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PROGRESS

VOL. XI., NO. 531. ST. JOHN, N. B., SATURDAY, JULY 16. 1898. PRICE FIVE CENTS

TROUBLES OF OUR OWN.

SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE TIME GOOD NEWS COMES.

Which Accounts for Some Things That Don't get Into "Progress" and Particularly the Comment on Last Week's Races—Halifax is Without a Track.

PROGRESS has an idea that the best things in the line of news, happen late Thursday or on Friday just because this good journal goes to press so early Friday as to make it almost impossible to handle any article of length after the middle of Thursday afternoon. The C. P. R. that takes PROGRESS to Nova Scotia and permits its subscribers to read something on Sunday that is religious as well as entertaining has got into the habit this year of rushing into town when the labor bell is ringing the noon hour on the Market Square instead of the good old hour of 2 p. m. and then, to make matters even more difficult for the newspaper, the postal authorities have revoked that old time, convenient and generous order that premitted the carrier boys of PROGRESS to shy the bundles at the mail clerks on the train as the engine was pulling out of the station. These are troubles of our own but they will explain to some people why paragraphs apparently sent to this office in plenty of time don't obtain that publicity their writers desire.

And it also explains why those horse races at Moosepath last week didn't get the notice that they deserved. According to the opinion of the majority who attended, the most deserving notice would have been anything but complimentary. That wasn't the fault of the management which tried to make the purses attractive and did so and did so many other things to draw a crowd and make a good event that money was dropped, but rather of the fact that pacers and trotters went together and that always means a fiasco in the way of a race. The fact is made plainer that trotters have no business in the same class with pacers. The latter can down them eight times out of ten. Terrill S. is a new star in this firmament. He took the money at Calais and St. Stephen and he took it here. The best part of it is that a St. John man ownes him and has for some months. It was not generally known at the time but the fact remains just the same. Terrill S. can go, they say, in 2.10 or less. Of course "they say" is not reliable but still when one horse laps another out and the time is 2.09 the second horse can likely come close to 2.10. And that is what Terrill S. did. There were other old favorites in the race but none of them were in for first money. Special Blend was not in shape and the fact that he did not show up in his usual form led many to think that the operation performed on his throat had affected his staying powers. An old horseman laughed when PROGRESS asked him if that was the case. "Well" said he "I will tell you what I saw on the Tuesday preceeding the race which was Thursday and you can judge for yourself. Mr. Willis took Special Blend on the track and gave him three miles. The first was an easy one and no time was taken, the next was in 2.40 and the third was in 2.25 and the last halt was done in 1.09 So you can judge whe ther the operation injured him or not. But that was nearly his first speed work. New muscles came into use and the horse was sore on Thursday. Depend upon it you will hear from Special Blend this year."

It will be remembered that about a year ago there was additional interest in the races from the fact that pools were sold on them. Nobody stopped them and it appeared then that nobody had a right to. This year the chief of the police went out to the track and stopped the pool selling. There was a good deal of discussion as to the right of the chief to do this. Might is right sometimes, and no doubt it was so in this case. At any rate the pool selling stopped. The law relating to pool selling was framed by Sir John Thompson, then minister of justice for Canada, and there was much opposition to the act as it was first introduced. The result of it was that there was a modification of the proposed law which permitted the selling of pools during the pendency of the race. Last year permission was asked to sell the evening before the race and it was refused which was right and in accordance with the law but according to the opinion of horsemen the chief of police had no right to interfere with the pool selling on the track and while the race was going on.

Now in order to increase the local interest in the track there is talk of local fortnightly races on Saturday afternoons. These may be successful. They probably would be if the track was near the Marsh bridge.

