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VOL III., NO. 113.

ST. JOHN, N. B., SATURDAY, JUNE 28, 1890.

PRICE THREE CENTS.

NOTHING SMALL THERE.

THE RISE AND FALL OF A PARTY BY THE NAME OF FERGUSON.

Starting as a Slab Sawyer, He Developed into an Operator to Whom the Banks Paid Homage—His Ingenious but not Lasting Ways of Raising the Wind.

The great and important question which is now agitating the minds of a number of the citizens of St. John is as to who constitutes the firm of M. A. Ferguson & Co., lumber dealers, of late doing business at Salmon River in this county.

One of the morning papers, last Wednesday, said that Mr. M. A. Ferguson was "believed to be in business difficulties," but PROGRESS is in a position to state that such an allegation was wholly incorrect.

Mr. Ferguson is not in any difficulty—he is not the kind of a man who gets into difficulties—but floating around this part of the county are liabilities to the extent of about \$50,000, incurred by him. Any "difficulties" there are in the case will be encountered by the creditors in trying to realize anything out of the wreck.

Next to an abundance of ready cash, the best capital a young man can have in this great and growing country is an abundance of check. Mr. Ferguson seems to have realized this important fact and to have operated accordingly.

Mr. Ferguson made his appearance at Salmon River some twelve years ago, as an applicant for work at one of the mills. He accepted a position at slab sawing and seemed very well satisfied with his lot. He was then getting a dollar or so a day, and probably not even he, in the wildest flights of his imagination ever supposed that he would acquire fame by sticking some of the sharpest dealers and shrewdest financiers in the county to the very liberal extent of \$50,000.

But he has done it. The banks are left, the wholesale dealers of Montreal and St. John are left, and even the lawyers who do not generally propose to do anything but make money out of commercial disaster are sad and silent as they gaze at the financial void which lies ahead of them. The particular legal firm which has been "salted" in this instance is that of McKeown & Kierstead, with special reference to the latter member of the firm. The consolation which it has in the possession of a second claim on a mill property to which George H. White of Sussex has a first claim.

Mr. Ferguson's rise from the ranks of labor to those of capital is said to be an interesting study in evolution. From the slab saw he developed into a small contractor, and from this he grew to be a trader in a small but profitable way, among the horny handed lumbermen and mill hands. Then he took more contracts, and enlarged the base of his operations. He had transactions with the leading concerns in the eastern end of the county, and in his operations he handled more or less of their paper. This brought him in contact with the St. John bankers, and they learned to know him as a man of affairs who was apparently prospering in his undertakings and was grasping the elusive dollars as they came in his way. They were always willing to accommodate him.

Some of the other operators found him a very useful man under these conditions. He was always willing to help them with their paper, and they were equally willing to oblige him.

The years rolled by, and a great affliction fell upon Mr. Ferguson. His aunt or some other relative died, but the loss was in some measure atoned for by the fact that she left him a legacy. This was said to be \$6,000, and he deposited that or some other amount to his name in one of the city banks. This gave him an increased line of credit, and he used it. He could get discounts when citizens of St. John who had four dollars of assets to every dollar of liabilities were sent away sorrowful.

When Mr. Ferguson bought a mill and entered into business with a will. In the course of these transactions he became mixed up with George H. White, of Sussex, who now has the first claim on the property, and whom he is said to have introduced and held out to the world as his partner. It is not on record that Mr. White repudiated the connection, though he now does so, and as a matter of fact everybody understood that Messrs. Ferguson and White constituted the firm.

The banks appeared to think so, too, and as Mr. White is a financially strong man, Mr. Ferguson's credit went away up above the boiling point. The financiers used to accompany him to the street door when he left, "washing their hands with invisible soap in imperceptible water," scarcely glancing at any ordinary citizen who had a "heavy day," and was willing to accept a title of the favors granted to the Salmon River mill-owner.

It is just a year since the firm entered into business, and it has done a good deal in that time. Mr. Ferguson bought largely in Montreal, and to some extent in St.

John. He did not distribute all the goods in the vicinity of Salmon River, but adopted the much more expeditious plan of selling them en bloc for cash or its equivalent, wherever he could find a purchaser. Some were disposed of in Toronto and some at points much nearer home. And they were sold at remarkably low figures.

In the meantime, the men who worked for the firm were not getting any cash in return for their labor. They could take what they chose out of the store, but pay day was always to come "next month." They did not feel uneasy. They believed that Mr. White was a member of the firm, and knew that he was perfectly good for all that was due them.

