

The Saturday Gazette.

ST. JOHN, N. B., SATURDAY, JULY 9, 1887.

PRICE 3 CENTS.

VOL. I.—No. 11.

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The Gazette.

AROUND CHUBB'S CORNER.

A DESCRIPTION OF AN HISTORICAL SPOT IN ST. JOHN.

Some of the Men Great and Small Who Have Made it Their Headquarters For the Past and Present.

Who is there in St. John who does not know Chubb's corner and who knowing it has not at some time or other lounged near it to meet some friend. For more than half a century Chubb's corner has been the legal, political and financial centre of St. John. More important law cases have been quietly discussed in its shadow, more political jobs put up and more property changed hands on the more than one occasion when the corner of the city was rebuilt after the fire. As soon as the heat of the fire had subsided and the ruins of the old post office made safe, the old frequenters began to gather about the corner once again to discuss the credit of their fellow townsmen or to talk over old times and the reasons why Mr. So and So collapsed and how he would "cut up" if his creditors came down severely on him. Now-a-days those of the old time who survive can always be found about the corner and no doubt while they retain the use of their lower limbs they will continue to paddle down every day when sales take place if they have to remain in the house on other days. Chubb's corner is a great news centre; the first information of a commercial disaster even though it occurs at one or the other extremities of the city can always be got at the corner. The latest joke at the expense of some man about town can always be traced to the corner, while the newest thing in the way of a social scandal is first heard here. In fact it is the point where the men who are best informed as to what is going on about town meet daily and talk over matters and compare notes. Chubb's corner is the most convenient place in the city to do this. The banks are all within a stone's throw of it; the post office and city hall across the way and the custom house a short distance beyond. Business men are forced to pass by it and in doing so they always linger to learn the latest news.

Chubb's corner has an interesting history. Before it was the site of the late Henry Chubb, the founder of the Courier newspaper, the north west corner of Princess and Prince William streets had several owners. When the present century was ushered in Colin Campbell, who was Mayor of St. John at one time, and also the post master resided and had his office on the corner. In those days there was no lobby in the post office for people to litter in while the mail was being assorted. Mr. Campbell delivered the mail in the wall of his house, the recipient standing on the sidewalk meanwhile. Afterwards the property passed into the hands of Hugh Johnson who had his residence there. The next owner was George E. Frink, from whom in 1841 Mr. Chubb purchased the property and began at once the erection of a new brick building. A large fire occurred which destroyed the greater part of Prince William street, while Mr. Chubb was erecting his new edifice. Fortunately for him the fire stopped at his building, an while the structure was slightly damaged the work of construction was not seriously impeded. It was therefore in 1842 that Chubb's corner commenced its existence, and for forty-five years it has continued the financial centre of the city.

Henry Chubb the founder of Chubb's corner was one of the most enterprising, energetic and useful citizens St. John had. He was the son of John Chubb had a U. E. Loyalist who came to St. John in 1783. Born in 1788, Henry Chubb was apprenticed to Jacob S. Mott, the leading printer of the province. The first number of the Courier, a newspaper destined to obtain a wide circulation and to wield an extensive influence was issued from the office of Jacob S. Mott, on May 2, 1811, by Henry Chubb & Co. It grew with the city and became one of its most useful institutions, and would still have continued a power, had its publication not been suspended. Besides the publication of the Courier, Mr. Chubb carried on a general job printing business and kept a Stationery store in which was sold, besides the usual stock in that line, all kinds of fancy articles and a complete assortment of patent medicines—such was the general mix up in business, even down to a late date. Besides being a business man and editor and publisher, Mr. Chubb was, to some extent, a politician, having been appointed Mayor of the city in 1850. Being of a companionable disposition, Mr. Chubb naturally had a large number of personal friends and among these were the majority of the leading men of the city. They discovered that the Chubb's corner was a most convenient place to meet and talk

