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ST. JOHN STAR.

ST. JOHN, N. B., APRIL 15, 1908.

ELECTORAL SYSTEMS.

The electors of St. John will on Tuesday next be asked to express an opinion as to the relative values of three different methods of choosing aldermen. The vote will undoubtedly be a light one, for as there are to be only a few ward contests and as no deep interest is manifested in civic affairs, many voters will not take the trouble of going to the polls. Those who do stir themselves sufficiently to exercise the franchise will be asked to decide between the ward system, which is in vogue at present, — the old method which prevailed two years ago and under which all aldermen were elected by the city as a whole, and the district system, a nebulous scheme not yet outlined by its supporters.

Frequent changes cannot be considered advisable. Jumping about from one place to another is unsettling to say the least. A mistake was made in introducing the ward system which was really forced on the people by an aldermanic clique, but it is better to continue as at present than to make another change next year. If any different plan of civic government is to be adopted it should be an improvement over the one now existing, and the district system is more desirable than that under which aldermen are elected by the city as a whole, of the other in which ward representatives are chosen. Until some definite scheme, whether a commission or board of control, is outlined, it will be best to have matters remain as they are at present. Let St. John electors vote for the retention of the existing system and exercise their brains in endeavoring to formulate some more modern civic government.

THE NOMINATIONS.

The only unexpected feature of yesterday's nominations was the retirement of Ald. Spragg who for reasons best known to himself, has decided to withdraw in favor of ex-Ald. Rowan. Had this move been anticipated it is probable that other candidates would have taken the field. There is little serious opposition to any of the other aldermen seeking re-election, as most of those who are opposed have been able to win with large majorities in the past. The number of candidates for office as aldermen at large is below the ordinary, but to balance this there is an over-supply in Queens, following the retirement of Ald. Bullock. There will be few changes in the council; the absolute lack of interest on the part of St. John citizens is once more responsible for the failure to make any radical improvements in the governing body. It is apparent that the electors do not desire better representatives than they now have.

Accepting the theory that the bandstand is to be built over the King Square fountain, the Times calls on all St. John citizens to prevent the destruction of the grass and flowers while the concerts are being held. This is the first cry of the kind. It will need to be repeated daily during the summer and even then will be of little avail, for St. John citizens are not different from those of other places. They will walk on the grass and on the flowers with as little concern as they exhibit in treading asphalt. The duty of protecting public property against the owners will be left to the police who are even now unable to perform all the duties demanded of them.

Troubles never come singly. It now looks as if poor persecuted British Columbia, the haven for Asiatics, and nerve-grating Hindus, is about to receive some six or seven thousand nomadic Doukhobors, including those who shocked the people of Port Arthur and Port William with their nakedness, and who refuse to eat or keep themselves clean in prison. The leader of the Doukhobors in Canada is at present searching the Pacific provinces for a place in which to found a Doukhobor settlement; some spot where they may live according to their needs. The climate of the middle west, he says, is too severe for his people. He hopes to get them settled near Nelson and Vancouver.

The increase in grain shipments from the port of St. John this season to date is certainly gratifying. As there are about 110 steamships in all, it is evident the total value of the exports for the winter will be very greatly in excess of that of last year.

COYOTE'S TEETH IN HER BREAST; KILLED BEAST

Grabbed Animal by Throat and Did Not Release Until It Was Dead.

PORTLAND, April 11.—Choking a coyote to death after the animal had fastened its teeth in her breast, was the experience of Mrs. T. A. Caldwell. Mrs. Caldwell, who lives on the M. Wingfield ranch, near Adel, was attracted to the barnyard by a commotion among the poultry. Discovering that a coyote was making a raid on her chickens, Mrs. Caldwell sought to scare away the animal. She had no fear that the wolf would attack her, but, releasing its hold on a hen, the animal turned fiercely on the woman, who as she started to beat a hasty retreat, tripped and fell. The coyote was upon her in a moment and fastened its teeth in her breast. Mrs. Caldwell grabbed the beast by the throat, and notwithstanding its desperate efforts to free itself from the woman's clutch, the animal finally sank exhausted, but the brave woman did not release her hold until the animal was dead.

