

THE UNHOLY ALLIANCE

DOESN'T ATTRACT BRITISH-AMERICANS WHO KNOW FURLONG.

The Annexation Question as It is Viewed in Boston—Poor, Sleepy Halifax Should be Waked Up Gently—The Chrysanthemum Craze—Sayings and Doings at the Hub.

[SPECIAL CORRESPONDENCE.]

BOSTON, Nov. 26.—No matter what big events occur—presidential elections, Sackville West episodes, or what not—there is one subject that always and persistently comes to the front, and that is the annexation question. It has always been largely talked of in New England, but latterly it has taken a more national importance, and about every week or so we find in our morning papers a report of what President-elect Harrison, or Senator Sherman, or some other heavy political weight, has said or denied on this subject. It is plainly evident that the matter has taken a strong hold upon the general public, and it is also very apparent that the incoming administration will bear watching by Canadians along this particular line. Arguments in favor of annexing the dominion have been made in newspapers by the mile, and the readers of PROGRESS are familiar with them all. But little, too, has been said against the project, or if it has, has been in a deprecatory sort of way, on the ground that if there is any annexing to be done, Canada itself should be the one to ask for it. When a man like Attorney-General Longley makes a visit, he is always received with open arms, and he is given every opportunity to air his annexation views. I remember that the speech which claimed the greatest share of attention at the great Merchants' association banquet here, last year, was that of the same Mr. Longley. Oh, there is no doubt that the great sisterhood of Canadian provinces is just now a tempting morsel in the eyes of the people of the United States. Perhaps it is because the people who have come across the border here are so well liked by them that has taught them to cherish such a tender regard for Canada itself.

In this connection, I notice that there is a movement on foot here looking to an organization of those Canadians and others who favor the annexation scheme. In fact, there are two movements. The figurehead of one of these is one N. Furlong, of this city, and Mr. Ellis, of St. John, has been invited to come and address a meeting that is soon to be held here in the interests of the movement. Those who know Mr. Furlong and his fellow patriots best, however, are rather disposed to speak slightly of their fitness for such an important position, and call attention to the fact that at least one of them was prominent among those who protested against the granting of Faneuil Hall to the British-Americans on the occasion of their memorable jubilee banquet. This may not be very cheerful intelligence for Mr. Ellis, but it is hereby given for what it is worth.

The other movement I speak of is in the hands of a different class of men, who have not gone out of their way to take sides with the enemies of the British-born residents of this section.

It should become necessary to annex the dominion by force of arms, the New York Herald has already supplied the United States government with an elaborate plan for the investment of Halifax. After carefully looking over the plans with the eye of a connoisseur who knows what he is talking about, I can cheerfully endorse it as a most excellent one, but I am afraid that the resultant shock would be too much for the sleepy old municipality. It wouldn't be a very good investment for it, so to speak. If the Herald would kindly call off a few of its nitro-gelatinous guns and Zalinski mortars, the awakening would not be quite so cruel.

I don't know whether the chrysanthemum craze has struck St. John yet, but if it hasn't, you are missing a great thing. The glory of the rose and the violet, and all the other old favorites, has departed since this beautiful flower, "the queen of autumn," as it is so aptly named, has come into prominence. Everybody who doesn't grow chrysanthemums buys some, and we had a most wonderful exhibition of this exquisite Chino-Japanese importation in Boston, last week, in which a countless number of varieties and colors figured. They have taken the place of the orchid craze, and are less costly and much more beautiful and easy to raise than the latter. At a very swell wedding, in the Back Bay, which I was privileged to witness, a few days ago, the chancel of the church was literally buried in flowering chrysanthemums, and a very pretty conceit found expression in large bunches of pure white flowers of that kind, tied with white satin ribbon, and fastened to the outside of each pew in the main aisle. The whole effect was simply beautiful, and didn't cost so much as one might think, either.

The amount of business done by Boston florists, by the way, is simply immense. Thousands of dollars are expended in this city for flowers every week, and it seems to be the universal fashion to marry people and banquet them and bury them amid the sweet perfume of Flora's most fragrant gems. A cool hundred dollars for one piece for funeral or festive occasion is no uncommon price to pay. It is quite a common thing, too, for Boston florists to send flowers to New York and Philadelphia, and points even more distant. Flowers can be

sent a great distance nowadays. I have proved that, for, by the grace of the sleeping-car porter and the good offices of St. John hotel people, I have carried a bouquet presented me by admiring Boston friends from this city to Nova Scotia.

