

PROGRESS.

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A SHAREHOLDERS' ROW.

SOME WANTED TO WIND UP THE BUSINESS; SOME DIDN'T.

The Affairs of the Eastern Fire Assurance Company—A Close Observer Advises the Shareholders to Hold on to their Shares.

HALIFAX, March 7.—Never was there a more noisy meeting of moneyed men in the city than the annual meeting of the Eastern Assurance company, which was held in this city at the end of last week. Of ten thousand shares more than seven thousand were represented, and they were arrayed in two hostile camps. One was the party of directors, or the Corey section; the other was the malcontents or the section opposed to the management and Mr. Corey's particular. Both parties had gathered up all the proxies they could, but in this scramble the management came out away ahead. Or at least the management and directors starting out with the central of more shares, kept up the proportion with proxies secured.

The issue between the management and the directors was whether or not the company should be wound up. Reuben Hart, one of the wealthy men of this city; John E. Shatford, warden of the county; and delegations from Annapolis and Amherst combined with others to demand that the company be wound up; while, on the other hand, the management in effect asked for another chance to try and show that the Eastern has lost money for several years, and during the last twelve months went some \$37,500 behind.

These are trying times for all fire insurance companies, and the Eastern has not been one of the worst sufferers. In this connection it is not reassuring to hear a well-known authority say that the year 1895 is to be the worst yet for all companies, and that the months of January and February, which were not included in the statement furnished by the Eastern to shareholders, have been phenomenally bad.

The winding-up shareholders went to the meeting with their appetites whetted for a fight. The conflict began a year ago, and they came this time determined to carry their point and wipe the Eastern out, taking what they could as their share of he assets. The management were just as pronounced on the other side, and when the smoke of battle cleared away they found themselves decidedly the victors. They carried a resolution that the Dominion parliament be asked to amend the Eastern charter from \$1,000,000 to \$500,000. Only \$250,000 has been paid up, so that this proposal means reducing the liability of the shareholders by one-half. Parliament is also to be asked to allow \$50,000 of the paid-up capital to be set aside as a reserve, leaving the paid-up capital \$300,000. Thomas Fyfe, of the Bank of Nova Scotia, questioned whether this could be done, in view of the possibly impaired condition of the capital as it stands to-day. If this legislation is refused then the directors are to take what course they deem best.

The winding-up resolution, which was defeated, called for the dismissal of the employes and the immediate settling up of the affairs of the company. Hon. Hiram Black, of Amherst, favored giving the company six months' further trial before deciding upon the winding up, and that in the meantime the staff of employes be given three months' notice that their services will not be longer required.

It is said to be very doubtful, indeed, that the Dominion parliament will grant any such legislation as that proposed, cutting down the capital, and the shareholders' liability, by half.

From three in the afternoon till eight at night the shareholders fought out the question. The winding-up party, bitterly assailed the management on the ground of its expensiveness. Manager Corey's salary of \$5,000 per year, while the company is losing money, was like a red rag to all bull in the eyes of the malcontents. The salaries of other members of the staff were assailed as being extravagant in proportion. The two local Halifax fire companies, which are making money, were pointed to as models, each satisfied with no other staff than a man and a boy. The whole annual expenses of the head office of the Eastern are \$18,000. When the malcontents thought of these things they could not contain themselves and demanded excitedly that such a state of affairs, and their own losses, should have an immediate end. The management replied that the Eastern expenses were not greater in proportion to business done than the expenses of other first-class companies; that all fire companies had been losing money in recent years, and that a better day is dawning. The statement was made by them that it was the Ontario, Quebec and New Brunswick business that had been disastrous, while the risks in Nova Scotia have paid. It was intimated that the company, if it

WHERE IS THE REFORM?

IS IT NOT APPALLINGLY LARGE, AT ANY RATE.

Three Different Sets of Ideas Among the Fifteen Members of the Council—Whose Heads These Were In—Does Mayor Robertson Covet a Second Term?

When the common council started out on the path of reform in May last with beating heart and exulting spirit and a god-speed from the people who elected them they had before them an horizon of vast possibilities and one seemingly not far distant. But as they advanced, as month succeeded month, it seemed to flee before them and likewise diminished in size. At twenty minutes past six of the evening of Thursday, the seventh day of March, they caught up to this horizon of their hopes, but lo! the great country that had once extended invitingly before them had shrunk to very small dimensions.