So did the farmers, and everybody else who had any dealings with the concern.

Mr. Ferguson's plan of buying and selling goods worked well while it lasted, but lacking the element of permanence, it had to come to an end. It did so the first of this week, since which time Mr. Ferguson has been missing.

There has been a great hustling around the banks and among the police to find him, but the effort has not been crowned with success. The most that they can do is to find out where he has been.

The banks know that he has been there, for they have long schedules of paper bearing his name and that of others. They have also been telegraphing over the country to ask certain people if they had signed things which purported to bear their names.

One of the banks was quite content in the possession of warehouse receipts as collateral, but it did not have so much faith in Mr. Ferguson after it found that he had bought the goods on credit in St. John, sent them up the line, reshipped them, and put them in warehouse, so that the receipts could be used in that way.

The amount of the wreckage is estimated to be \$50,000. Mr. White claims to be among those who are badly "stuck," as having made very large advances to Ferguson. The impression is that if the creditors can establish the fact of a partnership he will be stuck a good deal worse than he now thinks he is.

There are some who say that Mr. White's idea was to be a partner if the concern paid; if it did not he was to be a creditor by virtue of his bill of sale.

Which is a mighty convenient arrangement, if it can be made to work.

The Blue Jackets Fought.

The significance of the alleged message, which Nelson never signalled—"England expects every man to do his duty"—was never illustrated in St. John more fully than on last Saturday morning, when the blue-jackets of H. M. S. *Canada* lent their aid in fighting the fire at Dunn's mill.

They proved that they were fighters, and willing ones from the start, and the Carleton men who stood by with their hands in their pockets ought to have been thoroughly ashamed of themselves. They were not. They argued that as the city had established a paid department it should earn its money by doing the work. They were not disposed to give themselves any trouble in the matter, even though the wages of some of them would stop when the mill stopped.

How would it do to enlarge the West side fire department and make all of the able-bodied citizens honorary members? They might be disposed to exert themselves then at critical times.

Perhaps He Was Absent Minded.

One day last week two or three gentlemen were standing at one of the windows of the Union Club, when their attention was drawn to the fact that a gentleman occupying an official position in the city, but not a member of the club, had entered the building with a stranger who had been put up a day or two previously. Comment was general, and not at all complimentary to the city man who had done a thing, which to say the least, was one that his own good sense should have told him was incorrect. It amounted to about the same as if some members of the club had walked into this gentleman's house uninvited, sat down in his drawing room, ordered his servants to serve them with refreshments, and made themselves at home generally.

Band Concert Tuesday Evening.

Among the attractions on Tuesday evening will be the City Cornet band's promenade concert on the Shamrock's grounds. After two postponements, unavoidable as far as the band was concerned, arrangements have been completed for lighting, and a series of good concerts is promised. Over 1500 tickets have been sold already.

The Myrtle House Open.

Those who intend going to Digby July 1, or any time this summer, will be glad to learn that the Myrtle House is open, and under competent management.

Don't Fail to Get It.

If you are a Lacrosse Player, do not fail to buy next Saturday's PROGRESS, which will contain splendid illustrations of the game and the leading players of Canada's game.

WILL HAVE THE LIGHTS.

THE CITY CORNET BAND CAN GIVE ITS CONCERTS NOW.

Some Advantages in Having More than One Electric Light Company When a Contract is to be Completed in a Hurry—A Lively Hustle in North End.

There is a good deal of activity among the electric light companies just now to secure contracts and arrange for present and future business. The Calkin company has the contract for lighting the city, or more correctly speaking it is to have it when the aldermen who have the matter in charge get good and ready to complete the arrangements. They have been procrastinating for the last two months, and unless they hurry up and do something this week the first of July will find the contract still unsigned and the lamps not located on the street plan. In the meantime, however, the Calkin people are gathering in all the private contracts they can, both for arc and incandescent lighting.

And so are the gas company, moving with a celerity which shows that they mean business and intend to go ahead, even if they did fail in their energetic but vain effort to secure the city contract at what was considered a fairly remunerative figure.