PROGRESS Halifax correspondent writes that judging from the present aspect of things, Halifax will have no race track in the future. The track at the new exhibition grounds is pronounced by experts to be a beauty but it looks as if it will get very little use. When the act was put through parliament for the building of the track there was a clause inserted in it which specifically stated that it was to be used only at the time of an exhibition for "speed purposes". At the last session of parliament an attempt was made to strike out that clause, so as to leave the exhibition commission free to lease the track if it saw fit. In the place of doing that a blunder was made, and another clause taken out, which had no bearing whatever on it. The commission, however, in the face of all this called for tenders for the lease of the track and the Halifax Driving club being the highest bidder, it was given the tender. Races were held on the track on the 24th of May and also on the 21st of June. On the first mentioned date liquor was sold freely on the grounds, there was much carousing, and many disgraceful scenes witnessed. Of course this became talked about, and it soon found its way into the press, and in a short time the agitation became general throughout the province. The papers were filled with correspondence about it, and meetings were held in almost every town protesting against the commission countenancing the lease of the track. Meetings were held in many places at which strong resolutions were passed urging the commission to revoke the lease.

A meeting of the members was held and it was quite lively. Some of the members spoke out very freely and denounced the sectional newspapers and also the Law and Order league for taking any part in the matter. However the commission thought it best to get out of the difficulty as easy as possible and as a favorable opportunity now offered it agreed on cancelling the lease. Consequently Halifax is now without a race track while every small town in the province has one, and the owners of fast horses can speed their trotters without any fear of molestation.

In connection with the races on the 21st there a very unusual happening occurred. Liquor was being sold in one part of the grand stand, and when the bar was in full operation Inspector Banks and the chief of police stepped in and scooped all of the refreshing beverages. This made things quite dry for the time being but there was another bar going full blast in the other end of the stand, but the officials did not bother it. It was run by another party and the thirsts of many were quenched. It was run very openly and what bothers many is why this place was not closed up also. The raid on the first place may have only been made to satisfy those who have been clamouring about the sale of liquor at the track and it no doubt had the desired effect.

Tin Mugs are not Nice.

Somebody suggests to PROGRESS that if the management of the Park could arrange it so that it would be convenient for visitors there to get a drink of water such accommodation would meet with the kindest appreciation of the public. The idea is not a bad one. Perhaps it has been carried out before this paragraph is printed but if not the temptation to stoop down and take a taste of Lily Lake will probably be too great to resist. And the result of such a draught might be worse than a drink of that ginger ale or beer that can't be sold upon the grounds. Of course ladies are precluded from stooping to taste Lily Lake and it must be on account of this that the fair correspondent of PROGRESS suggests that a few mugs secured to a cool spring that is on the grounds would be pleasant and refreshing.

The Orangemen and Foresters.

With the Orangemen out of town Tuesday and the Foresters in the city Wednesday and Thursday the week was fairly evenly balanced. Some say 1000 people enjoyed the excursion on the Victoria to Fredericton. At any rate whatever the number was, the management say she could have carried five hundred more without trouble. Perhaps this was the largest party that the new boat has had on board. The trip to and from the capital was made in between five and six hours each way which is fast enough to suit anybody. The Foresters had an excursion too while in town. They took the opens cars and made the circuit of the city. They seemed happy and certainly were orderly and quiet.

THEY WENT OUT IN STYLE.

Alms House Committee Follow in the Footsteps of the Commission.

People who went down Princess street Thursday morning and saw two or three barouches drawn up before the office of the county secretary would probably wonder what select party of C. P. R. or Shore Line magnates were calling upon their solicitor who also has offices in Barnhill's building. Or it might occur to them that a party of rich tourists were doing the town and the vehicles were drawn up out of the way while they were calling upon his worship the mayor and inspecting the city building. These and other thoughts would pass in and out of any citizen's mind in less time than it took to pass the handsome turnouts. But he wouldn't be a good guesser just the same. The barouches were there for the purpose of taking a select committee out to the almshouse just to see what was going on—to look with wonder at the artisen well and equipment the cost of which went into the thousands and to devise some means of heating the place so that the very poor might be warm in winter as well as summer. People nowadays are beginning to get a little irritable over alms house expenditure and to manifest that spirit of curiosity that usually results in something. They may be induced to see that a barouche visit to the asylum for the poor would be beneficial, inasmuch as it might remind some of the inmates of former bright and prosperous days when they too could ride in barouches, but PROGRESS doubts it. Of course he might be a poor specimen of a citizen who would object to paying five or six dollars for a barouche to take the mayor and warden out to the alms house and back but still his memory would no doubt tell him that Mayor Sears never objected to a bus and Warden Lee has been seen on a brick cart. And neither circumstance was to their discredit. It might also occur to him that when the alms house has a nice team it might be at the service of any representative committee that wished to visit the place provided of course that the chairman had no use for it on that particular day. That old saying that straws show which way the wind blows is so true that it comes in play most any time. If the gentlemen who govern the alms house or the committees appointed to look into its affairs will spend ten dollars for coach hire when a quarter of that amount would take them there in comfort then it may be taken as an indication that in the matter of larger expenditure the necessary rigid care is not exercised.