After all their labor they have accomplished a reduction of only \$800 in salaries. They spent over nine months of hard labor in drawing up in committee a large assortment of recommendations and on Wednesday and Thursday of this week they spent seven hours in disposing of those recommendations. They voted on motions by the dozens and all sorts of propositions respecting various ideas were made, but on the main question, that of officials and salaries, it comes down to the fact that Harbor Master Taylor loses \$500 from his salary and perquisites and Chairman Bunting loses \$300.

Three different sets of ideas have developed into shape among the fifteen members of the council during the progress of the enquiry. There were first the aldermen, who were indifferent. They were members of the old council and included the two who were elected in opposition to the T. R. A. ticket. They took little interest in the progress of the enquiry and did not see any need for reform respecting officials. Ald. Christie, McGoldrick and Shaw were the representatives of these ideas.

Then came the men who were very moderate in their notions respecting decreases in salaries. They were opposed to any official being dismissed and did not seem to be exactly desirous of cutting down any of the salaries, with the assistance of the "indifferents" they passed in committee the majority report which did not recommend any cutting down of salaries. These men were Ald. Baxter, Blizard, McCarthy, Millidge, Kennedy, and Lockhart.

Finally, there were the out-and-out radicals who demanded dismissals and reductions. They brought in a minority report, and it was the passing of resolutions contained in their report that brought about the reductions that were made. They had several others, but they were voted down. They included the dismissal of the ferry superintendent and the reduction of the salaries of the director of works, superintendent of streets, and chief of the fire department. Ald. McRobbie, McLaughlin, Waring, Seaton, McMulkin, and Daniel signed this, except that Ald. Daniel opposed the reduction in the salaries of Director Smith and Chief Kerr.

This is how the aldermen stood on the question of reform when brought to a practical issue, and now the tax reduction association will deal with their individual records. It is a matter of common report that the association have expressed their strong disapproval of the action of the council. They say that they elected the present board to retrench in the matter of salaries and these have not done so to any extent.

Last night their nominating committee met to choose a ticket and the members of the association have not taken any pains to conceal the fact that they will probably have only the six aldermen who signed the minority report on that ticket.

Some doubt has been expressed as to whether the mayor will offer again on the ticket. He has stated that he does not wish to run. The T. R. A. do not heartily endorse his course as the chief magistrate and think he was not firm enough.

His worship rather enrolled himself among the moderate party at the council board on Thursday. He opposed a recommendation of the minority report which called upon the chief of police to enforce the Sunday liquor regulations on his casting vote that was lost. When the report had been disposed of he stated that the result was very satisfactory to himself. In regard to this it may be remarked that if he had been one of the radicals he would probably have not been satisfied.

Some of his remarks were also of a foreboding nature. He said that if he and they were sent back to private life they would have the satisfaction of feeling that they had done their best.

Do Young Men Go to Church?

The religious press has been quite concerned over an article by Edward K. Bok which appeared in the Cosmopolitan recently. It stated that young men did no

TO BREAK THE MACHINE.

THE EFFORTS OF REFORMERS TOWARDS THAT END.

The Young Liberals Weakened the Machine of Their Party—The Conservatives Have Even a More Vigorous War in Their Camp—The North End Candidate.

Machine politics is having a hard fight in St. John this year. On both sides there have been determined efforts to break the old rings and destroy caucus rule. Among the liberals there was a partly unsuccessful attempt. The young men asserted themselves and were successful in establishing ward organization and representative conventions. Through their candidates did not win the day in the convention it was because there were certain conditions against them. They showed that they were a power, however, and they at least weakened the machine.

Now comes the conservative turn. Here too batteries of opposition have been turned upon the machines, ward organization was obtained and the convention when it meets will be a representative one. The orangemen are the fighters this time, and they are just as determined as the young liberals. The ward meetings to elect representatives will be held next week, and lively hustling is going on on both sides to get their representatives elected to the convention.

Mayor Armstrong is the man outside the ring, the man whom the orangemen and temperance men will nominate if they can obtain enough support at the convention. It was some months ago since PROGRESS said that he would make a strong fight for the nomination and their predictions have materialized.

The machine are putting forward Hazen, who was not allowed to take the county court judgeship because he was wanted in this constituency. Who the machine's other man is, is not certain, but it is probably Mr. G. F. Baird, though it is stated that Mayor Robertson would like to be nominated. C. N. Skinner's name has been spoken of, but he does not want to run. Then there is another element which makes the fight in the tory camp more vigorous even than that in the liberal. The north end have Chesley to put forward and unless he is looked after they will oppose the machine.

It is uncertain how it will all come out, but it is quite certain that it will make lots of fun.

CLUBS AND LIQUOR SELLING.

Chatham Club Men up in Arms—The Law about Clubs.

