

PEOPLE SHOULD KNOW.

THE COMMON COUNCIL AND ITS POWER TO SPEND MONEY.

A Better Plan Needed to Warn the Citizens in Advance of New Offices and Proposed Expenditure of Money—The Permanent Auditor Question Settled.

The council, with the exception of Messrs. Jack, Connor, Vincent, Chesley, Christie, I. E. Smith, Shaw, Morrison and Nase, is of opinion that it does not want a permanent auditor. The citizens would have voted the same way, if they had had anything to say about it.

What is a permanent auditor, anyway?

According to the explanation of the advocates of the idea, it is a man who spends his time in auditing the accounts of the city, not at one fell swoop, as has been the custom, but little by little, every month, every week, or every day of the year, if he sees fit. In this way the accounts are in a perpetual state of audit, and the various books, as fast as audited from time to time, are handed back to their regular custodians. If these custodians were all right, the system might work. If they were not, it might not work quite so well. They could go back on the auditor by simply changing the figures which he had gone over, so that unless the whole accounts were re-audited at the end of the year, the changes would not be noticed.

The appointment of a permanent auditor meant simply the creation of a new office, at the cost of about \$1,500 a year. The salary of the auditor himself would be not less than \$1,000, while at certain times he would require assistants, at a cost of about \$500.

PROGRESS would be very glad to see the gentleman whose name was suggested as auditor placed in a first-class position which his abilities merit. On general grounds, however, it is of opinion that the council followed the course which is best in the interests of the public. The auditing of the accounts now costs about \$600 a year. If it is "a farce," as one alderman alleged, it is because the best available men are not appointed. The system is all right if it is carried out the way the law intends that it should be. That it is not so carried out would be no reason for adding \$1,000 a year to the public burden.

There was nothing to prevent the council creating the new office, had it been so disposed, at its last meeting. There is nothing to prevent the board—nay, a bare majority of a quorum of the board—from creating one or a dozen new offices and voting the expenditure of any amount it pleases at any of its sessions.

But there ought to be something to prevent it. It is all very well for the people to have confidence in the wisdom and economy of the council. The public may safely trust a portion of the board, but that portion might be in a minority at some particular session in which some particularly bold piece of work was perpetrated. Everybody knows what some of the others would do if they had a chance.

Everybody thinks that the council did well in giving Mr. Leary a lift with his dock scheme. But supposing it had not been right, and through the mesmeric influence of the capitalist the money had been voted away with the same celerity, what would the people have had to say about it? In that instance, everything went with a rush. With a man of Mr. Leary's seductive tongue, the same thing, probably, would have happened in any case. Some of the council undoubtedly knew what they were about, but the majority seem to have voted first and considered the matter afterwards. They took big chances. The next man that comes along may be just as smart as Mr. Leary, and a good deal less honest.

What is urgently needed, and this is the first important step in the way of reform, is a regulation which will give the people a chance to say how their money shall be spent. No new offices should be created, or new financial obligations over a certain amount incurred without at least two weeks' notice of the intention of the council. This would give the citizens a fair warning, and a chance for them to express through their aldermen, their opinions on the way it is proposed to spend their money.

This is the parliamentary way of doing things. It is the right way. The people should be even more in touch with the council than with parliament. Their pockets are more directly and heavily affected by its actions.

Let the people have a right to say how their money shall be spent.

He Has the News Room.

Mr. Joseph S. Knowles has purchased the news room from Mr. C. H. Fisher, and intends to boom it for all it is worth. New publications will be added, and Joe's latest jokes will be thrown in without charge. The *Gripsack* will go on just the same.

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GOSSIP AMONG THE BOYS

Of the Prospects of Base Ball for Next Summer.

Notwithstanding the season and the ear freezing weather, the boys are talking base ball and its chances in a quiet way. The managing committee is of good men and they are not losing sight of the fact that spring opens in three months.

Frank White will, without doubt, captain the A. A. Club nine this year, while Tom Bell, the veteran, will take an afternoon when he can from business and watch the boys win a game. The ex-captain has spent many years on the diamond and thinks it about time business should have his entire attention.

Parsons says he has plenty of offers and is inclined, so his friends say, to look for a mint next season. He wants big money. The A. A. Club will give him what he got last year, and perhaps add a dollar or so, but it is not inclined to bid salaries—not so much in fact as last year.

