russia and England if he had listened to their advice. Comparisons are odious, and this one made by Mr. Ritchie's friend was particularly out of place.

Colonel O'Brien's resolutions in regard to the Jesuits Estates bill were defeated last night in the House of Commons by a vote of 188 to 13. This result is in accordance with the predictions of the GAZETTE and with its frequently expressed views as to the merits of the case. The proper place to oppose a bad bill, which it is within the power of a Provincial Legislature to pass, is in the Legislature itself. To interfere with provincial rights in such a case as a remedy for evil provincial legislation is fraught with danger, and it was this fact which made the majority against Colonel O'Brien's resolutions so large.

Dr. Alward's zeal for Union has been made a subject of reproach by Mr. Ritchie, who took occasion to say in his speech yesterday, that he had not thought there was any Irish blood in Dr. Alward's veins, but the lively way he stepped around at that meeting in the speaker's room suggested that he had been mistaken. Dr. Alward comes from good loyalist stock and he is naturally anxious to see the city of the Loyalists advanced to its true position. When he found the wishes of the people of St. John likely to be defeated by back-stairs intrigues, he thought it a good time to step around lively, in the interests of his constituents, and he was right.

The fate of the resolutions, which wer introduced by Dr. Stockton in the House of Assembly yesterday, in favor of giving the franchise to women will be watched with interest. Dr. Stockton would give the franchise to widows and spinsters who possess $100 worth of real estate, $400 worth of personal property, $400 of income or who are licensed teachers or professors. We do not believe that any good reason can be offered why such women should not have votes.

It is a remakable fact that none of the St. John papers that support Mr. Ritchie has had a word to say in his favor in regard to his attitude on the question of union. The Daily Telegraph is silent, the Evening Traitor is dumb as an oyster. Why is this? Is it because Mr. Ritchie is wholly wrong; or is that the two papers in question are afraid of the GAZETTE? The public will probably believe that both considerations prevail with our two dis-esteemed contemporaries.

The Czar is being reminded of the dangers which constantly threaten an absolute monarch by the discovery of a gigantic plot, existing throughout the empire, for another series of attempts on in his life. It is as true now, as it was in the fourth Henry's day, that "uneasy lies the head that wears a crown."

The Solicitor General says that he has never yet allowed himself to be controlled by any clique, and that he does not propose to do so now. What about the organization that has its head-quarters at Hamilton's Hall, and which has for its organ and mouthpiece the Evening Traitor?

SOLICITOR GENERAL RITCHIE.

He Continues His Attack on "The Gazette" and Has a Good Deal to say About Bigotry.

FREDERICTON, March 29.—In the House of Assembly this afternoon Dr. Alward committed the bill to provide that certain civic election shall not be held in the cities of St. John and Portland during April of this year, Mr. Moore in the chair. He spoke of the appoutment of the union commission last year, of their successful labors, of the union scheme being carried by a large majority, and of the desire of the people of St. John and Carleton to have the union scheme crystalized into law as soon as possible. The commissioners in the interest of the two cities suggested that the civic elections of St. John and Portland should be delayed for a short time, pending the preparation of the bill for the consummation of the union. It was thought that the final bill would be ready in a short time, and that the elections would only be delayed a short time, because of the passage of this bill.

Dr. Berryman said he had perhaps an advantage over his colleagues, so far as being able to guage public opinion in St. John and Portland in reference to this matter, having been in both cities quite recently. The feeling in both cities was that the work of union should be completed as soon as possible. That was the opinion of the sober, steady and thinking portion of the public of both cities. The wishes of the people were that the government should press forward the work of completing the union with no unnecessary delay. The fact that the matter was in an unsettled state interfered with business and with the plans of certain politicians. On every hand there was a feeling that the work of union should close in the shortest time possible.