The innocent storekeeper, who does not know anything about electric lighting, gets pretty well mixed up by the time a representative of each company has called on him to solicit his patronage for their incandescent system. One tells him that this company has not only the best and cheapest light, but has certain important patents which no other company can use. He has about decided to take that light, and perhaps signed a contract, when the agent of the other comes along and assures him that as regards the most important requisites of incandescent lighting the first concern has no rights whatever. More than that, if they attempt to carry out their contracts not only will they be sued, but every patron of their system will also be sued and put to costs which would more than keep him and his household in light for the next century or two. Then the shop keeper gets very much rattled, until the agent of the first company comes along and assures him in the most positive terms that the other man has been "giving him" something which has no foundation in fact. Then the shop keeper doesn't know what to think about it.

There is also another company, in connection with the street railway, which proposes to do electric lighting, and which doubtless claims to have certain valuable and exclusive rights which it has not yet begun to assert.

As a matter of fact no man can form any intelligent opinion on the matter unless he is a patent commissioner, a lawyer and an electrical expert at one and the same time, and even then he is likely to be puzzled.

Once in a while the benefits of competition are realized by the consumer. The City Cornet band has just had an experience of this kind, and here is how it happened: The band has been anxious to give evening concerts on the Shamrock grounds, back of St. Luke's church, North End, and two weeks ago it undertook to have some arc lights placed there. The gas company has the advantage of having wires along Main street, while the Calkin line extends only to the L. C. R. depot. So application was made to the gas company, and it agreed to run a line back to the grounds and put in the lamps for \$75, providing that a responsible man guaranteed the cost. This was a reasonable figure, and after the agreement was made the company appears to have thought it was entirely too reasonable, for it took no further steps to furnish the lights. The reason alleged was that there was no wire, but as wire could be procured from Montreal in two days the band could not understand why it should forego its performances for two weeks. Then somebody told the Calkin company about it.

The Calkin company had wire, but no poles, but it undertook, in case the poles of the Western Union could be used, to put a wire from the depot to the grounds and furnish the lights for \$100. This was a very low figure. There was an absolute loss in it, unless some other private contracts could be picked up on the way, and that was just what the company expected to do.

The Western Union could not lease its poles without permission from New York, and this Supt. Clinch said he would try to get. This was last Saturday, and he expected an answer by the middle of the week.

Before the middle of the week came, Supt. Clinch went away to Nova Scotia, and the Calkin company was at a standstill in the matter.

In the meantime the familiar figure of its engineer had been seen by Gas company men in the vicinity of St. Luke's church, and the latter corporation hastened to precipitate the irate bandsmen. Several conferences were held, and on Thursday night it was settled that the gas company should go ahead, and it agreed to do so. The

concerts will take place now, but the Calkin company will not have any arc lights around the North End in the immediate present. Competition is a very healthy thing sometimes.

CHEAP ENOUGH FOR A LICENSE.

But the Next Time a Circus Goes that Way the Rate May be Higher.

The circus man does not consider \$50 for each performance too much of a license fee in a city, and when he strikes the country he doesn't have to pay anything as a rule. They know better than that in Charlotte county, however, in villages and unincorporated towns where there are vigilant justices of the peace, as the agent of Robbins learned last week. While making his arrangement, he was waited upon by a newly appointed squire who demanded of him a license fee. The agent asked what the charge would be, and when the very moderate sum of \$3 was named, paid it at once, and gave the magistrate four complimentary tickets into the bargain. He probably reasoned that if he denied the legal right of this magistrate to issue a circus license some other obstacle might be put in his way which it might cost as much as \$5 to overcome. When some of the justice's neighbors asked him by what right he issued the license, he replied that he had been "reading up the statutes" and found he had full authority to act.

"Then having licensed it you are bound to protect it," said one old stager. "If they need ten special constables you will have to supply them and pay \$1 a day to each of them, so you will be \$7 out of pocket." The justice said that he had omitted to consider that part of the question. The next time a circus gets a license in that town the charge is likely to be higher, unless some of other magistrates compete and make war of cut-rates.

Did Not Keep Wink Soda.

A medical man went into a city drug store, the other day, and ordered a number of articles, a memorandum of which was duly made by the clerk. Then the doctor asked for a drink of soda with some whiskey in it. To this the clerk replied that such a decoction was against the rules of the shop. "But I am a doctor," was the reply, "and I will write a prescription for it. You will have to fill it, won't you?" The clerk replied that he did not fill prescriptions to be swallowed on the premises, and declined to furnish the drink under any circumstances.

"Then," said the doctor, in high dudgeon, "you need not mind putting up the other articles I ordered," and he departed in virtuous indignation to find a more accommodating druggist, for he wasn't the kind of a man to be seen in a bar-room. Wink soda is not as easy to get here as it is in some of the Scott Act towns.