Robinson would not object, perhaps, to holding down the first bag, in Bell's place, while Whitehead would like nothing better than to catch "Manny" again occasionally. Both of them are open, PROGRESS understands, but are in doubt whether they will stay at home or try their fortune outside.

Rogers is at home, doing nothing, but put in a pleasant time. There is a feeling in favor of "Billy" Donovan instead of "Dan" next season, but both have many friends, and the better man will stand the best chance.

Frank Small says that if Virginia proves too hot for a summer residence that he may play ball again and St. John stands first in his favor.

Holly is not likely to be counted on as one of the nine. He is a hard man to get down to regular practice, and he is not always as certain that he can play as the captain would like to see him.

"Jimmy" Kennedy is counted on to cover first base, and Kearns' record last season give him a sure place somewhere.

He Earned the Dollar Easy.

Charlie Stewart, a slender darkey dandy, who wields the scissors and razor in Macintyre's shop, earned a dollar easy the other evening. A tin pail of water attracted the attention of a customer, who bet Charlie a dollar that he couldn't carry it across the room on his head. Stewart showed his ivory, and lifting the pail to the top of his woolly pate, moved gracefully across the floor and didn't spill a drop. The customer handed over the dollar, and then learned that the water carrier came from the West Indies, where the natives balance a water vessel on their head with the greatest ease. Charlie had not forgotten the tricks of his boyhood.

Musical Receptions Instead of a Ball.

An apparently reliable report reached PROGRESS this week that in future there would be no dancing at Government house, as Lady Tilley disapproved of it. When approached on the subject by a PROGRESS representative, Lady Tilley said:

I cannot imagine how such a report could have originated. I have given four large balls since we came to Government house, and this winter I intend giving a series of musical receptions instead of the annual ball, as it gives an opportunity for those to come to Government house who have not hitherto accepted the ball invitations from a matter of principle. We will have some of the best musical talent—and there is a good deal of it in Fredericton—and I trust the evenings will be enjoyable.

"Out At Sea."

There has been a good deal of speculation as to what the words *Out at Sea*, repeated so often in bold type in PROGRESS, meant. The lengthy announcement in another column explains it all. A number of young ladies and gentlemen have been working in a quiet fashion for some time, preparing for the production of this scenic drama, and propose a genuine surprise for the people on the 10th and 11th of this month.

Big Bills in York.

It is understood that the opposition in York spent about \$7000 in trying to defeat the government ticket. Of this sum \$2,500 is believed to have come from Mr. Gregory, and people are anxious to know who chipped in the remainder. What it cost the government candidates to win their victory is not stated, probably because Mr. Blair knows how to be eloquently silent on the subject. There is no doubt the bill is a big one.

Carnival and Races.

The Palace rink carnival, Wednesday night, was a success, there being 750 people present, which included a large number of costumed skaters. The ice and music were excellent, and everybody had a good time. There are races Tuesday evening—the first of the season. The flyers are all entered, and the fun should be worth a quarter.

The Result of Advertising.

"Jim," the "Maltese kitten with a short tail," that was advertised as lost from 80 King street, was returned by a small boy last Saturday, who said he had found it on Paddock street.

PUGSLEY WILL RESIGN.

BUT ONLY TO TAKE A POSITION AS PROVINCIAL SECRETARY.

Mr. Tweedie is to be the New Solicitor General, and McLellan Goes to the Upper House—The State of the Government Made Up at Last.

Have we a Provincial Secretary, or have we not?

Long before this issue of PROGRESS reaches its expectant readers in Alaska and Terra del Fuego, the question is likely to be answered, and the answer will be, "We have."

And his name will be William Pugsley.

As the lamented T. S. Arthur used to observe when he told a specially improbable temperance story, "this is no fancy sketch." It has a better foundation than most of the rumors which have been circulating since the election, though it has of itself been one of those rumors.

A little bird which has a great reputation for veracity, flew down from Fredericton yesterday with the news that the thing had been decided on at last, and that Mr. Pugsley's ornate script would henceforth decorate the official documents issued at Fredericton. Mr. Pugsley is a good writer. He has written some able documents in his time, but henceforth he will only have to sign them.

When Mr. Pugsley takes his new position there will be a new solicitor-general to take his place. This will undoubtedly be Mr. Tweedie. It is not hard to guess this. The only two available lawyers are Tweedie, of Northumberland, and Wilson, of York. The latter, it is understood, will not take the position. It is believed that he would refuse to go back to his constituents for anything less than provincial secretary, and that he is not to have just now. There is believed to be an understanding that he is to be Mr. Blair's successor, if the government recovers its strength, and the leader can safely leave it to go into dominion politics.