over events past and to come, and this was how Chubb's corner first got its name. Many of the old frequenters who made the corner famous as a financial and news centre have passed away and given place to an entirely new set of people, men who love gossip as much as the old fellows used to and can drive just as close a bargain, but who nevertheless have none of that spirit of bohemianism so marked in the frequenters of the generation whom they have replaced. To write intelligibly of Chubb's corner as it was ten, fifteen or twenty years ago it is necessary to describe its surroundings. An essay to describe its surroundings of ten years before the fire Gabel's rubber store faced it and the Commercial bank building occupied the opposite corner. A coal shed occupied the present site of the post office; the bank of New Brunswick had been on its present site for over sixty years. A small stone building stood next the bank and this was used for various civic purposes. A water alley separated this building from the one further south, the alley being the entrance to the Bee Hive—an establishment every St. John man knew something about. Opposite the entrance to the Bee Hive stood an old wooden building in which the Daily and Weekly Telegraph offices were situated. A few yards south again was Barnes' Hotel, another popular resort for down town business men. Morrissey's or as it was better known by the Duke House of Lords was on Duke street. The Royal Hotel previously situated opposite the Custom House and Furlong's were also resorts frequently patronized particularly the latter. In the early days of the corner the store afterwards occupied by Mr. Furlong was kept by Thomas A. Paddock. Nearly all the places mentioned came into existence after the reputation of Chubb's corner was established, and it had become the favorite meeting ground of the city. Several of them also changed hands more than once since 1841, and a good many have passed out of sight altogether. The Bee Hive is no more. Pat Morrissey is dead, and a new but as yet to be found where the "Lords" formerly went. The Royal Hotel is on King street. The Cooper's Alley eating saloons have recently also. Mr. J. D. Turner, who more recently kept an oyster house on Water street has moved up town. The Commercial bank burst up. The city purchased the property for a city hall, and after the fire re-built the present expensive structure. The Daily Telegraph has come to Canterbury street, and scores of changes have taken place even in the last decade. And in the next ten years still more will be witnessed as business of the kind formerly done around Chubb's corner gradually working back the way. The banks, with two or three exceptions are centered about the corner, and the majority of insurance agents and real estate brokers are within easy call of the corner. In so large a list of frequenters as the corner had there could scarcely fall to be some odd characters—and if one could only recall the various eccentric individuals who have at one time or other did odd things on the corner some very odd things would most assuredly be brought to the surface.

Among the more famous of the first frequenters of Chubb's corner were Robert L. Hazen who, in after life, was Recorder of the city. He came every evening and was usually met by Sir William Ritchie, then a practising lawyer in this city, now Chief Justice of Canada. Mr. Peter Bernard was also one of these who could be seen on the corner every day. Mr. Bernard is still living and occasionally takes a walk up town to see what is going on. He always carried a white umbrella in summer and was for years the only one in town who carried an umbrella in fine weather. Charles Stewart long since dead was another of the earlier frequenters of the corner. He was extensively engaged in whaling operations both in St. John and at New Bedford, Thomas Lovett the United States Consul of the early days of the city, and John R. Parlow at one time Provincial Secretary of the Province and for a time chamberlain of the city were representatives of another branch of the old timers. Thomas Merritt was a unique figure among those who spent a considerable portion of their time in that vicinity. Isaac Bedell whose father Paul Bedell laid out the city plot of St. John was also frequently seen in the corner. He was a former merchant of this city had a particular place in front of where the City Hall now stands for observing the doings of the crowd on the opposite corner. He was somewhat eccentric in his dress and generally wore a long coat which gave him a most peculiar look. In fact there has always been some eccentricities displayed by some one of those who daily frequenters. One of those who daily resorted there always wore a seascucker coat and trousers and carried the drink he paid for his solitary morning drink

carefully done up in a piece of paper. Citizens will still remember a somewhat remarkable though familiar figure clad in a loose linen suit surmounted by a white straw hat. The latest fad in this direction is a suit of white flannel one gentlemen has recently assumed, and wears in open defiance of the good natured, but keen criticism of his friends.

