

PROGRESS.

VOL. V., NO. 257.

ST. JOHN, N. B., SATURDAY, APRIL 1, 1893.

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THEY "SAVED WISELY."

ONE MOTIVE IN THE SPASMODIC "REFORM" BY THE COUNCIL.

Some of the Reasons Why Some Things Were Done and Others Left Undone—How the Mark Was Overcast in the Wild Hubbub of the Last Meeting.

This is All Fool's Day, and it is also the date on which the nominations for the Common Council must be filed.

Far be it from PROGRESS to insinuate that the coincidence is any reflection on the aldermen. Some of them are clever men and good representatives, and some are neither so clever as they think they are, nor so good as they would have others think them. The reflection, if any, is on the people, who are content to be represented by a body so big in proportion to its brains, and so busily useless in proportion to its opportunities of being useful.

The Tax Reduction Association was formed on the right principle, and its proclaimed platform was in most particulars such as PROGRESS has advocated ever since the union of the cities. It may again be repeated that beyond question the vote in favor of a union was due to the exposures by PROGRESS of the ring rule in Portland, and the desire of the people of that city to be emancipated from the yoke of bossism. Whether that union proved to be in the interests of the general public is not now the question. One thing is certain, that a certain amount of the levian which caused the ferment in old Portland has been incorporated into the municipal politics of St. John. It is likely to remain there until the people take the matter of reform into their own hands.

The Tax Reform Association was a move in this direction. Its inception was due to the exposure by PROGRESS of some of the features of the Moore street job, in which Alderman John Kelly was to the front. Unfortunately, the movement came too late to be of any practical use in the approaching elections, and the guidance of the affairs of the Association did not seem to be in the best hands. Either this was the case or the committees were "captured" by wire-pullers, though the absurdity of some of the names suggested for a "reform" election leads to the presumption that there was merely blundering without crafty intent, in regard to all but two or three of the names put forward. Since PROGRESS voiced public opinion and set on the proposed nominations, nothing has been heard of them. The T. R. A. has abandoned the field, for this election, and most of the old aldermen will be returned without opposition.

This is a pity, for at least two-thirds of the present members could be spared from the council with advantage to the ratepayer. Some of them have realized this fact since the cry of "less taxes" was raised. For aught they could tell, the legislature might act promptly, the elections might be postponed, and they, in an election by the people of the whole city, might be relegated to their proper sphere as private citizens. In this spirit they undertook to accomplish some reforms.

Nobody gives them credit for any higher motive. The only newspaper which bestows even faint praise on them clearly shows that it knows very little of what it is talking about. The men who are to the front in the latest deal for economy are not of the stuff of which reformers are made. They began too late, and the coincidences, they say at least, were unfortunate.

The "reformers" who became so suddenly developed last week, virtually proclaimed that they had been wrong all the time they were at the board in enacting and permitting what they then repealed and abolished. They informed the public that they had sat at the board, week after week, month after month, and some of the noisiest of them year after year, while thousands of dollars were over-expended with their consent and usually with their active cooperation. In all that time they had seized every opportunity to secure what they could for their own pocket boroughs, without the expression of a sentiment favorable to reform. Then, after this indifference, a scheme of "economy" was sprung, just after the T. R. A. began to threaten and just before the time of an election. The ratepayer who could be deceived by such clap-trap ought not to have a vote.

One of the motives which is said to have actuated the North End members was a desire to "save wisely." In the theory of the framers of the union act a director of public safety was necessary in addition to the heads of the police and fire departments. Mr. Robert Wisely was one of legacies which came from the city of Portland, and a place had to be found for him as director of public safety at \$1,200 a year. Mr. Wisely is known to everybody as a thoroughly decent, well-meaning man, and nobody who knows him has begrudged him his place. It has been a generally recognized fact, however, that \$1,200 was an extravagant salary for the position, even if there were more duties than there are, and if the situation was held by a man qualified for it. Mr. Wisely would have been well paid at

THEY WANTED A CHANGE

THE CITIZENS' MOVEMENT OF THIRTY YEARS AGO.

To Abolish Ward Elections as They Were Held Then and Now—Some of the Names on the old Petition—Ald. Blizard and Keegan's Petition on Record.

