

THE ST. JOHN EVENING TIMES

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CITY COUNCILS.

The Hon. Willard Howland, chairman of the Massachusetts state board of conciliation and arbitration, holds strong views on the question of membership in city councils and in legislatures. In a recent address, before the Massachusetts and Suburban Press Associations, he said: "He who feels that he is too good to work in the civic government or in the legislature is a bad citizen. It is the duty of every citizen to lend his talents to the state, city or town in which he lives. Why is it that men speak slightingly of the boards of aldermen and of our common councils? Because the men who ought to be in them are not there, and the thing for the press to do is to raise the sense of duty and patriotism of such men so that they will become willing to serve in those boards. The government of cities will come to this pass, I think, that men for the common councils will be selected just as jurors are now. Make their service compulsory, and that would bring into the public eye men whom the state and city would delight to honor. Men, who, when they had become better acquainted with public service, would be willing to give of their time and talents for the benefit of their fellow-citizens. By such means public service would become again an honor and men would not shrink from it as they do now."

The need of reform which Mr. Howland points out is generally admitted, but his proposition that service be made compulsory is hardly practicable. Of course it might be that with such a council as he suggests there would come such a reform in methods of administration under salaried heads of departments that only matters of general policy would have to be considered by the council. In that case there would not be so great a sacrifice of time as is at present involved in membership of the civic board.

Under such a council in St. John, for example, it might not be necessary to spend hours debating the question whether the owner of a baby carriage should pay the ferry toll to the gateman, or to the toll-keeper in the ferry house. The aldermen might not be compelled to hold secret enquiries relative to the conduct of employes of a department. Long and windy speeches might be eliminated. Business methods might prevail, and it might not be necessary to wrangle over work done, and at last order some of it undone. So many and so great and fascinating are the possibilities in a city under the rule of men whom "the city would delight to honor," that one is tempted to urge the immediate adoption of Mr. Howland's scheme. There is no likelihood, however, of its being adopted this year, and in the meantime a new city council must be chosen in the spring. Let us hope that the sense of duty and patriotism will be manifest in the selection.

MUNICIPAL GAS.

Boston and Montreal are moving in the direction of municipal gas plants.

The board of aldermen of Boston, by a vote of 10 to 3 have concurred with the common council in the passage of the order authorizing the city of Boston to maintain plants for the manufacture and distribution of gas and electricity.

The Montreal Gazette of Monday says:—

The attempt has not yet been given up by the aldermen of getting an underground conduit here, and a gas plant under the management of the city. Ald. L. A. Lapointe moved that the city give notice of its intention of going to Quebec again this winter to get these and other amendments to the charter. He explained that practically the notice included a proposal to buy out the Gas Company, or to organize a company, and to undertake the construction of a conduit for present overhead wires. The notice he spoke of was only a preliminary one, and the committee on legislation, when it met, would likely decide on the exact amendments to ask for. The notice of the city's intention was accepted by the council, by which the legislation committee is authorized to prepare a report on amendments.

SEPARATE SCHOOLS.

The Toronto Telegram hands out this broadside to Mr. R. L. Borden:—

Carleton County, Ontario, is one constituency in Canada which should give no blank cheques to Mr. R. L. Borden or anybody else now that the national school issue again threatens to invade federal politics. If Mr. Borden is in favor of handicuffing the people of the Territories with constitutional restrictions in favor of separate schools let him say so.

If Carleton County is in favor of giving its representative a free hand to assist in forcing separate schools into the constitution of the new province in the North-west let it vote to that effect.

But if Mr. Borden appeals to the electors of Carleton County he should

be asked to state his views upon the national school issue in order that the people who provide him with a seat may not vote in the dark.

In a letter to an evening paper Rev. J. A. Richardson arraigns the city council for its refusal to make a grant of \$200 to the Salvation Army Travellers' Home. Canon Richardson sets before the readers of that paper what the Times has made clear on several occasions—the real need of the work the army is doing, and the justice of its claim for a measure of civic support. He refuses, as this paper has also done, the statement that the indigent strangers among us are all loafers or thieves.

A London cable says:—"The board of trade returns says that 453,531 people left the United Kingdom last year for places outside Europe, as against 449,006 in 1903. The total was made up as follows: English 175,941; Scotch 35,342; Irish 58,308; the rest being foreigners. The United States took the most with 291,793; British North America next with 91,737; while 32,133 went to South Africa."

The latest story, says the Boston Globe, is that Senator Snoot's friends in the Mormon church advise him to resign from the United States senate, because they think he ought not to be compelled to sit in a body of which three of the members have been indicted within the last year or so.

While Canada is not yearning for reciprocity it is absurd to assume that Sir Wilfrid Laurier would curiously refuse to discuss the question if invited by the United States government to do so. Friendly discussion of mutual relations is always in order, and productive of good.

The discussion on Modern Education, as it relates to St. John, should attract a large audience to Berryman's Hall this evening. The subject is one of great importance, and men with special knowledge will be heard.