Coming down to more recent times there are still many figures about the corner which are still remembered, and though many have departed from this earthly sphere they are not yet entirely forgotten. Surveyor Dixon, better known as the hard of war, because he was once unfortunate enough to deliver a lecture on the Russian Persian and German Wars is often recalled by those who knew him in the flesh. George M. Burns is still living, but he does not frequent the corner as much as formerly. S. K. Brundage also a familiar figure is dead. Charles H. Chandler for a long time clerk to the Police Magistrate and one of the boys has gone the way of all flesh. Herb Sinnott the most inveterate practical joker of the city is also dead. Oliver Stone, who frequently helped Sinnott out in his jokes is in the Northwest. Joseph S. Knowles visits the corner occasionally, and after delivering himself of a large number of bad puns goes away and hides for a moment or two in Halifax. T. City Crook-shank, who was always supplied with a fresh fish story full of flavor very seldom looks down upon the boys now, but he occasionally puts in an appearance and is always sure of a hearty welcome. William Murdoch who published two volumes of excellent original poetry is also numbered among the dead. For many years he made daily visits to the corner to meet "a brother Scot" and there talk over the leading events of the day not only in the realms of fact but also fancy. Thomas W. Peters, Thomas Gilbert and Bradford Gilbert were for many years central figures among the corner frequenters. Then there was Charles U. Handford, George V. Nowlin, Wm. K. Reynolds, Jr., and a host of others greater and lesser lights who made their headquarters there.

At the present time John Kinnear and John Risk are perhaps the oldest frequenters of the corner. Warden T. W. Peters has been a familiar figure there for several years. George A. Garrison who died a few months ago was up to the last a regular visitor at Chubb's. He went down town every afternoon and although over 80 years of age was as spry as many men twenty years younger. Post Office Inspector King was a good portion of his time within ear shot of the corner, and although he has not been so much seen about recently Col. DeBlais is not forgotten by the older frequenters and is as genial as ever. Capt. H. W. Chisholm visits the corner quite frequently still and keeps posted on all that goes on there.

The old time auctioneers have long since disappeared. W. D. W. Hubbard still lives, but has retired from business. George E. Snider is still in business. Thomas Hanford has retired. Stewart & White have dissolved. George H. Clarke is making a fortune in the West. I. H. Anderson is dead. W. A. Lockhart still holds forth at the corner on Saturdays, and frequently on other days. The flags of T. B. Hanington and Geo. W. Gerow are often seen on the corner.

Half the real state of the city has changed hands at Chubb's corner. Ships, houses and merchandise of all classes has been bought and sold there. On one occasion all the real estate owned by the city was advertised for sale at this place, but the city effected a settlement with its creditors and paid the bill for advertising the property—a bill amounting to over \$400. In old times the city bye laws were proclaimed at Chubb's corner and the bell man stopped there to make his announcements. The most famous of the city bell men was McCann who had things including led children, goods for sale at auction and public sales of all kinds.

But with all the changes Chubb's corner is still much the same as it has been for the past 45 years. The same class of persons resort there, and while the lumber business which was formerly done on the street in front of Chubb's is now done in the offices, many transactions are still begun and completed on the corner. And no doubt will be for some time to come. The Board of Trade, the Commercial News Room, the Post Office and the City Hall are still there and they will always cause a large traffic along the street.

The Queen's Jubilee Souvenir is the title of a neat little publication issued in Halifax during the jubilee. It is a guide book to the city of Halifax and is capably written. The publisher and editor is Mr. Joseph B. Knowles and he has done his work well. The little book contains a preface worth twice the price charged, and besides a description of the city several clever humorous articles. For sale at the bookstores.

IMPROVING THE CITY.