Dr. Alward Walks In the Park.

Dr. Silas Alward is not a near sighted man and he generally tries to do what is right in every way, except, perhaps, a political way. But then the majority of people in St. John at least think that his course in politics is all right too. But that isn't the story. Last Sunday he was walking in the park and as he sauntered along enjoying the sunshine and the air and the good company he was in he was unconscious that he was treading on forbidden ground. But the man in charge soon let him know, and by the way he shouted and gesticulated one would have thought he was some destructive animal instead of an inoffensive member of the provincial partiament. The doctor is slow to anger but the continued abuse of himself for apparently nothing, at length drew forth a remonstrance from him and that having no effect finally a threat to report the turbulent employee to the park management. This brought a counter threat and the doctor handed the man a card so that there would be no mistake about his name. The spectators thought the remarks of the park employee uncalled for and no doubt the doctor thought so too for when he continued his walk he seemed in doubt as to what he had done to provoke such an onslaught.

TOLD HOW HE SHOT HIM.

WILLIAM CURTIS MAKES A BRIEF STATEMENT

Of How He Came to Shoot a Man at The Charivari at His House Last May—The Grand Jury Found no Bill Against Him Which Met With Approval.

Haste and passion sometimes betray men into actions which they may regret all their lives and indeed at times bring serious punishment and disgrace upon them. This was nearly the case with William Curtis of Blackville, Northumberland county, who in May last fired a shot from the window of his house and killed a man. The circumstances were peculiar and yet not uncommon in the country. There was a marriage in Curtis' house. One of his relatives was married that night and after the ceremony the men and boys for miles around gathered to do what they thought was an honor to the bride and groom and at the same time to have a little fun on their own account. They did not hesitate at a small noise but make all the din they could. All the noisiest instruments they could find were called into play and, what proved to a most regrettable incident, guns were also on hand to add to the din and to terrify the inmates. To state the result of the affair in brief a man was killed and Curtis was arrested for murder. A special sitting of the court at Newcastle, Tuesday, was held and the grand jury found no bill against him. A representative of PROGRESS who had an interview with the prisoner describes him as a fine looking man of about 32 years of age who is taller than the average man, standing six feet high. Those who were well acquainted with him gave him an excellent character. In Blackville he is a good member of the baptist church and well thought of by those associated with him in the work connected therewith.

The story of the tragic occurrence as told by Curtis himself is interesting, inasmuch as it throws new light upon what was considered at first a serious crime. To use his own words, the story runs as follows:

"On the night of the 25th May last Almira Harris and Howard Davidson were being married at my residence. A large number of guests were present and were all having a great time when the house was surrounded by a gang of men and boys armed with horns and guns. They made a great disturbance which greatly annoyed Mrs. Curtis, who was very sick in bed. I ordered them away but they continued to fire guns and one gun was fired almost into the room where Mrs. Curtis was. I seized a gun and fired a blank cartridge into the crowd in order to scare them. They laughed at me and told me my eye was crooked and continued the noise. I again picked up the gun and picked up what I thought was a blank cartridge but found to my horror it was loaded but it was too late as I had killed a man."

There seems to have been a great deal of sympathy felt for Curtis from the time the shooting took place. The coroner's jury and the preliminary examinations placed him upon his trial but there was evidently much concern for the prisoner and his trial was hurried along and a special session of the court held to try him. The grand jury remained out nearly all day and looked into the case carefully and their finding "no bill" was evidently satisfactory to the community.

HAVE YOU A DOG LICENSE?