Now that a Paris scientist has discovered that kissing instead of being dangerous and deleterious is really pathologically beneficial it is possible the practice will be resumed. (New York American.)

"A short life and a merry one," was poor Bettina Girard's motto; and her life was short indeed, but in the ending of it was anything but merry. (Boston Globe.)

An exchange very properly puts this query:—With \$20,000,000 worth of diamonds at the Astor ball in New York how could it fail to be a brilliant spectacle?

Fifty-two divorce cases are before the Cumberland county, Maine, divorce court this week. The average keeps up remarkably well in Maine.

The secretary of the Grain Dealers' Association at Winnipeg, says that over four million acres will be in crop in the west.

The United States senate is vigorously discussing a bill proposing government regulation of railroads.

ONE IMMIGRANT'S STORY.

Russian Jew, Now in the City, Whose Father Was a Victim of Kischeneff.

David Rostersky, a Russian Jew who is among the immigrants in the synagogue tells a pathetic story of his experience in the land of the "great white czar."

His father had been wounded in the Kischeneff massacre, and died shortly afterwards. He sent a petition to the governor of the province asking that the murderer be punished, and received in reply an unsigned document instructing him to "drop the matter at once or take the consequences." He replied that he would take the consequences, and received word from the governor that the matter was being investigated and the responsible party would be punished. Shortly afterwards, the war in the east broke out and his younger brother was called to the front. Then came a second call for troops; and, fearing that he would be called upon, he sold his household effects left half of the sum thus realized with his wife to help maintain her and their child and started out to seek fortune in another land.

He encountered many difficulties, especially at the German boundary, where for two days he remained hidden among the bushes and undergrowth. He finally succeeded in avoiding the guard and got into German territory. Then his funds gave out, and he worked for two months, earning sufficient to pay for his passage from Antwerp here. He is a custom tailor, and hopes to get work here, and thus be enabled to bring his wife and child across the ocean.

BETWEEN THE UPPER AND THE NETHER MILLSTONE.

American Newspaper Correspondent Gives a Graphic Pen Picture of the Hardships of a Besieged City--- Manchuria Being Slowly Ground to Earth by Hostile Armies.

(Special Correspondence of The Evening Post.)

Shihliho, Manchuria, November 22. —During two weeks Shihliho has been as a town without life. The broken mud walls, the stark, roofless mud houses, the shattered shops, gave it the appearance of an ancient dead Eastern settlement that had been half exhumed to make a hiding place for Japanese reserves and cart-ridden trains. Hooded sentinels stood at the north gate, at the corners of the boundaries, at the Mukden road, and out in the plain where the wind sweeps—all stiff and steadfast, with rifle at attention, and eyes fixed immovably to the north. Just ahead, along Sa River, lies the Russians, too weak from losses to dislodge us from what is still a precarious position. We feel secure now about that position, having for this corps alone received 118 Hotchkiss machine guns; and the feeling has communicated itself to the natives, who are coming forth from secret places, digging up their hidden property, and opening their shops for trade. Women have left their caves, and are nursing their children on warmed kangas, grinding their millet by aid of little blindfolded donkeys, but not venturing yet upon the streets, for the thunder of guns come frequently, making the paper windows rattle.

Cake and flapjack-makers are baking their wares on the street-side, five to the length of a block, and soldiers and Chinese carters are buying them and eating them. The apothecary is out with his store of cereals spread in the sun like the treasures of a "souvenir" fakir at Narragansett beach or Niagara Falls. The shops contain the same assortment of merchandise. There are invariably Manchu shoes, Manchu caps, Japanese beer, some writing paper (meant for a brush and not for pen or pencil), some cloth, candles, and cigarettes.

Japanese have opened numerous canteens in vacant shops. Probably no army was ever followed by so many canteens. They carry Japanese beer, whiskey, (Japanese, with imitated Scotch and Bourbon labels), and "brandy cognac made in England," and snake, cigarettes, and fish sauce. Of all the alcoholic drinks the Japanese soldiers like sake best, though he has a taste for whiskey, which is flourishing. Col. Yamada of the staff declares that it is a mistake to suppose that the Japanese does not like drink as well as any other soldier. As part of the ration sake is issued only when the general commanding considers it desirable, which is also the custom in the British service.

Temples, shot and broken, are occupied by troops. Soldiers are garnering the beans left in the fields. Trees, sacred groves which are the abodes of revered spirits, are falling to make charcoal for the invaders. What the natives must suffer before the end of winter no one can tell. Their case is hard, for, without any concern in this war, they must submit to its blighting hardships as much as any soldier of Czar or Mikado, who has the ardor of patriotism to inspire and sustain him.