URBAN PARKS AND ROUND DRIVES SUGGESTED.

A Boulevard at Barrack Point and an Esplanade on Fort Howe, with a Large Park at Lily Lake.

In provision for wholesome out-of-door recreation by pleasant walks or drives without going great distances or without meeting with unpleasant incidents on the way Saint John is sadly deficient—although the site of the city and suburbs is one of the most picturesque in America. There are no playgrounds for the children or common for boys to have their games of ball or cricket to develop their growing muscles. The aesthetic side of life has been largely ignored—the practical has had full sway. It has been remarked that wherever the saw mill industries there the taste for the beautiful lies dormant and undeveloped. These industries have been mainly the source of St. John's former prosperity, and the fact may possibly account for the lack of interest in anything outside of business. It can however no longer be said of St. John that these are its principal industries—there is literally no shipbuilding and the saw mill is no longer the controlling power. With the change in the nature of the business of the place, and a return to our former prosperous condition, it is to be hoped an interest will be developed that will make our town the desirable place for living in that its site and climate entitle it to be.

For a pleasant evening's walk of an hour, and at this season of the year of long evenings, and when the heat of the day has given way to refreshing coolness what can be pleasanter, where can one go? There is the "Government Pier"—you say—and the walk extending from it around by the sea to the Courtenay bay side of the city. Certainly this location had many of the features of a pleasant seaside walk originally, and if the Barrack grounds had been taken in hand at the time the soldiers were removed, and which scheme was then advocated in the press, a very desirable park, on a small scale, could have been made without great expense, and, by judicious purchase of surrounding property, fine sites for first-class residences could have been put in the market and made a source of profit as well as greatly improve that part of the town. But the Railway has been run through the property, destroying it for pleasure drive and the Exhibition buildings and Drill Shed erected on it. Yet with all this, enough remains that with proper treatment a very desirable promenade could be made, with seats and ornamental planters and a hand stand, shade trees sheltered and the approaches improved.

There are the squares—King and Queen—and the "Old Burying Ground" but they are only useful for passing through, being too small for exercising grounds and are lacking in any purpose of art in their lay-out to be of interest as a walk. The Burying ground could be made a pleasant place for a ten minutes stroll, but what little has been done towards improving it has been so badly done as to quite ruin it, except for nurses and children. When the new fence, so much needed, is erected it should be a good iron one on a low cut stone wall and with stone posts at intervals.

For a walk out of town there is "Lovers Lane," a walk without a tree or shelter of any kind for near a mile. Then there is Lily Lake and the approaches to it. A long chapter could be written on this subject profitably if there was in prospect of the property being taken in hand and laid out as a park proper. It has naturally all the requirements of a park in the way of wood, water and green sward, but needs the hand of art to develop these features properly. This need not require a great outlay at the start except for the purchase of the property which should be secured at once, more especially in the matter of the approaches. The lands now available are admirably adapted for the purpose, but are liable to be built upon at any time and thereby put out of the way of being used by the park or the acquiring of them made too expensive. A slight outlay at the first in making a few paths and clearing away the underbrush in places and with judicious management and policing would make the park a beautiful resort and not difficult of access. The Sandy Point road, or Howe's Road, as it is sometimes called, has always been a favorite strolling place, but is lacking in interest and has no connection with other roads except through the bushes, swampy in places and underbrush everywhere. This road could easily be connected with Lily Lake on the one side and the Fort Howe and Millidgeville roads on the other.

There is no such thing as a round drive out of St. John over good roads. In whatever direction you leave town you must return over the same road, unless willing to risk the springs of a light carriage over rough bye-roads. If you go out to the Marsh, or return by way of the Marsh, if to Red Head or to Mispick you simply turn round and double on your tracks. To Sandy Point or to Millidgeville on the Kennebecasis—the "Beach" at Sand Cove or the Manawagish Road—from all these you return by the way you went. The remedy for this would not be difficult or expensive. The "Beach road" at Taylor's Island and Manawagish road could be easily connected, also the Sandy Point road with Marsh Road, and the Marsh road with the Red Head road. A comfortable afternoon's drive would cover all these roads giving a constant change of scenery.