Chatham has been having a big sensation lately and there has been more excitement there than the closest election could create. The steward of the Social Club was fined \$150 for selling liquor and the 240 members of the club are up in revolt. They claim that is an outrage propose to appeal if they can from the decision of the police magistrate. Hon. Messrs. Blair and Fuglesley have promised to see them through and they think they have quite a case. Their argument is that the obtaining of liquor in the club is not in the nature of a sale, as the alleged purchaser being a member of the club owns the liquor already.

The question arises, how about the Union club? Can liquor be legally sold there without a license? A section in the license law provides that clubs organized for the special purpose of selling liquor must have a license? This is probably meant to meet the possibility of a saloon keeper calling his place a club and giving his patrons nominal membership. The Union club would hardly come under this category.

THE POWER OF A HYMN.

An Incident of One of the Berwick Camp Meetings.

The professor at the testable, and the fat boarder, and the occasional boarder, and the rest of them, were discussing Messrs. Crossley and Hunter pro and con, and even the silent boarder lifted his voice from his boots and spake. Then the conversation drifted to the time that the fat boarder was at camp meeting in Berwick, Nova Scotia.

"It was just before dark one Sunday afternoon," said the corpulent one, who can talk like a Moody and Sankey hymn book when he likes. "And out of the shade of the trees there came a female woman. She was tall, and she had a way about her—a decided way about her," continued the fat boarder, musingly.

"I've met that kind of women," said the silent boarder, even more musingly. "And that woman," said the fat boarder, "spoke thus. 'Air you a christian?' she said. And the fellow alongside of me said, 'No, mem, I'm a farmer.' 'Thereupon,' continued the man who had laughed and grown fat, "we commenced to laugh. And the woman pointed her parasol at us, and said, 'Ah! ah! There'll be no titterin' thar! There'll be no titterin' thar! It's all very well to titter now, but there'll be no titterin' thar! 'Well, as we were assured by the

HE MADE MUCH OF IT TILL HE WAS ILL-TREATED BY HIS WIFE.

HALIFAX, March 7.—The papers have been filled with the story of Rev. Edward Ownes' cruelty to his wife—his efforts to confine her in a lunatic asylum in order to get clear of her, and latterly his abandonment of the poor woman. Ownes was pastor of the baptist church at Onslow, not far from Truro. The story is that Ownes came to Halifax from England some time ago. He was a carpenter by trade, but had also been an evangelist, so he said, in England. When he came to Halifax he interested Rev. D. G. McDonald, of the North baptist church, in himself warming up Rev. Mr. McDonald's heart, as well as other baptists, when he told them how he delighted in work in that denomination. The services at the north baptist church were favored with Ownes' assistance. It was through Mr. McDonald's influence that he was assisted in obtaining the pastorate of the Onslow church. He had left his wife in England, and when she followed him here Ownes was sorely displeased. He illused her and finally had her incarcerated in the lunatic asylum at Dartmouth. Mr. McDonald and other baptist ministers in Truro assisted in having the woman so confined. Superintendent Sinclair, when he examined the woman, pronounced her perfectly sane and she was released from the asylum. The conduct of baptist ministers in Halifax and Truro in this asylum business is severely condemned. Next we find Ownes, every other means failing to rid him of his wife, endeavoring to have her placed in an insane asylum in Massachusetts. He could not get her there, and at last, with his three children, left the province, and his wife to her fate, and disappeared. It is believed Ownes is in the pastoral charge of some church in the States. Mrs. Ownes is being cared for by the W. C. T. U. of this city. She is ignorant of her husband's whereabouts and demands that at least he give her back her children.

The case furnishes a new instance of the danger of taking up with strangers who tell a plausible story, and make a loud profession, but who are very likely to be pious frauds. It also seems to reflect strongly on some of the baptist ministers with whom this black sheep was brought in contact.

"THE STONE CHURCH BELL."

Many people who have, from time to time, read the poems of "Ferg" in the PROGRESS and other St. John papers, have wondered who chose this strange pen-name with which to conceal his identity. For some time even the staff of PROGRESS did not know who the writer was. When a few weeks ago, there appeared in PROGRESS a poem entitled "The Stone Church Bell," signed "George Edwin Fairweather," the mystery was solved for some. It is now solved for all by the appearance of "The Stone Church Bell and Other Poems," with the writer's real name on the title page. The volume is published in loving memory of Walter Cardwell Fairweather, a good son."