Snow, heavy enough for sleighing, on Nov. 25, is something that Bostonians don't care to see every season.

THOMAS F. ANDERSON.

THE LEAGUE MEETING.

Not to Mention Other Improvements, It Saved Base Ball From Bankruptcy.

The league meeting, last week, was in many respects the most important one held during the last few years. I venture to disagree with those who think that the admission of Cleveland in place of Detroit was the event of the session. That was a good stroke of business, but it cannot have the far-reaching effect that will be produced by certain of the new rules, which have thus far attracted little attention.

Take the classification scheme, for example, and consider what that reform—for it is a reform—involves. During the last three years managers and players have been doing their best to kill the goose that laid the golden egg. Every season salaries have grown more exorbitant and oppressive. Some of the best clubs in the New England league, located in cities that are fond of ball and would do anything reasonable to encourage it, were crushed by the heavy salary lists that competition forced upon them. In every other minor league this experience has been duplicated. Under the old system there are National league cities—Indianapolis and Pittsburg, for example—that might be practically put out of the race at any time if the three grades in the Boston management chose to spend the money to do it. What has the game to "show for" the big salaries, anyway? A \$10,000 beauty and a few more mouth-organs of the same kind—but not a single substantial benefit.

The principal features of the scheme adopted last week are as follows:

The compensation for all league players for services as players shall be limited, regulated and determined by the classification or grade to which such players may be assigned by the secretary of the league, after the termination of the championship season as follows:

- Class A, compensation \$2,500.
Class B, compensation \$2,250.
Class C, compensation \$2,000.
Class D, compensation \$1,750.
Class E, maximum compensation \$1,500.

But this section shall not prohibit the payment of extra compensation for the services of one person to each club, as field captain or team manager.

In determining such assignment, batting, fielding, base-running, battery work, earnest team work and exemplary conduct, both on and off the field, at all times shall be considered as a basis for classification.

With \$2,500 made the limit—and the rule rigidly enforced—salaries will come down to hard-pan all around. Where now it is hard work to carry four or five clubs through a league season, 20 New England cities will support professional ball. The change will be for the better in every way. The only regret I feel is that after the league began the work of reform it didn't go to the logical end and adopt the Sporting Life's millennium plan.

There have been times when I have envied President Nick Young, but I pity him now. Imagine a single man pitted against the howling mob of ball players who are not rated first-class!

The committee on playing rules had its annual wrestle with the question, how to increase the hitting, and wasn't thrown quite so heavily as on former occasions. The change to three strikes and four balls will make little difference. The batter gets another chance, however—and the umpire gains a blessed relief from an annoying class of decisions—by the rule that a foul hit not rising above the batsman's head and caught within ten feet of the plate, doesn't count as a put out. Taking the assist on strike-outs from the pitcher is likely to make him depend more on his fielders and cause livelier hitting. Recording sacrifice hits will not only add to the interest of the game in this respect—it will give team-players a chance to even scores with the record-players—and it will make better base ball.

The magnates do well to recognize at least that a pitcher is only a man, and therefore not always at his best. One of the new rules not only permits the usual bench-warmer, who comes to the front when a man is injured, but provides for another who may be substituted at the end of any completed inning. That ought to put an end to the lamentable exhibitions we have sometimes seen when the man in the box went to pieces early in the game.

The new rules, other than those mentioned above, are comparatively unimportant with the exception of the provision that the fourth column of the score shall be devoted to sacrifice hits. It was also voted that the error column should be dropped, the errors to be lumped in the summary; but when the reporters heard of that law they very properly and promptly lobbied its reconsideration.

Imagine the howl of joy that will go up

from the incompetents when that error column does sink out of sight!

That the sacrifice hits should be scored there can be no question; but the advisability of concealing the errors, and for the same ostensible reason—the improvement of team-work—is not quite clear to me. As it stands at present, the error column works no injustice to a team-player, for the fact that he is a team-player soon becomes apparent. The column is a "terror" to the careless man, and on his account I think it is hardly safe to do away with it.

Boston, of course, wouldn't give it up, whatever the rest of the league cities did. Boston is a law unto herself in the matter of scoring—and a pretty safe one I have always found her.

One of the Boston men writes that it isn't a question of his own preference at all. The readers of his paper pay for base ball news, and the errors form an essential feature of that news. There's a good deal in that, too.