No finer outlook can be had than that from Fort Howe—from the top of this hill can be seen in clear weather the coast of Nova Scotia, some 40 miles distant. The nearer view takes in the West-Branswick coast trending east and west, Mispick and Black River on the one side, Manawagish Island and Pisarinco on the other with Partridge Island, Carleton, St. John and Portland in the more immediate foreground. The bridges over the Falls and Grand Bay on the St. John river to the west and north and the Marsh and distant Ben Lomond to the east. With these views to be had by a few minutes walk or drive from the centre of the city there has been no steps taken towards making a road to it or to put up a shelter or seats so that the views could be enjoyed when there, with rest and comfort. A fine, easy drive could be made to the top of this hill with an Esplanade at the summit where carriages could stop or move slowly about. A broad and ornamental shelter with seats for pedestrians should be put up and other seats placed at points where their improvement might be made. It is worth the road, as an outlook. It certainly could be made quite equal of the "Dufferin Terrace" at Quebec, without the great outlay, and would be a favorite resort of the citizens as well as a point of interest to take strangers to from here a road could branch off to the Millidgeville road and one to the Sandy Point road by way of the "Marsh" and the Sandy Point road continued along the shores of the beautiful Kennebecasis river to "Drury's Cove" and from there a road now connects with the Marsh Road, thus making a round drive which for its length would give as great a variety of picturesque scenery as can be had on the coast.

THE CRAZY ROMANOFFS. How Insanity Has Run Through the Entire Imperial Family. (From London Society.) In the recently published memoirs of Count Vitshum, of Eckstadt, proofs are given of the hereditary character of the mental disease which afflicted the Imperial family of Russia. All the sons of Czar Paul I., like that unhappy monarch himself, who was murdered in 1801, became subject to fits of insanity. Paul I. had four sons—Czar Alexander I., the Grand Duke Constantine, Czar Nicolas I. and the Grand Duke Michael. Every one of them, after his forty-fifth year exhibited undoubted signs of mental derangement. This was not fully discovered in the case of Nicolas I. until after the Czar's death. An English physician, however, the Count says, noticed the appearance of the hereditary disease in the Czar as early as July, 1853, and he then predicted that the monarch had not more than two years of life before him. This he stated in a letter to Lord Palmerston. The Emperor Nicolas died in 1881, the date predicted. The Count appears to have no doubt that the Crimean war, so far as it depended on Nicolas, was the rash act of a ruler whose mental equilibrium was disturbed. None of the four sons of Paul I. lived to be sixty years of age, and every one of them suffered from concussion of the brain after reaching his forty-fifth year.

Alexander died at forty-eight, a terrible man, moody and despondent, as Prince Metternich has painted him, "tired of existence." His brother, the Grand Duke Constantine, though manifestly insane, gave frequent signs of mental disturbance, of which he himself so plainly conscious that he did not think himself fit to be trusted with the reins of government. His conduct in the year 1830, at the outbreak of the revolution in Warsaw, will remain to be intrusted to the care of his wife, the Princess Lowicz, who was cautioned in the same way as is a physician in charge of a patient having intermittent fits of insanity. He died in his fifty-second year from congestion of the brain. The Grand Duke Michael was killed by a fall from his horse at the age of eighty. Some years before his death he had exhibited signs of undoubted mental disease, and his physicians declare that he was on the road to certain insanity. The events of 1848-52 were not calculated to allay the hereditary predispositions of the imperial family of Russia, but to excite and intensify them. There is something terrible in the contrast between the outward position of the Czar Nicolas, upon the best of whose will the fate of so many millions in Europe was depending, and the alleged diseased inward condition of his mind.