LEFT BY FATHER OF HER 13 CHILDREN

After 48 Years Together, Man Deserts for Younger Woman.

PITTSBURG, April 14.—Having lived for forty-eight years with a man to whom she never was married, and bearing him thirteen children, all living, only to be deserted for a younger and prettier woman, Mrs. Sarah A. Cass asked Judge Frazer, in Common Pleas Court, this morning if he thought the man in the case would hate her for suing him. The woman told her story in a matter-of-fact manner, stating that some time ago Cass decided he would marry another woman, and did so. Subsequently this woman departed, and has not been heard from since. Sarah Cass said she was first married when she was 17 years old, but her husband deserted her, and never returned. Some time after his disappearance, on the suggestion of Cass, they came to America, he promising to marry her. Later, she said he told her a marriage was not necessary. Judge Frazer ordered the man to pay the old woman \$2 a week.

KILLS NEGRO WHO PURSUED DAUGHTER

SMITH'S CROSS ROADS, Va., April 14.—Bert Moss, a young negro, was shot by J. M. Bishop, a prominent white farmer after the negro had attempted to attack Louise Bishop, his 14-year-old daughter. A coroner's jury pronounced the father. Following a negro celebration, Moss was passing the Bishop home, and seeing the girl, attempted to ride over her with a mule. She succeeded in reaching her home and bolted the door, but the negro broke this down and entered just as the girl ran out another door, accompanied by her baby sister. The father, who was in a field nearby, heard the girl's screams and ordered the negro to leave. He refused and moved as if to draw a revolver. Bishop ran into the house, got a gun and fired, the negro falling dead on the porch.

JOHNSON-McRAYE RECITAL A GREAT SUCCESS

A crowded house greeted Miss E. Pauline Johnson and Walter McRaye when they appeared last night, and both of these entertainers in their joint recital came well up to the expectations of the public. The program was formed with regard to them. Miss Johnson, or Teahawakwe to use her Mohawk name, displayed talent of the highest order in her readings and sketches, while Mr. McRaye's selections from Drummond's Habitant stories were enthusiastically received by the audience. The programme last evening was divided into two parts and was as follows: Part one—Poem, Oglatoh, Miss Johnson; sketch, Le View Tempis, Mr. McRaye; poem, Legend of Qu'Appelle Valley, Miss Johnson; sketches, Little Batsesse and Johnny Corbeau, Mr. McRaye; poem, The Riders of the Plains, Miss Johnson; sketch, When Albany Sang, Mr. McRaye. Part two—Conciellita, A Society Satire, Miss Johnson; poem Canadian Born, Miss Johnson. The concellita proved to be one of the best numbers on the programme. Its humor appealed to the audience very strongly. In this original work Miss Johnson illustrates the manner of the wife of M. P. who, while the house of commons is in session, goes from her own little town to Ottawa and shines in the social life of the capital.

WINTER PORT COAL BOOMING. Underground development work at the Winter Port Coal Mines is proceeding satisfactorily and all that will be necessary to furnish a large output immediately is to increase the number of men employed. Ten car loads of Winter Port Coal has been discharged in the St. John railway yards by Gibbon and Co. within the past week. The reports are that the quality of the coal is improving with each car-load and it is now admitted by nearly everybody who tries it that Winter Port Coal is better than a great many of the Nova Scotia coals.

BILLY ALLEN AND "THE DANCING DAMSELS."



The above is taken from a photograph furnished by the press agent of the Harder-Hall Stock Company, of Billy Allen and "The Dancing Damsels" as they will appear in his "King of Komo" specialty after act two of "The Girl and the Gambler," at the Opera House next Monday night.