We are in the home of a man who belongs to the "writing class," the educated class. We are crowding him and his wife and niece and his four children into a place 5 feet by 8, while we occupy, uncomfortably enough, the best apartment, 20 feet by 14, five of us. He is a meditative person, and his wife and children have the marks of quality. His family ranks here as that of a prosperous Wall street broker's ranks in your suburbs, such is the honor done in Manchuria to even slight literary attainments. Suppose the prosperous broker alighted at Scarborough, or Greenwich, or Englewood, or Hampstead some afternoon, to be met by his coachman, saying, "The invading troops are camping in your house, and your wife and children have had to go to the groom's room, over the stable. The stalls are occupied by the cavalry horses, which are eating your grain, and your own horses are tied to the nose in the spring bushes on the front lawn. Your kitchen garden, lettuce, beets, asparagus, everything has been pulled up by the roots. Besides, your safe has been rifled by a cook, and the title deeds to your estate, left you by your father, are in his bag."

Nothing here is overdrawn in the slightest. The condition is literally presented. Last night by candlelight the owner of the house entered our dim apartment with an interpreter. He pointed to the little black grip of our cook who had just gone to the trenches with a number of the mess. The owner of the house was very excited. "What is it?" was inquired of the interpreter.

"He says Chin Tung has in that bag some papers, the deeds to his house, some money, and valuables."

"How did the cook come by them?" we asked.

"He learned where the owner of the house had buried his treasure. It was

under the camp fire. It is now in that black bag."

Sitting "in bank" as justices, we had the claimant describe his box of treasure. He did so; and opening the bag, there was the package in plain sight. The claimant leaped for it, but was restrained. "What is inside?" he was questioned. "Deeds to this property, my father's will, accounts of debts owing to me, promissory notes, some money, and some jewelry."

We opened the box. Everything was as described. We caused the claimant to write his autograph in Chinese. It corresponded precisely with signature to certain papers, old and yellow.

"Now, if these are not yours, we will complain to the mandarin, and you will lose your head," was the way in which they were handed over to him. He touched the ground three times, and spoke rapidly in Chinese, and made three swift passes with one hand across his neck. He would willingly suffer the loss of his head if these articles were not his. Then he went backward into the other room.

Loud greetings met him, then a joyous confusion. There came a knock on the door. His wife, she of the tranquil face, was there beaming in upon us, and holding out the jewelry made of the green, shabby parts of the wings of kingfishers.

"She wishes," said the interpreter, "to present you with these trinkets, which were in the box you restored. They are her wedding hair ornaments—the ornaments she wore when she came to this house as a bride. She would like to give them to you to show her gratitude."

Her marriage jewels—kingfisher's feathers mounted on gold; her wedding ring in effect—were what the lady, her eyes wet with emotion, was offering to us for not protecting one who would have looted from her house and home!

No; they were very beautiful, these jewels—like polished malachite; but they were no decoration for our fresh, unstained ermine.

THE OUTLOOK.

It is Considerably Clearer in the Business World.

(New York Journal of Commerce.)

Notwithstanding rumors to the contrary, now that the public is reasonably satisfied that there will be no tariff or railroad legislation during the present session of Congress the outlook seems considerably clearer, and there will be an opportunity to judge how far prices have discounted the improvement in business. The foreign situation is not reassuring, yet the danger of revolution in Russia need not perhaps be regarded too seriously. If civil strife should arise there it will probably be a rather slow growth, and there will be due warning of the same. It seems more likely to extend over months than to break out unexpectedly. Therefore a collapse in Russian securities would not appear to be among the early possibilities. Great banking interests in Continental centres will undoubtedly stand ready to support them, and that they do not fear any serious trouble is evident from the fact that a considerable part of the new Russian loan has already been placed and is selling at a liberal premium. The gold which we are shipping from New York at the present time, and which London has also begun to ship to the Continent, is intended for the Russian loan. Of its success there can be no question. Russia's resources are so great that she can stand considerable more taxation and yet furnish ample security for new bond issues. In view of these things the securities outlook in this country probably need not be influenced by foreign considerations. It is purely a question of public sentiment and whether present prices are considered high enough. An important argument for higher prices, to which attention has already been called in this column, is the fact that the leading railroads must at no distant date take care of large floating debts, and it is for their interest to have a good market. To suggest that they will furnish the resources for making the market seems out of place and unwarranted. Yet that they will do their best to make good showings and earnings and that banking interests will naturally want to put up prices there seems no doubt. Therefore, after a moderate rest, during which an opportunity will be given to those who want to take profits to get out, it seems likely that prices will be in a moderate way carried higher. The bonds market, particularly, is likely to become more of a feature. As old bonds advance they will no

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doubt, seem too high to many, and there will be an unwillingness to buy new issues if offered at attractive prices.

SUDDEN.

Ian MacLaren recounted this story in a lecture on Scottish humor: In a dull Scotch village, on a dull morning, one neighbor called at another's house. He was met at the door by his friend's wife and the conversation which ensued was thus: "Cauld?" "Aye." "Gau to be weety rainy?" "I'm thinkin'." "Aye." "Is John in?" "Ou, ay! he's in." "Can I see him?" "Na." "But a want tae see him?" "Aye but ye canna see him. John's deid." "Deid?" "Aye." "Sudden?" "Aye." "Verra sudden?" "Aye, verra sudden." "Did he say anything about a pot o' geen pent afore he deed?"

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