

Mrs. Robert Matthew is Ninety-Nine Years of Age, And is Now Enjoying the Best of Health—She Celebrated Her Birthday Yesterday.

Probably the oldest woman in St. John is Mrs. Robert Matthew, who yesterday received the hearty congratulations of her friends upon her birthday. Mrs. Matthew was born near Hampton on February 13th, 1806, and yesterday completed ninety-nine years. She lived for the greater part of her life near her birthplace, but being alone, she came to this city upwards of four years ago and went to reside in the Home for Old Ladies on Broad street. Mrs. Matthew has but few relatives, in fact the only one in St. John is Dr. George P. Matthews, who was distantly connected with Mrs. Matthew's husband. She entered the home in November of 1900, being then almost ninety-four years old, and has since been one of the most cheerful of the inmates. In spite of her great age she is quite able to look after herself and needs but little care from the matron of the home. Mrs. Matthew has only twice missed coming down to breakfast at the regular hour, and on those occasions it was due to the fact that the matron insisted upon her remaining in bed, because on the previous evenings there had been entertainments in the home and Mrs. Matthew had been up later than usual. On these occasions she strongly objected to remaining in bed longer than at ordinary times.

GAVE HIM A CANE.

Ex-Captain Philip Hamm Remembered by No. 2 Salvage Corps.

At the regular monthly social of No. 2 salvage corps, held last evening in No. 5 fire station, a farewell send-off was given to ex-Captain Philip Hamm, who is to leave the city in a few weeks for Moncton, where he will engage in business. Nearly all the members of the corps were present besides several friends. An excellent programme was carried out and refreshments in plenty were furnished. Capt. White presided and gave a short address at the opening. The following was the programme: Piano solo, Prof. Fox; vocal solo, Mr. Lewis; piccolo solo, Mr. Ross; violin duet, Messrs. Coates and Holder; selection by Holder quartette; selection by banjo quartette; solo, Prof. Fox; banjo solo, Cecil Holder; violin solo, Mr. Coates; solo, Richard Bradley; instrumental duet, Messrs. Middleton and Jones.

After an intermission for refreshments Alderman McGoldrick was called on and made a short address at which Capt. White on behalf of the salvage corps presented Mr. Hamm with a beautiful gold-headed cane. In making the presentation Capt. White referred to Mr. Hamm's long connection with the corps, during which he had labored faithfully in its interest and helped very materially to bring the corps to its present state of efficiency. He had been captain of the corps for seven years and had always been one of its most esteemed members. It was with the deepest regret that they would say farewell to him and they wished him every success in his new business.

LATE SHIP NEWS.

Domestic Ports.
HALIFAX, Feb. 13—Arr. str. Briardene, from St. John.
8:40, str. Seneca, McKinnon, for St. John via ports.
British Ports.
GLASGOW, Feb. 11—Arr. str. Aldice, for St. John.
FOXBORO, Feb. 12—Arr. str. Norman, for Portland and Boston.
BAHIA, Feb. 11—Arr. sch. Besse, from St. John, via ports.
LIZARD, Feb. 12—Passed, str. Marina, from Bremen for Portland.
Foreign Ports.
VINEYARD HAVEN, Mass., Feb. 13—Arr. sch. Ellen M. Golder, from Port Liberty for Portland; Vinita, from Jersey City for Yarmouth, N.S.
Sid. schs Catherine D. Perry and Nathaniel J. Palmer (from Norfolk), for Boston; Frank Barnett (from Brunswick, Ga.), for do; Wm C. Carnegie and James B. Drake (from Newport News), for Portland; Savannah (from Fernandina), for do; Avalon (from Philadelphia), for Gloucester.
CHATHAM, Mass., Feb. 13—Fresh southwest winds, with snow at sunset.
Passed north, schs James B. Drake, from Newport News for Portland; Savannah, from Fernandina for do. (Both anchored tonight off Chatham).
NEWPORT NEWS, Va., Feb. 13—Arr. sch. Wm B. Palmer, for Providence; Rachel W. Stevens, for do.
REDFORD ISLAND, Feb. 13—Passed, str. Manchester Corporation, from Manchester via Liverpool and St. John for Philadelphia.
BOSTON, Feb. 13—Arr. schs Independent, from Baltimore; Cosmopolitan, from Boothbay.
Cld. str. Saxonia, for Liverpool; sch. Theoline, for Brunswick.
Sid. sch. Bradford C. French, for coal port.
GENOA, Feb. 13—Arr. str. Konigin Luisa, from New York via Naples.
MARQUIS HOOK, Pa., Feb. 13—In harbor, sch. Maune, from Philadelphia for Fall River.
PHILADELPHIA, Feb. 13—Arr. sch. B. Starr Jones, from Boston.
CITY ISLAND, Feb. 13—Bound south, str. Manahattan, from Portland, Me.; schs Levina M. Snow, from Hurlingham Island, Me.; Ella F. Crowell, from Rockland, Me., before reported here in the ice, left today in tow of tug Port Chester and Ada Ford.