So it may be assumed that Mr. Tweedie will be solicitor-general. This will please and satisfy the North Shore, and Northumberland won't be such a rank opposition county after all.

The ground on which the members from Northumberland were elected to oppose the government was the high rate of stampage. It is now stated that while Premier Blair declines to back down from the position he has assumed on this question by reducing the stampage to 80 cents per thousand, he is willing to have the lumber surveyed by a scale, (probably the Quebec scale) which will be more favorable to the lumbermen of the north than that now in vogue. With this concession it is stated that the Northumberland four will support the government, and that a portfolio will be given to that county. Such office therefore will go to Mr. Tweedie. Mr. Burchill is recognized to possess, perhaps, the stronger claim for a position, but is not the man to fill the particular office now available. Mr. Tweedie therefore appears to stand the better chance, though he will not be quite as acceptable to some of the government supporters in that county as Mr. Burchill. There is no possibility that Mr. Ryan will be obliged by the exigencies of the case to vacate his office.

What is to become of Mr. McLellan?

Oh, he's all-right, his friends say, and he will not be the member from Madawaska. A softer seat awaits him in the upper house, where he will hold the position of president of the executive council. This will be an honorable and easy situation after his arduous exertions in the late unpleasantness.

What is to become of Mr. John Kelly, whom popular report booked for a seat in the Legislative Council?

PROGRESS honestly confesses that it does not know. The bird flew away before it got to that part of the story. It may be safely assumed that Mr. Kelly is quite capable of looking after himself and his interests. He will be "all right," wherever he is.

No change will be made in the office of chief of police until the end of the present incumbent's year. It may not be made then, or it may be. If there is a new chief, Mr. Quinton is likely to be the man. Mr. Clark seems to have dropped out of the competition, although it is asserted that the promise given to Dr. Berryman was an unconditional one.

Mr. John L. Carleton is not to be registrar of deeds, nor is any change to be made in the office of sheriff, unless the present incumbent gets tired of it and gives it up. In any case, his year does not end until May.

The referees in equity, who expected to be bounced with scant ceremony if the government were defeated, are taking heart and breathing easier under the present aspect of things at Fredericton.

In the meantime, nobody knows when the legislature is to meet, or just how the heads will count in the first test vote.

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FREDERICTON'S BAD BOY.

He Writes a Composition About His Visit to St. John.

Teacher told us our subjik this week woz to be "Some Leadin' Canadian City." So, now then, bein' we woz all to Saint Johns durin' Crismus week, 'coz ma and pa agreed that they never in the hull of their existence seen sich fellers to stick on prices as the merchants of this town, and the moreipons he woz the wusser he stuck 'em, I gess I'll tell you a few things about Saint Johns.

Pa thot wenz he left Fredericton on the trane we woz certain to have a fine day, but wenz we got to Saint Johns the fog woz terribel. So I gess his predichian wasn't a foghorn conclousium after all. The foghorn didn't conleod for all the time we woz there. I ain't seen nothin' to tech that horn' ceptin' the leadin' base solo in our quire, and he is tremenjous.

Saint Johns is the liver-pill of America, pa sez. Wot that means I don't know 'cept they're allers bilyus down there. It has a Chief of Perlice wot wares a gold snuff-box, goldheaded cane and a red nose.

He looked at me so terribel when he passed us that I lung onto ma's bussel and smashed it. But he aint fer long, pa sez, 'coz Doctor Berryman has got a proscrispshun in his pocket wot is goin' to dubble him up quickern the grip one of these luvly days.

It has a Bord of Trade wich passes resoluishuns askin' fer the erth and then forgets wot they asked fer, and kicks themselves 'coz they didnt ask fer more.

It has a Common Council wich is very common indeed. They okeepies the shinin' hours givin' contracts fer coal and things to themselves a slite testimoneal on behaf of a grateful and bleedin' country. The the minits of the council is read the same as our rector reads his prares, bein' I supposes to take the cuss offen their inikwities. Fer I do suppose that if the peccidin's can't be high-toned there's nothin' like havin' them in toned ennyway.