The idea that ward elections are pernicious and that all the electors should have a right to vote for all the aldermen, is not a new one in St. John. More than a generation ago, in October, 1859, the leading ratepayers of the city undertook to have a change in the system, and this is the petition that was circulated:

To His Worshipful The Mayor, and Corporation of the City of Saint John, in Common Council assembled.

THE PETITIONERS of the undersigned Magistrates, and other Freeholders and Freemen of the City of St. John, respectfully shew—

That your Petitioners have long been convinced that the present mode of electing the Members of the Common Council of this City, by voting in each Ward for the Alderman and Councillor of the particular Ward only, is subject to many and serious objections, and productive of much abuse and corruption.

That your Petitioners are firmly persuaded, that the only mode of securing independent voting at Civic Elections, (free from personal, party, or private influence,) and of ensuring the election of the fittest and best qualified men to represent the people in Common Council, will be, by giving every Elector a right to vote in his own Ward for the whole body of Aldermen and Councillors to be elected, for that side of the Harbor on which such Elector votes.

Your Petitioners therefore humbly pray that Your Worshipful Body will forthwith cause to be prepared, and will take the most energetic measures for securing the passing by the Legislature, at its next Session, of a Bill enacting, that at all future Civic Elections, every Elector shall vote (in the Ward in which he may be legally entitled to vote) for the whole body of Aldermen and Councillors to be elected for that side of the Harbor, in which such Elector gives his vote.

And as it is duty bound will ever pray, &c.

Saint John, N. B., October, 1859.

This petition was signed by the leading merchants of the city, the old-time solid and substantial leading citizens whose names are identified with the history of the prosperity of the city in the days when lumbering and shipbuilding were in their glory, as well as by a large number of ratepayers in various walks of life. The original petitions are now carefully treasured by Mr. Clarence Ward.

Most of the then leading men have passed away, but among the familiar names of today are those of Dr. W. Bayard, Senator Lewin, J. F. Marsters, G. E. Fenety, W. C. Godsoe, T. F. Raymond, R. Cruikshank, G. W. Whitney, W. W. Turnbull, T. A. Godsoe, Dr. B. Travers, Wm. Wedderburn, C. N. Skinner, F. Tufts, L. H. Waterhouse, R. Whiteside, Thomas Furlong, G. W. Day, A. Ballentine, Calvin Powers, C. F. Kinneer, Dr. P. R. Inches, W. P. Dole, Henry Duffell, Ald. S. G. Blizard, J. S. Boies DeVeber, Hurd Peters, W. A. Lockhart, C. H. Fairweather, S. Gardner, Charles Clarke, D. O. L. Warlock, Peter Sharkey, J. E. Barnes, Lewis J. Almon, W. J. McCordock, G. Bent, James A. Tufts, Senator Dever and others.

It will be observed that Ald. Blizard put himself on record, as he is doubtless willing to do now, and that City Engineer Peters was of the same opinion.

The petition seems never to have got very far, however. The aldermen understood then as well as they do now that an election by the people means a new council. The petition was either not received or it was referred to some such committee as has had the mayor's inaugural in hand for the last twelve months.

They Travel in a Rut.

Three persons who held liquor licenses last year have been refused renewals for this year because three convictions for violation of the law were recorded against them. This is as the act directs, and they have no right to complain. The only question that suggests itself is if why these three have been convicted so often and so many others, commonly known as violators of the law, have escaped. The police methods seem to run in ruts in this and in other ways. Why should one person with a wholesale license be brought up time and again for selling at retail, while another well understood to be a like offender should publicly and with impunity violate the law?

It is because he is accounted more respectable, or because he has a "pull" with somebody? Then again a stranger, reading the papers would infer that only a certain three or four persons sold liquor without license, for their names appear with astonishing frequency while apparently there are few or no others who violate the law in the same way. For some reason or another the police appear reluctant to make discoveries outside of certain well worn paths. Why is it?

Will Depart Without a Eulogy.

The presbytery of St. John held a meeting in the Carleton church on Tuesday night when the resignation of Rev. Godfrey Shore was accepted without dissent. The eulogy expected from the congregation did not materialize, and as there was a quiet whisper that the informant of PROGRESS was present, the talk was somewhat guarded. A certificate of transference was granted to Mr. Shore to the Kingston, Ont., presbytery, where it is expected he

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ST. JOHN ALDERMEN AT FREDERICTON FORGET ECONOMY.