Owners of Canines May Look Sharp After the First of August.

Those who have some chance to judge, estimate that there are fully 3000 dogs in the city of St. John. That should mean $3000 for the city in dog licenses but it doesn't for last year there were about 1140 licenses taken out and this year up to date the owners of three hundred and sixty dogs have gone to Mr. Ward in the mayor's office and paid their dollar for the little document that gives them a right to keep a dog.

After the first of August dog days in a civic sense will set in in earnest. Then the summonses will begin to go out and every little piece of paper that is issued will cost the owner of the dog half a dollar extra. Of course after the first few summonses are issued there will be a rush for the mayor's office and quite a number will escape but no one can tell that he won't be the first one to get a notice to appear before the police magistrate. Then if they don't appear a fine is struck and by this time the dog is probably not worth half his cost and bother.

There was a time when Abner Secord scoured the streets and captured a good many dogs but Abner spoiled his job by not distinguishing between the licensed thoroughbred and the unlicensed mongrel. He was a fancier in one sense for anything he put his net over was hurried down to the barrark green and the howlings that went up from the south end attracted many a citizen who missed his dog. The day of the dog catcher is over in St. John but the the policemen say that when those summons are placed in their hands they won't be looking for dogs.

Perhaps a hint in this time of trouble will not be amiss. There are a lot of new policemen on the force. They are pretty good fellows, so they say, but still the word DUTY is before them in large letters up to date and they have not drawn any line between Duty and Discretion as yet. The officer who knows the meaning of both words is a better man than he who only knows the meaning of one. That was probably why the latest arrival on the force made an arrest the other night of a citizen of the North End who was in the hands of his friends. The fact that the new man was not acquainted with the party probably had something to with his action. He made sure rather than be sorry later.

So the new man who distribute the summonses may not be as lenient as the older members who would in many cases get the cash at the time with a polite request to see that license was taken out.

Who Knows Where the Keys Are.

A good volume of smoke such as came from the photo supply store of A. E. Clarke on King street early one fine evening this week, was the means of drawing a bigger crowd of people in two or three minutes than has attended any attraction in St. John this year. The fire amounted to a good deal for Mr. Clarke but not much as a fire. If it had lasted a few hours later when nobody but policemen were walking around that nice combustible stock of photo chemicals would have started a pretty but expensive blaze. But as it was the fire started so quickly that Mr. Clarke, who was in one of his dark rooms had some trouble getting out in the end as the smoke and fire got between him and the street while he was trying to put it out with a pail of water. But for the timely arrival of Officer Killen and Mr. Manson in the rear he would have had quite a scorching. As it was he left his coat and hat behind. One of the curious things that occur when such a fire breaks out is the absence of knowledge about keys. Of course there were enough who knew where keys could be had to send in a prompt alarm. There were four keys within a stones' throw of the blaze, one in the Royal hotel, one in each morning newspaper office and one in Mr. Armstrong's, Germain street. It wouldn't be a bad idea if some of the many fire alarm cards that are issued for advertising purposes contained this information as well.

Price Webber is in Town.

Price Webber, with his face clean—shaved, and a few more gray hairs in his unshorn locks, is in town looking as happy and feeling as well as usual. He is the guest of Mr. James Seaton and when he is not telling good stories to his host is renewing old acquaintanships and shaking hands around town. Mr. Webber is taking a vacation, an unusual luxury for him but an agreeable one just the same. St. John has not lost its attraction for him and he likes to talk of the past as well as the present. His friends will be glad to learn that fortune has not been unkind to him this year and though Price will not admit that he has made any money he is happy with an easy conscience and a good digestion. Mrs. Webber is well and at present visiting friends in Augusta, Me.

Spending the Week in Boston.

The department of safety is this week without a chairman. He went away without leave, so the civic officials jokingly say, and those people who are always on the lookout for him to sign bills and so forth are not as happy as they might be In brief, Ald. McGoldrick went [illegible] Saturday af[illegible] I will [illegible] turn to[illegible] a bu[illegible] and co[illegible] Bos[illegible] aging to [illegible] say, that [illegible] own east."