OTTAWA LETTER.

Criticism of Estimates is Hard Work. But the Opposition is Faithfully Performing Its Duty—How One Firm Was Paid.

OTTAWA, Feb. 10.—Parliament spent nearly two million dollars yesterday, but it took six hours of hard work to do it for the opposition, while not resisting any legitimate expenditure demanded and forced the government to give explanation of every penny of it. The explanation in many instances was far from satisfactory. For instance, in connection with a proposed expenditure at Fort William, the opposition pointed out from the auditor general's report that last year one dredging firm—one of whose alleged members is also a member of the house on the liberal side, Jimmie Conmee of the somewhat noted corporation of Conmee and Bowman—had been paid at the rate of \$10 an hour for 12 hours' work a day through the summer and up to the middle of December. Could the minister explain how a dredge could work 12 hours a day in December when there were only about eight hours of daylight? queried a truth-seeking opposition member. Now that is one of the things very difficult to explain off-hand, and the minister made a poor fist of it. There were many other instances similar to this and the way the opposition pounced upon them and filled page after page of Hansard with condemnation of the system which permitted them should cause the government to consider a while before they permit similar graft this year.

It is hard work—monotonous, dreary work, this criticism of the estimates, but it is one of the chief duties of an opposition which considers itself the guardian of the people's interests and that the present opposition has no intention of shirking any of its duties, has been abundantly shown this session.

The sums voted yesterday were a million and a quarter for the new Victoria museum, \$45,000 for an extension to the western block of the parliamentary buildings, \$52,000 for harbor improvements, as follows: Quebec, \$100,000; Montreal, \$30,000; and Port Colborne, \$150,000. All these came under the public works estimates and during the winter Hyman had a trying day standing up to a cross-fire of censure, criticism and question from shortly after three in the afternoon till nearly midnight.

The largest part of the time was devoted to the details of the harbor estimates and to a vain attempt to get the government to enunciate some definite general policy in regard to this discussion. Dr. Stockton spoke strongly of the government's neglect of the port of St. John while spending hundreds of thousands of dollars of not nearly such national importance. He contended for the establishment of a national port policy. The largest part of the time was devoted to the details of the harbor estimates and to a vain attempt to get the government to enunciate some definite general policy in regard to this discussion. Dr. Stockton spoke strongly of the government's neglect of the port of St. John while spending hundreds of thousands of dollars of not nearly such national importance. He contended for the establishment of a national port policy.

There is considerable interest in the city and around the house in the suggestion unanimously made by the Ottawa City Council that the Dominion government should consider the question of making Ottawa a federal district under the control of a commission, on a system similar to that prevailing in Washington.

The government of recent years has spent large sums of money in beautifying Ottawa's buildings, driveways, parks, etc., and the idea is that, with the city placed directly under government control, much more money would be spent and the city made the most attractive in Canada at no cost to the citizens, as it is expected that taxes would be considerably reduced by the change.

On the other hand, the placing of the city under the direction of a government commission would mean the disfranchisement of the people of Ottawa, who, as they would have no aldermen or representatives in the house, would necessarily lose the right of voting in Dominion and municipal and probably in provincial elections. As important manufacturing and business interests are located in the city, this would mean with strong resistance from the capital involved, which would lose a large part of its influence on legislation by this move. Also the idea of being deprived of all voice in the country's affairs is repugnant to the majority of men, and if the matter is to be decided by popular vote it is improbable that any such surrender will be endorsed.

The suggestion, which emanates from Alderman Grant, is that the district to be formed should be about ten miles square, taking in Hull, the whole to be called the District of Ottawa.

But the one topic which puts all others in the shade, the topic which is discussed at all hours in every corridor and room of the house, is the mix-up in Quebec. Unless it is patched up speedily it is generally conceded that it will greatly weaken Laurier's prestige, especially after the Ontario election, as it is generally known that he has been interfering personally in the melee, in the hope of conciliating the combatants. Liberals who are inclined to optimism look for a temporary cessation of hostilities, as a result of Laurier's mediation, with Parent ostensibly on top, but with a secret understanding that he shall speedily retire to accept another fat job somewhere, probably on the G. T. P. construction commission, leaving the path clear for Hon. Mr. Gouin.

But if the sunny news fall—and those on the inside claim that the scrap has gone too far for any conciliation—it probably means another general election, the certain defeat of the Parent clique, and the election if not of a majority of conservatives, at least of enough to hold the balance of power between the two great factions and to force the formation of a coalition government. Another inevitable result will be the great weakening of Laurier's influence and the engendering of a lot of ill feeling against him on the part of the anti-Parent party. Altogether, recent events are regarded as a splendid justification of Mr. Ryan's action in refusing to contest the late election and as a judgment on Premier Parent's trickery, with Laurier's complicity, in springing the election on the province without notice and within a few days of the general election.