A Church Waiting For a Rector—Too Many Officers in Both Police and Fire Departments—A Lack of Rank and File as a Result.

When the common council proposed to send the Mayor and Ald. John Chesley to Ottawa to explain what the city wanted in the matter of the Mill street crossing, somebody naturally enquired why two men were required where every possible explanation could be given by one. Ald. Nickerson rose to the emergency by a speech in which he said that it was a good plan to send two men in case one man should die on the road. Perhaps the same thing has been followed in the case of the bill committee which was instructed to send a delegation to Fredericton to explain one or two very simple bills. The committee consists of Ald. Kelly, Chesley, Bizard, McGoldrick, Baxter, White, McKelvey and McLaughlin, and every one of the lot, with the exception of Ald. McKelvey, took a trip at the expense of the ratepayers. They were accompanied by the recorder, and the expense of their holiday will probably be a snug little sum, judging by the accounts in which some of these gentlemen have figured in the past. Just why Ald. McKelvey did not join the merry party is not stated.

IN CAPITULAR MASONRY.

The Degrees of the Chapter to Be Fully Exemplified Next Week.

The official notices have been issued for a special convocation of the Grand Royal Arch Chapter of New Brunswick, to be held in this city on Wednesday next, at 11 o'clock in the forenoon. The morning session will be devoted to routine business and the afternoon and evening will be taken for the exemplification of the four degrees under the direction of the ritual committee. The following arrangements have been made:

Work in the Mark Masters' degree will begin at half-past two, with the H. P. of Union chapter, Mr. W. K. Reynolds, as R. W. M.

The Past Master degree will be taken up at four o'clock, with the H. P. of New Brunswick chapter, Mr. Hedley V. Cooper, as R. W. M.

At the conclusion of this degree, supper will be served in the Masonic building, so that there will be as little delay as possible in resuming work.

At seven o'clock the degree of Most Excellent Master will be exemplified, with Mr. H. V. Cooper, as R. W. M.

The Royal Arch degree will be taken up at half-past eight, with Mr. W. B. Wallace of Carleton chapter as H. P.

The work will be exemplified on candidates furnished by New Brunswick chapter, under the warrant of which the degrees will be conferred. As this will be the first official exemplification of the work since the formation of the Grand Chapter of New Brunswick, and as it is most desirable there should be uniformity in points of interest throughout the jurisdiction, it is probable there will be a large attendance of companions from other parts of the province. It was with the view to accommodate these that the arrangement has been made to have all the work done in one day, rather than to divide it between two evenings, as would have better suited the companions resident in St. John.

HOURS WITH THE POSTS.

Only Four More Verses Remain in Which to Compete for a Prize.

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E. S. CARTER, Prop. PROGRESS:—It affords me much pleasure to hereby acknowledge receipt from you of a cheque for five dollars, the prize for the best poem published in PROGRESS during the month of February last.

With best wishes for your success and the prosperity of your journal, I remain, yours,
ALEX. HERON,
Herald office, Fredericton.

The supply of poetry still continues to more than equal the space which can be given to it in these columns, but there is not so much of it as there was during February. Perhaps the weather continues too cold for the traditional spring poet to come to the front with his warbling, but the next four weeks are likely to be warmer and more favorable to the cultivation of the muse.

Coppers in a Bundance

There was a great crowd at the services in St. Andrew's church last Sunday. In the evening it is estimated that there must have been 1000 people present, many of whom were strangers. When the collection was counted there were 300 coppers found among the silver and notes. This seems to bear out the theory that many interested in church work have, viz. that a big crowd is no sign of a big collection. Seven-eighths of the strangers go provided with coppers instead of silver.

The Shareholders Will Get the Saving.

Referring to a paragraph in the last issue of PROGRESS regarding a recent meeting of the shareholders of a joint stock company, it may be stated that the reduction made in the salaries of the manager and secretary was not voted to the president. In fact that motion did not come before the meeting though it was pretty well understood that it had been previously suggested but lacked the necessary encouragement to warrant it being brought up.

A Flourishing Scotch Society.

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