The truth is that the ideal score would contain many details that the narrowness of our newspaper columns forces us at present to crowd into the summary. I should like—and the base-ball cranks would like to have me—to make up a score after this fashion:

Name. r. ab. lb. th. sh. sb. po. a. e.

Every one of those nine columns would be of interest. The total bases column could be left out without any great harm being done—and so, for that matter, could the stolen bases column—but there's not one of the nine but would have its peculiar value. If the columns of PROGRESS were twice as wide as they are I would score a game on that system and see how it "took." Perhaps I will, as it is—next summer.

Since the paragraph about salaries was written, I note that the International league has fallen in with the reforms and fixed the salary limit of its clubs at \$12,500. Thus the good work goes on. If it continues long enough, we shall hear, some time in the remote future, of ball players who are as poor as college presidents or bishops—and none the worse for it, either.

A curling crank makes a most audacious suggestion. He wants a scorer and an error column. The nice points would be in the decision of what are and what are not errors. Old curlers who have not participated in the benefit of the E. column in a base ball score are not inclined to the innovation and beside they say it is impracticable. I agree with them but I would like to see one game scored for the fun of the thing. The sheet would be all error columns.

JACK AND JILL.

COSTLY ECONOMY.

The Shaft Was Cheap But It Took One Man's Time to Tend It.

A thousand miles from Bangor—less as the crow flies—is a sawmill. It is buried deep in the heart of the primeval forest, and only reached by a circuitous approach. Neither by railway, telegraph, mail or stage has it communication with the rest of the world. When its proprietor has a message for the men in charge he has to walk, drive or send out, especially for the occasion. In spite of its seclusion, in fact because of it, this humble saw and shingle mill has become famous. A feat of mechanical engineering has been perpetrated there. It will come as a revelation to shingle manufacturers all over this broad land.

The confidential clerk of the proprietor took a drive to this lonely spot last week. To say that he was surprised at what he saw would put it mildly. Some days before, the main shaft, where it comes up from the waterwheel through the floor of the mill, had become loose so that it wobbled badly. Instead of putting in a new babbit-box, the enterprising backwoods mechanic in charge of the mill saw a chance to economize. He took a common two-inch plank, bored a hole in it the size of the shaft, stuck the shaft through it and stood back to admire his ingenuity. But as that shaft was rotating at the rate of 1,400 times a minute, more or less, it became unpleasantly clear that something must be done or the mill would soon be in flames.

Something was done. The foreman promptly set a man to throwing water on the shaft. When the owner's representative walked into the mill a Frenchman was just dashing a pail of water on the shaft and skipping out of the door for another pailful. Of course if the shaft had gone five minutes without a wetting down there would have been a sawmill in flames somewhere in that vicinity, and so one man, earning a dollar a day, was kept busy, first throwing on one pail of water and then hurrying down to the millpond for another. The mill had been running this way for six days. A babbit-box was shortly adjusted around that shaft.

She Came With the Beautiful Snow.

Not to be behind the other great journals of the country, The Gripack has acquired an office cat. She is a dark-complexioned female, 15 years old, and bears herself with even greater dignity than does "N. P." of The Telegraph.

Ladies' Furrs, new styles, opened today, at McArthur's Buckle, King street.

IT IS JOHN'S DOG.

His Name is "Norphin," and He Causes a Commotion in the House.

I've got a dorg. He ain't very big, but he's black and he's a norphin, 'cause he had no friends afore I got him. I call him Norphin, 'cause he is one. I used to fire stones at dorgs before I found out whether they're orphins or not, but I liked Norphin right away, 'cause he had a fight with our maltese cat the first thing and pa nearly knocked the stove down tryin' to git him out from under.

Pa wouldn't let me keep him at first. He said what his house wasn't no orphin asylum and if I didn't look out I'd be a grass orphin—whatever that is. Norphin and me's good friends. I took him out the other day and a perliceman askt me if he paid taxes. I told him I gussed he wasn't of age yet, and besides widows and norphins didn't pay no taxes and my dorg was one. The cop said I would die with the cutes pretty soon, and 'cause everybody laffed at him he moved on.