New Scenes for Tourists.

Manager H. H. McLean intends to boom the Shore Line railway for all it is worth this year. Last week Supt. McPeake, accompanied by Mr. Isaac Erb, photographer, and a descriptive writer went carefully over the line, visiting the points of interest around the shores of Charlotte county and further inland. A number of fine views were taken and some literature for tourists will be prepared at once. The party had an exceedingly pleasant time, and are not likely to forget their visit to Letete and L'Etang. There is some fine scenery to be found in Charlotte, and some splendid opportunities for summer outing. Much of what is really a beautiful part of the province has never been appreciated because it has not been known.

May Go to Church Next Year.

After all that the daily papers have said about the celebration of St. John the Baptist's day by the Masonic fraternity, there is little that PROGRESS can add. It is conceded that the proceedings were very successfully carried out, and though the marching was not all that could have been desired from a military point of view, the general effect was good. What is better, some effort was made to entertain visiting brethren after the church service, and so far as could be learned it was not made in vain. The avidity with which the fraternity went to church this year will doubtless induce the Grand Master for next year to arrange for a celebration of the festival in a similar manner.

The Dorothy Matinee.

The opera *Dorothy*, at the earnest pleading of many persons, will be given this (Saturday) afternoon in the Institute, under the patronage of the officers of H. M. S. *Canada*. Everybody go. Matinee prices.

Even the Baby Has Cards.

The very latest Boston idea is that of birth cards. A prominent insurance man in St. John recently found himself the happy father of a girl baby and duly sent word to his friends in Massachusetts. In a few days a parcel arrived by express, which on being opened was found to consist of a quantity of tiny envelopes, each containing a card with the name of the child and the date of birth. The idea is a pretty one and is likely to become popular.

Look Out For Lacrosse.

Those who have heard of Lacrosse, but have never seen it played, should not fail to get next Saturday's PROGRESS and look at the illustrations of a game.

OUR PART IN THE SHOW.

THE ARRANGEMENTS MADE FOR THE BIG EXHIBITION.

By "Progress"—A Duplicate of our Press Room Outfit to be Shown in Machinery Hall—Two Editions of a Daily Paper the size of "Progress."

That PROGRESS will be represented at the Exhibition this fall goes without saying, but it may interest the paper's friends and enemies—if it has any!—to know just what shape that representation will assume.

Some months ago when the exhibition first began to have definite form the new machines in the press room of PROGRESS were attracting a great deal of attention among the people of the city. Hundreds of callers saw them in operation and went away with the impression that they never saw more perfect machinery.

This gave the publisher the idea that an exact duplicate of the machinery in PROGRESS press room would prove an exceedingly attractive exhibit in the machinery hall of the exhibition. Since the press and folder would have to be brought from Boston and erected, it can readily be imagined that the "attractive exhibit" meant the expenditure of considerable money and much work. The manufacturer who supplied PROGRESS' machinery, Mr. J. H. Cranston, of Norwich, Conn., was approached on the subject, and the matter was discussed in all its bearings with the result that when he visited the city recently, he agreed to send a duplicate of PROGRESS outfit to the exhibition where it will be erected and run during the time of the show. The secretary of the exhibition association appreciated the attraction such a display would be to the exhibition—for how many people there are who have not seen an improved printing press in operation, and laid the publishers application for space for a press and printing office before the proper committee of the association which was pleased to approve of the idea and recommend a certain space to be allotted for the exhibit.

The press and other machinery having been secured it remained for PROGRESS to determine what use it would make of them during the exhibition. A daily paper was obviously the best possible use that such an outfit could be put to, and arrangements have and are being made to that end. To publish an afternoon and evening edition of a paper the size of PROGRESS will require plenty of preparation and lots of work when the time comes. But it will be a paper worthy of the exhibition; it will be worth reading and keeping after the exhibition has gone.

This outlines our plan, which will be shown more fully as it develops.

This Beats Bumble.

Among the guests present at the collation served in the Masonic Temple, Tuesday night, was Bumble, the sagacious and much travelled skye terrier which is an honorary member of the Fusiliers and felt it his duty to accompany the band. Bumble goes where he pleases by rail, steamer or otherwise and is always a dead-head. A Moncton man, however, tells of an Irish terrier in his town which beats the record on making a journey. Its owner came to St. John and on his arrival was surprised to see the dog crawl from under a car seat where it had hidden in order to follow him. At the house where he stayed, he left the dog to be kept until he returned from Fredericton, whither he went by train. After his departure the dog got his liberty, followed the scent to the depot, took the next train for Fredericton, and got there, despite the fact that it had to change cars at the junction. The story is a remarkable one, if true.