OLDEST WOMAN IN PHILADELPHIA REACHES 108 YEARS

PHILADELPHIA, April 14.—With the dawn of today, "Aunt Mahala Ayers, the oldest woman in Philadelphia, is 108 years old. At least she says she is 108, and she has to prove it the old family Bible of her "marster," for "Aunt" Mahala was born a slave. She is now, and has been for twenty-six years, an inmate of the Home for Aged and Infirm Colored Persons, at Girard and Belmont avenues, and since she celebrated her centennial her birthday has been one of the big annual events of the home.

Tomorrow the anniversary will be duly observed. "Aunt" Mahala will have a big birthday cake. It will weigh in the neighborhood of ten pounds, and will be decorated with 108 candles, in red, white and blue. At the evening table the candles will be lighted, to be admired by the 139 other inmates of the institution. "Aunt" Mahala was born on the plantation of John Fossit, eighteen miles from Snow Hill, on the shores of Simpson's bay, Maryland. She says her old "marster" always was good to his slaves. He had thirty of them. Mahala as a young girl, was one of the house servants, and never had any children. She has not been near the Simpson for more than a quarter of a century, but says she hears frequently from her grandchildren and great-grandchildren of the Fossit, Covington, Robins, Turpin and other families whom she remembers.

Notwithstanding her advanced age, "Aunt" Mahala is fairly active and in possession of all her faculties. She long since lost her teeth, but she sees clearly and talks and thinks with a mind which the years do not seem to have impaired. Many friends outside the home, who have made it a point to make her a special visit on her birthday, are expected to call on her tomorrow. She is proud of her birthday cake and wants them to see it.

LONDON EATING PEANUTS.

LONDON, April 14.—London has just discovered the peanut. Peanut roasting machines are now to be seen on the streets, and the Cockney small boy has a new and delightful delicacy to spend his pennies on. Until now peanuts were not to be had in England, where they were only read of in the American comic papers. Today they are the latest development of the "Americanizing" of London.

EYESIGHT!

Sight is one of Nature's blessings. Take good care of your eyes. For eye-strain see D. BOYANER, 38 Dock street. The only optical shop in St. John.

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CRITIC GIVES PUGSLEY CREDIT

Effective Reform in Dredging Inspection.

Sharp Debate Marks End of Lent in the House of Commons

OTTAWA, Ont., April 14.—With the Easter adjournment but a day distant, the House of Commons today had an oratorical outburst as an indication that Lenten penance was drawing to a close.

The opposition wanted to place some of their complaints before the country before meeting their constituents. Mr. Bennett got the eye of the Speaker and the ear of the House early in the sitting and delivered a lecture on the economies of dredging on the great lakes.

Mr. Borden is in New York and Dr. Spruille led the opposition. He asked the Prime Minister for copies of the boundary and fishery treaties relating to Canada, said to have been presented to the United States senate.

Sir Wilfrid said that if the treaties had been given to the American senate he should get copies from Ambassador Bryce in due time and would promptly lay them before parliament.

Mr. Bennett declared that he had a matter of urgent public importance to be discussed. It was dredging.

The Minister of Public Works had stated he would make contracts for further dredging of Midland, Tiffin and Victoria Harbors without calling for new tenders, but on the basis of the boundary and fishery treaties were in the writing of the secretary of the Midland Company and this indicated collusion.

He asked for the production of the original tenders.

Sir Wilfrid said that if the documents were in the custody of the public accounts committee he had no control over them.

Dr. Fuglesley asked if a matter before the public accounts committee could be discussed before it was reported to the house.

The Speaker ruled that papers before the public accounts committee could not be referred to.

Mr. Bennett said the prices paid for

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We would sell more \$5.00 Shoes if we didn't have these for \$4.00. Men come in with the intention of paying \$5.00, see the \$4.00 Soes, and it's all up with the \$5.00. Sounds pretty rough on the \$5.00 Shoes, but it isn't; works the same way there—the men who usually buy \$6.00 Shoes get them here for \$5.00. Unless all signs fail, we are going to do an immense shoe business this Spring. People get the best shoe satisfaction here and we get the business.