Norphin can do sum tricks. Whenever I cough he barks like fury. I lockt him up in pa's room this week and stole all the matches. In the middle of the nite I lockt pa's door and then coughed and Norphin barked like a hole pound full of dogs. Pa got up and couldn't find any matches, so he fired his boot at Norphin and upset a pitcher of water. I gness he fell over a chare, 'cause he said poetry like fun, and Norphin barked. Pa fired somethin' else and broke the lookin' glass and upset the toilet set when he's lookin' fir the door. He made sitch a noise chasing Norphin around the room what the people in the next house cum in, and I told 'em pa's full and was beatin' ma most to death. So they got a perliceman and had pa arrested. Pa had a fight with the cop, but he got hit on the head with a billy and got knockt out. I gness he settled it though, for he wasn't lockt up. Pa had to buy a new bedroom set. He laid the blame on me—with the strap.

Bill Johnson's keepin Norphin fur me now, till things git settled down.

JOHNNY MULCAHEY.

The "Poet" Phillips is a Nuisance.

The "poet" Phillips is becoming a greater nuisance every day. He has a peculiar way of putting mild and gentle business men out of temper. Poking his head with in the door, he sounds his demand for money, and if it is not given to him he favors his audience with blasphemous opinions. They are not what merchants like to hear, especially when lady customers are being waited upon. But no rebuffs will deter the "poet." He turns up at the most unlikely hours and places. He is the terror of the hotel porters, who, for reasons of their own, object to placing hands upon him. In this respect he is not unlike Mr. Paul, of "Millicete Philosophy" fame, who is tolerably sure to escape arrest whenever he comes to town, unless he becomes so drunk that he encumbers the sidewalks. Then Mr. Paul is handled with gloves. "Poet" Phillips' sole desire is either bad gin or worse whiskey, and his income being above the average of those engaged in his vocation, he gets sufficient of both to keep him alive from day to day. Aside from this, however, there is no doubt that he should be comfortably lodged for the winter in the poor house. His reputation as an ingenious and successful beggar will not suffer during his absence.

He Thinks It Queer.

"Queer, isn't it?" "What's out of gear now?" asked the writer.

"Just this, PROGRESS. I, for one, believe in the methods of the Salvation Army. I think it is doing what good it can, in its own way. I also believe in fair play, and it strikes me that the newspapers and the mass of the people are unjust to it. Perhaps they don't mean to be, but why do they, when a S. A. lad or lassie goes wrong, make the fact that he or she is a Salvationist a prominent part of the story? Why not mete out the same treatment to the Episcopalsians, Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists, Catholics, etc., etc.? To my mind, it isn't quite a square deal."

It Costs Twice as Much.

A thoughtful subscriber sends PROGRESS a copy of that bright and original Saturday paper, the Pittsburg Bulletin, and says, "I should like to see PROGRESS assume some such form as this, before very long. It would be even better than its present broad white sheets."

Thanks for the remembrance and the suggestion. The Bulletin is issued in a very neat and handy form but it costs Two Dollars a year, or five cents a copy. PROGRESS is One Dollar a year, or Three cents a copy.

They Gave a Lecture, Too.

The private affairs of at least one family were made as plain as daylight to all who were at the Institute Monday evening. Two young ladies, with loud hats and louder voices, jabbered away from start to finish, competing on even terms with Mr. Lawrence and evoking tones of ear-splitting intensity when a soloist came forward. People who sat near them were on the point of sending the usher for ear-muffs or gags when the entertainment closed.

S. S. Cards, large assortment, opened this week, at McArthur's, 80 King street.

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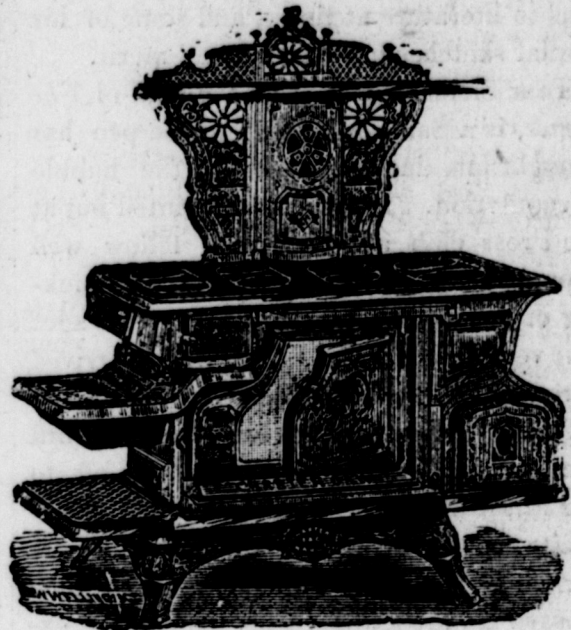
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