NORTH SEA ENQUIRY

Conclusions of British and Russian Agents Heard. Work of the Commission Practically Closed Until a Decision is Reached.

PARIS, Feb. 13.—The international commission which is inquiring into the North Sea incident, today heard the conclusions of the British and Russian agents upon the testimony presented. The session was largely attended by members of the diplomatic corps, including Ambassador Porter and several members of the Japanese legation. It was expected that the two agents would reach an agreement upon a number of points involved, but the pleadings showed that on the main issues they were not reconciled. The British conclusion maintained that the testimony showed that no torpedo boats were present and that therefore the firing was unjustified, whereas the Russian conclusion held that the testimony showed that torpedo boats were present, and that the firing was fully warranted. However, the Russian statement closed with a declaration of profound regret at the fact that innocent lives had been sacrificed, and announced the willingness of the Russian government to pay an indemnity to the survivors and families of the victims, leaving the amount and partition of the indemnity to the Hague tribunal.

An incident occurred when the Russian agent, M. Nekledoff, pointed out that the British statement referred to the commission as a court, whereas the two governments had expressly agreed upon it being a commission of inquiry, but not a "court." Thereupon the British agent, Mr. O'Brien, withdrew the use of the word "court." The incident was taken to indicate the restricted nature of the commission's inquiry.

The British summary of facts is under four main heads: First—That no torpedo boats or torpedo boat destroyers were in the vicinity of the incident, as shown by the declarations of the fishermen and the official statements of various governments that no torpedo boats belonging to their fleets were in the neighborhood, and that therefore the Russians made a mistake largely as the result of apprehension that an attack was about to occur.

Second—That fire was opened without sufficient reason and was continued for an unreasonable time after the mistake had been detected.

Third—That no effort was made to succor the sinking ships or wounded.

Fourth—That not the slightest irregularity was shown in the conduct of the innocent fishing fleet.

The Russian summary, after setting forth the justification under four heads, concluded as follows: "The Imperial Russian government therefore maintains that the fire of the Russian squadron was ordered and executed in the legitimate accomplishment of the military duties of the commander of the squadron. Consequently no responsibility whatever is attached to the Russian Vice-Admiral Rozhkovsky or any of the officers of the squadron."

The Imperial government sincerely deploring that the incident resulted in innocent victims, and therefore the admiral's responsibility being eliminated, the Russian government expresses its readiness to make reparation by indemnifying the innocent victims, deferring the amount and partition of the indemnity to the legitimate tribunal of arbitration at The Hague.

Today's session practically closed the work of the commission until a decision is reached, when Admiral Fourrier (the president of the commission) will call a meeting for the public announcement.

The admirals in the meantime will hold daily private sessions to deliberate upon the decision. It is expected that some days will elapse before definite results are reached.

A Presbyterian ministerial association was organized by the Presbyterian clergymen of the city yesterday morning. The forming of this association was talked over at a recent meeting of the ministers, but the final work of the organization did not come until yesterday. The officers of the association are: President, Rev. Dr. T. F. Fotheringham; secretary-treasurer, Rev. A. M. Hill; Rev. W. S. Pritchard of the Congregational church became a member of the association. Meetings will be held monthly. A monthly exchange of pulpits among the Presbyterian clergymen will also be a regular occurrence in the future. At yesterday morning's meeting, which was held in St. John's church, Dr. Fotheringham occupied the chair. Dr. Fotheringham also read a paper, The Historical Succession of the Presbyterian Church, showing that there has been no interruption in the order of presbyteries down to the present. A discussion followed the paper, and Dr. Fotheringham was tendered a hearty vote of thanks.

If you select your servants from the class who read and answer want ads, you will at least have intelligent help—and you know how often you get a line out of ten of the poor servants are ignorant ones.

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OF THE CZAR,"

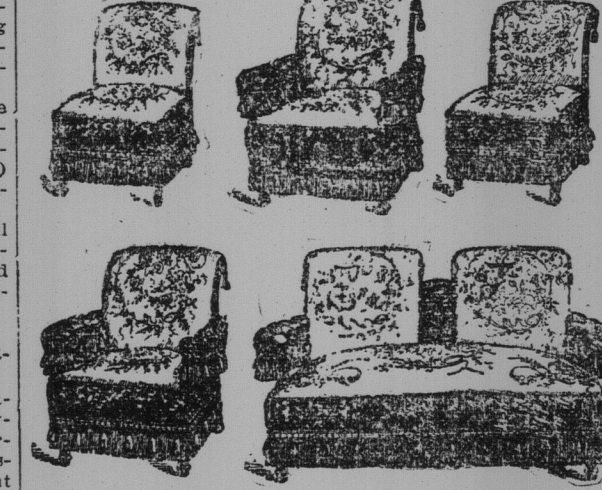
BY JULES VERNE.

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IN ST. JOHN STAR.

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