Hon. Mr. Ritchie said the bill was intended to obviate the necessity of holding two sets of elections. He was in favor of the bill, provided that the elections in the united city could take place about thirty days after the usual time of holding civic elections in St. John and Portland. He regretted to say that he observed a disposition in some quarters to create the impression that he was, or is, or might be opposed to this bill. He had been very much honored in this respect. He was at a loss to understand how any person desiring to be considered worthy of credit should have attempted to create the idea that he was opposed to this measure. The members of the municipality committee knew that for years he was in favor of union of St. John and Portland. So did most of the members of this house and there was now within the hearing of his voice a gentleman, at one time mayor of Portland, who knew how strongly he was and is in favor of the union. For some reason or another some persons seemed active in the attempt to misrepresent his position on this question. His views in reference to this bill were and are exactly in accord with Hon. Mr. McLellan and Mr. Quinton. They felt that it was unwise to have two sets of Mayors and aldermen if it were possible to have the scheme of union completed so as to bring on an election in the united city at an early date. They had agreed to support an emergency bill, provided there was fair evidence that the consummation of the union scheme would not be delayed beyond a reasonable date. They had all agreed on that McLellan, Quinton and himself. That was before the GAZETTE's first article misrepresenting his position had appeared, and before the self constituted committee had come Fredericton. Just as soon as the telegraph wires brought the news that the people of St. John and Portland had decide in favor of union, the government took steps to have the scheme consummated, and the leader of the government said the legislature would be held a week if necessary in order that the final bill might be considered and crystalized into law. He had held the opinion that if the union scheme could not be perfected so as to permit of holding the elections before the close of the year this bill should not pass, and he wished to say that that was his opinion now. He desired this information to go to the country for the benefit of those who considered it a right to misrepresent his position and call upon him to leave the government. He did not know whether or not he had displeased the self constituted committee that had come here from St. John. He had never yet allowed himself to be controlled by a clique, nor did he propose to do so now. (Hear, hear.) It was stated in a certain quarter that he was opposed to this bill because he was a Roman Catholic and because he wanted some young gentleman elected in a certain ward in St. John. Hon. members of this house knew that he did not allow a matter of religion to effect him one way or another, and the mind that had put forward the different idea was a very narrow and contracted one. As he had said McLellan and Quinton were in accord with him in reference to this whole matter. Did they take their position on this question because of a certain young Catholic gentleman running an election in Wellington ward? Certainly not. And still the charge could be made as truthfully against them as against himself. Dr. Alward and Mr. Quinton and himself had talked this matter over in St. John on Saturday. They were then all in favor of the union scheme being consummated at the earliest possible date. He never held any other opinions. His views, favorable to union, were known to the editor of THE GAZETTE on Saturday last, and he had expressed them to the latter that day. Notwithstanding all this, that paper comes out a few days later charging him with being opposed to this bill and calling upon him to leave the government. The fact of his being in the government seemed to be the trouble with the persons trying to misrepresent him. Why were not the provincial secretary and Mr. Quinton attacked as he had been—their views were just the same as his. They had all agreed to vote for a bill like this, provided it did not put the elections off until too late a date. They were not, and he was not now willing to have the elections put off to October or December and thus give almost two terms to officials elected for one year. The member for St. John (Dr. Alward) knows that while he (Ritchie) was in St. John last Saturday he gave almost his entire time to getting information on the question of union, so as to better assist in bringing about the consummation of the scheme at the earliest possible date. Yet the paper in which he is attacked represents him as spending his time in one of the city wards in the atmosphere of the Cathedral. That was nicely put and its object was very apparent. He did not deny being a Roman Catholic but he thought the hon. members of this house would give him credit of honestly trying to represent all classes. (applause) Certain papers might misrepresent him as much as they pleased and certain persons might make covert attacks upon him. He was quite willing to be judged by the members of this house as to any of his public acts. He did not regard the attacks—the dishonest attacks—of any narrow minded bigot. He wished it to be understood that he never said that he would oppose a bill such as the one before the house, nor had he ever the slightest intention of doing so, unless it would appear that the elections could not be held until late in the year. He had great confidence in the future of St. John, and was now, as he was three years ago, a warm supporter of union. While supporting this bill he thought that if it was found later that the elections in the united city could not be held about the first week in May that this bill should be repealed. While sound on the question of union he was not in favor of legislating to continue men in office if there was a reasonable probability that the elections in the united city could not take place until late in the year.