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the dredging at points mentioned gave the companies too large a profit. He objected to an extension of this contract on the same terms.

Dr. Fuglesley said he recognized the importance of having dredging done properly and economically. He regretted the department did not have dredging plants of its own on the lakes as a great deal of dredging had to be done by contract. The integrity of inspectors had to be relied upon to look after dredging contracts and it was unfortunate that some of these men had acted improperly. However, they had been dismissed as soon as this was found out. Every precaution was taken to see that inspecting was well done and inspectors had to certify to quantities of material and that they had inspected every scow load. A circular letter had been sent to inspectors warning them that neglect or inaccuracy would mean their instant dismissal. It was impossible to prevent contractors getting together before sending in tenders, but unreasonable prices would not be paid by the department. The work at Tiffin had to be finished by October and that was the reason the contract to the Owen Sound Dredging Company would be extended.

The Grand Trunk Pacific was putting in a two million bushel elevator at Tiffin and wanted the harbor equipped so they could handle the grain crop this autumn. The dredging was being done at the reasonable price of 28 cents a yard. The Victoria Harbor work was being done at the very low price of 8 cents a yard, and the government would lose nothing by enlarging this contract.

Speaking of the order-in-council authorizing him to extend the time for completion of these various dredging contracts he said that for time past large interests at Winnipeg, Port Arthur and elsewhere had been considering the question of dredging the great lakes harbors to a greater depth than 22 feet. The new American lock at the Soo would have a depth of some 24 feet, and it had been urged in view of this that Canadian great lakes harbors should have a depth of 25 feet.

He was now making inquiries into the matter. As yet he was not sure whether he would recommend under the authority given him, under the order-in-council mentioned, that he be allowed to change the contracts under which the work was now being done, so as to have the dredging done to the greater depth.

The chief engineer of the department informed him that even with the depth

of 24 feet at the new American lock it was not unlikely a depth of 23 feet in the Canadian harbors would be sufficient, but if it should be found best to have a depth of 25 feet it would require some arrangements to enable the necessary changes in contracts.

Mr. Bennett gave Dr. Fuglesley credit for framing instructions which would make it impossible for contractors to get advantage from loss or improper inspection.

Hon. John Haggart, Mr. Blain and Dr. Spruille supported Mr. Bennett. Mr. Carvell of Carleton declared Mr. Bennett had deliberately misrepresented the matter for the purpose of misleading the country. "Members of the opposition can see graft in anything that can take place. I sometimes wonder if they go back for their ideas to what look place when they were in power. I cannot understand why one thinks everything crooked unless he has a crooked mind."

Mr. Connors said Mr. Bennett came to parliament stamped by the courts as a slanderer of his fellow-men. I think his measure has been fairly taken here, but the people of this country are entitled to know the character of the man who makes these charges. He is a self-confessed briber, these are his own words: "I know you, Wilson; I have bought your vote before and I can do it again."

Mr. Taylor raised a point of order and the Speaker ruled that one member could not describe another as a slanderer.

Mr. Stewart, whose name had been referred to, said he had never used his influence to get a contract for the Dominion Dredging Company, in which his son was interested. That company had never got a contract except in open competition and by being the lowest bidder.

A significant light was thrown on Mr. Bennett's performance when the Speaker put the motion to adjourn by Mr. Bennett, seconded by Mr. Henderson.

"No, no," said Mr. Henderson, who is one of the veteran members of the opposition.

Mr. Blain finally agreed to second the motion, which was lost.

The immigration debate was resumed by Mr. Verville, labor member of Montreal, who protested against the bonus system.

Mr. Miller spoke for immigration encouragement. Dr. Chisholm opposed the bonus system.

Dr. McIntyre of Perth adjourned the debate and the house adjourned until Tuesday for the Easter holidays.