The Circus at Chatham.

That the opinion of PROGRESS in regard to Robbins' circus was not a prejudiced one seems apparent from the *Miramichi Advance*, after the show had taken in Chatham. The *Advance* says that "It will hereafter require better assurance than flaming pictures and posters of impossible and improbable things to induce the public who attended Frank Robbins' so-called circus and managerie, at Chatham on Tuesday of this week, to travel far or spend much money to see exhibitions of that class. The general verdict was that the affair was 'a sell.' There were a few performers who were worth seeing, but there was no such exhibition as that advertised."

A Big Day at Digby.

The steamer *Monticello* will run an excursion trip to Digby and Annapolis next Tuesday. The people across the bay are preparing for the greatest celebration they have ever had, and the prospects are that the trip will be well worth taking. The fares are low and the programme of sports is full and varied enough to satisfy everybody. The announcement elsewhere gives full particulars of the excursion.

Change in Time.

The night Boston train will leave Saturday night as well as every other evening in the week, after June 30, arriving in Boston in time to make connections for New York and other western and southern points. The Yankee will leave at 6.40, standard, and connect with night trains for New York.

Are You Learning to Play.

If you are learning to play Lacrosse, read the rules in next Saturday's PROGRESS, with illustrations of splendid plays.

RUNNING A BRIDGE ON CREDIT.

A System Which Works Well at the Border But Might Not Fit St. John.

A stranger crossed the bridge from Saint Stephen to Calais, early the other morning, and in response to a polite invitation from the toll keeper paid a tariff of one cent. Then he sauntered up the street a short distance and took a view of the St. Croix from the American side. On his way back he noticed a good many people going and coming over the bridge, and none of them stopping to pay anything, and going up to the toll house he demanded:

"See here, is that cent I paid a toll or a duty?"

"It is a toll," was the reply, "and if you are going back I will trouble you for another cent."

"But see here, I've seen a dozen people and a lot of teams coming over in the last ten minutes, and nobody paid anything. Don't you collect from anybody but strangers?"

"Oh, I know all the people around here and charge it to them. See here, look at those memorandum books and the names in them. We send in bills when the amount is large enough, though some of them pay by the month. Then some arrange for so much a month for a family, and that's the only time they get ahead of us, for when girls claim to be living with this or that family we can't always be sure of it. When a stranger comes along we know him and make him pay cash."

"How do you manage when there is a fire and there is a crowd?"

"We let them all go. We can't very well do anything else. You may think from what I tell you that we don't take in much cash at the gate, but there is quite an amount collected, even though the most of the people have their toll charged."

PROGRESS wondered how the credit system would work on the Carleton ferry, and concluded that the people around the St. Croix must be pretty "good pay," or the arrangement wouldn't work as well as it does.

THEY'LL MISS THE EARLY TRAIN.

The First Arrival from St. John in Fredericton at 1.50 P. M.

A rather curious feature of the new time table of the New Brunswick railway is the arrangement of trains to and from the capital. The St. John morning papers are part of the forenoon to a Fredericton man, and to wait until 2 p. m. for them won't add to his happiness. The first train will reach Fredericton at 1.50 p. m., instead of 9.30 a. m., as at present, while the return trains will be one less than at present. The express will run as usual, but there will be no noon train from the capital. Before the Celestials grow too audibly, they must remember that travel to their town has been on the down grade for the last two months, and the railway's course in cutting off one train is prompted by economy and nothing else. When PROGRESS talked with the officials of the road about the change, their answer was that a daily express train to and from Fredericton, second to none for speed and comfort in Canada, and an accommodation in and out should satisfy the people. "Besides this, they have the daily outlet to Woodstock, the Northern & Western, and the river boat. What more do they want?"

This sounds all right, but no doubt the people would gladly exchange some of these services for a morning St. John train.

The Rocky Road to Portland.

"How much longer is the Portland Bridge sidewalk going to remain in its present condition?" was a conundrum PROGRESS was unable to answer this week. "Why it's disgraceful," said the indignant North End gentleman. "You can't see where you are going at night, and more people pass along there Saturday and Sunday evenings than any other place in town. One is continually running against somebody, or stepping into a hole or the gutter, and everybody you pass is grumbling about it."

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