Mr. Hanington—You ought to thank THE GAZETTE for its attack on you.

Hon. Mr. Ritchie—I don't think it will do any harm. The article seems to have been written on information furnished by some narrow-minded person. The day has gone by in this province when anything is made by attacking a man because of his religion (Applause.) That kind of thing is played out in New Brunswick. (Applause.) A man is no longer judged by the cut of his coat. (Applause) The provincial secretary had said that he (Ritchie) was no more religious than he had ought to be. (Laughter and applause) He confessed that and supposed that the provincial secretary was quite as religious as he was. (Laughter.) When the five other representatives of St. John city, and city and county and himself were elected he thought the people regarded them as quite competent to look after their interests. He did not recognize the right of any self-constituted committee to come here to dictate to them, whether such committee was composed of gentlemen owning one or more newspapers or holding prominent positions, or having a large bank account. He had the greatest respect for Mr. McMillan, Mr. Thorne and George Robertson, even though the latter two had done all they could to defeat the local government ticket at the last election. He had met them in the speaker's room the other night, but he was not disposed to pay more regard to their opinions than he would to anyother three respectable men from St. John. They had not come in any representative capacity. He had not thought that there was any Irish blood in the hon. member from St. John (Alward), but the lively way that the hon. member stepped around at that meeting in the speaker's room suggested that he (Ritchie) had been mistaken. (Laughter.) It was interesting to see the provincial secretary embrace the hon. member for St. John and assure him that things would be all right in the morning. (Laughter). Dr. Alward did not meet the representatives of the city and city and county of St. John again—(as agreed upon), after that midnight meeting with the self-constituted committee—the self-styled delegation. The hon. gentleman may have been more anxious to consult the views of the latter gentlemen than desirous to talk the matter over with his colleagues and thus without consulting them next morning, brought in the bill in question before his colleagues had taken their seats. It was proper that the bill should go before the standing rules committee, and it was absurd to say that an adherence to the rules of the house as to the reception of this bill was intended to defeat the measure. There was no reason why the bill should not go before the standing rules committee, whose duty it was to recommend the suspension of the rule. As a member of such committee he (Ritchie) moved the suspension of the rule. It was idle to say that the passage of the bill had been jeopardized in any way by anything that he (Ritchie) had done, as any one familiar with parliamentary practice knows and only a desire to do him a gross injustice could have suggested the contrary. He regretted that any one should have considered it his duty to go out of the way to influence the editor to write the articles which appeared on Monday and last evening. On Saturday the editor of the GAZETTE knew from himself (Ritchie) that he was not opposed to any bill intended to assist in completing the Union scheme. On Monday out came the untruthful and unwarranted article that Mr. Quinton and himself were trying to defeat the union of the two cities. About the time that the paper containing this editorial was on its way to Fredericton on the same train in which came Dr. Alward and Stockton and the St. John gentlemen whom they all met that night, Messrs McLellan, Quinton and himself (Ritchie) were considering how they could best advance the union scheme and had determined to support this bill unless it contemplated the delaying of the elections till late in the year. He was sorry that some one had deceived the editor of the GAZETTE and he also observed that some one from this city had sent a misleading despatch to The Sun in reference to the action requiring the suspension of the rules. He regretted to have taken up so much time of the house but he felt it due to himself and his constituents to make this explanation on account of the effort of some one to do him an injustice.

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Dated the 25th day of March, A. D., 1889.

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Creditors are required to execute the Trust Deed within three months, in order to participate in the estate.

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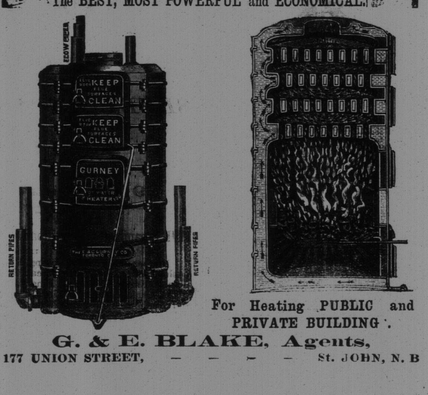

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