The mystery now is how such a busy man as Mr. Fairweather could have spared time to write poems of the merit evidenced in these. "The Stone Church Bell" is a poem of particular interest to St. John people, as it tells in graphic style of the bell of the church at which the poet worshipped. The poems are mostly deeply religious, and some have, no doubt, comforted many in similar sorrow to that which Mr. Fairweather has recently suffered. The poem entitled "The Dominion Election" will be of special interest at this time. Nearly all the poems in the volume have appeared in PROGRESS. The book is illustrated by portraits of the late Walter Fairweather and of Rev. J. DeSoyre, and by an illustration of "the old stone church."

She Took Her Lunch.

One lady who attended the evangelistic services one Sunday had lots of foresight. She went to the afternoon service and took a lunch with her. She remained after the service and ate her lunch and was in plenty of time and had a good seat for the evening service.

WOMAN THAT NOW WAS THE TIME FOR TITTERIN', WE MORE THAN TITTERED.

I NEVER LAUGHED SO MUCH IN MY LIFE.

"But just then there came from the darkening woods a burst of melody. It was the grandest song ever heard in God's meeting house—a song that made me better than I ever was before, or have ever been since. It was the first time we ever heard 'God be with you till we meet again.' As the chorus rolled from the throats of seven thousand worshippers, I didn't feel much like laughing. It was the most grandly solemn moment of my life. I thought of my home, and—"

"We all felt kinder solemn and religious," he continued. "There was no more titterin'," he said with a smile that betokened another reaction, and a little shame at having shown how much he, the fat boarder, had been affected by a simple hymn. "And that woman turned round to us, all the hard religious look gone from her eyes, and a soft religious one in its place. 'I beg your pardon, boys,' she said, with tears."

The Ladies' Hockey.

St. John has some good athletes among her society ladies and some of them will compare very favorably with their husbands and brothers in wielding the tennis racket and hockey stick and in other exercises such as military drill. Their latest fad has been hockey and some of them are now very proficient. They have been playing at the Slinger rink all winter. They take Monday morning for the sport, the same morning which sees their less unfortunate sisters at the wash tub. They wound up for the season on Monday morning of the week with a match between the married and single ladies. The single ladies were the victors by a score of three to one. No outside eye was allowed to look upon them while they chased the puck around the rink and dodged and checked and shouldered and shot and occasionally fell. They should have appeared in public and given an exhibition of their skill, but they will next year. Some of the players are Mrs. McLeod, Mrs. Starr, Mrs. Jones, Mrs. Coster, Mrs. Grant, Miss McMillan and Miss Jones.

An Interesting Book.

Those who remember the account of the interesting adventures and escapes of that well known criminal, Henry Moore Smith, and how eagerly it was sought after, will not be surprised at the degree of interest in the recent book, "Old Time Tragedies," compiled by Mr. W. K. Reynolds, and now on the market for some days. This book contains the only accurate account of The Green-Slavin Murder, Redburn the Sailor, The Boy Who was Hanged and The Tilton Murder. These accounts are written in the graphic, interesting style of Mr. Reynolds, and besides being attractive to the ordinary reader are very valuable from a historical point of view. "Old Time Tragedies" is for sale at all the book stores and newsstands, and retails for a quarter.

His Reception Should Be Cordial.

It is some time since Hon. John Costigan has visited this city upon political matters intent. The warmth of his reception by his friends is not a matter of doubt. And so it should be for if ever a man has remembered his friends, worked for them and fought for them, Mr. Costigan has. Nothing that he had was too good for them. Even those opposed to him politically will acknowledge this and place it to his credit.

She Kissed the Polling Clerk.

The coming up of the woman's suffrage matter in the house recently recalls a time when a lady entered a polling booth in Fredericton to cast her ballot in a municipal election. After she had performed that duty she affectionately kissed the polling clerk. That official was exceedingly wroth at first, but it afterward transpired that this was a case of wolf in sheep's clothing. It was a wicked man who had been personating.

A Salutory Hint.

Sometime ago attention was drawn to the fact that the sexton of St. George's church, Carleton, received \$40 a year from the city for looking after the church clock in order that it might serve as a town clock, and that the clock was going. The paragraph seems to have a salutary effect, for since then the clock has been going regularly and its merry chime is a help to the citizens of Carleton who do not possess Waterbury.

Mr. Treisman's Appointment.

The many friends of Mr. W. H. Treisman will congratulate him upon his appointment as reporter of the supreme court in equity. Mr. Treisman will undoubtedly fill the position with much acceptance. He is a careful though a young lawyer, and a close and diligent student.

Advertisements on the left margin including: SUN LISH, COO TONS & CO., N C RY, DAILY, ST. JOHN, and others.