Saint Johns is a nacheral center of the Province. It was made so by Providence and Providence, Pa sez, orter know. It is bounded on the north by the Rooral Cemetery, on the south by the foghorn, on the west by the Loonatic Asilum, and on the east by the old Penitenshary. The fertility of the soil is mirakulus. McAdam Junkshun is the only place I ever saw that kin equal it fer nacheral resorces. The corner of King and Charlotte street grows the biggest cabbage-heads on record, and York Point and Lower Cove is the greatest place fer beats in the world. It grows grapes too, but the fellers wot got left on the 20th. Pa sez, found 'em sour.

The fellers on the newspapers in Saint Johns is queer. They loves each other so. One of 'em calls himself the champion all-round journalist. Pa sez that's on account of his size. He sez if one of them newspaper fellers should happen to git to Heaven the rest of them would all stay out fer spite.

There woz a big eleeshun in Saint Johns lately, Pa sez. I didn't see anything about it in the *Globe* lately which Pa takes, but I gess there must have been, 'coz it's a cold day wen Pa sez left about anything wot's goin' on. Silas always woz one of the fellers wot woz elected. Ma sez the only objeeshun Silas has to the Piscopals is 'coz they has so many prares fer the government and none fer the opposishun.

Anutler feller that woz elected was Mr. McKune. He used to b'long to the tabernakle on Examuth street, she sez, but jined the Centenaries. There is no more quink and ekonomik way of gettin' respectabel, ma sez, fer ennyone wot don't want to go over to the 'Piscopals than to jine the Centenaries. Mr. McKune was the manager of the Nashunals w'en Jimmy Kristy stole the game from the Fredericton fellers last summer, and the way him and a feller named Kelly laffed w'en Jumbo Foster fired the ball from left field clear over the grand stand in the last innin's was aggrawatin', pa sez, to every right-thinkin' man present. But pa sez Mr. McKune is a good feller, and jedgin' from his magestik profile in PROGRESS I think so.

The girls of Saint Johns has took to warin' cans. Pa sez it's 'coz the fellers of Saint Johns is gettin' so debilitated that the girls has to carry canes to hold 'em up. But ma sez they does it 'coz it's very respectabel to do so. So I gess it's a good feller easier to get respectabel in Saint Johns than it is in Fredericton. In this town nobody kin be trooly respectabel unless his blud his bloo and the constabls is roostin' on the premises. So ma sez.

JIMMY SMITH.

Fredericton, January 30.

Nothing but Cash Hereafter.

Messrs. Ungar have come to the wise conclusion that a cash business pays better than one of credit, and are obliged to bring theirs to that basis. It seems absurd to think that a man or a woman should ask a collector or deliverer to "call again" for a laundry bill of 25 cents, yet hundreds do it. They are getting into bad habits, and laundrymen and all others should insist that such amounts are cash.

THAT LIGHT BUSINESS.

INDICATIONS THAT SOMETHING IS TO BE ACCOMPLISHED.

Why the Matter Has Hung Fire so Long—The Industry and Enterprise of the St. John Gas Company—Its Gentle Intimations to the Aldermen.

There is a prospect that the city will be lighted by electricity at no very distant day. There has been a good deal of doubt about it until recently, but the indications are that something is to be done at last.

So far as the public could see, there did not appear to be any reason for doubt or delay. The proposition was a plain one. The want of decent light was admitted, and the most obvious way to get it was to advertise for it.

So tenders were called for and received. As there were only two concerns in the city equipped to furnish electric lights, only two tenders were at hand. One of these was from the Calkin company and the other from the Gas Light company. There was, however, a good deal of difference in their figures. The former thought that about \$7,500 a year would pay it, but the latter wanted \$9,800. This would have settled the matter in some cities, but it did not do so here, for very good and sufficient reasons.

The chief of these was that the Gas company is one of our old, wealthy and influential institutions. It has lighted the streets more or less inefficiently for the last forty years, and it would be glad to continue doing so forever. It pays fat dividends, controls a good deal of patronage, and exercises a large, not to say dangerous influence. It is not a body to be treated lightly by any man who is in any way mixed up in business with the wealthy and influential gentlemen who control its affairs. It ordinarily does as it pleases. The inspector of gas himself, a dominion official, is glad that his tests always show the lights to be up to the regulation candle-power. If they went below it, and he had to report it, as a matter of stern duty, he would feel that he was a martyr to his conscience. For the company has influence even at Ottawa, and can sometimes unmake an official even more easily than he was made in the first place.

It was the thought of what the Gas company might do that caused the council to hesitate ere it rashly awarded a contract to a bidder \$2,300 lower than the great monopoly's bid had been. The matter was "referred," and some people had an idea that it was buried. In the meantime, the Gas company was not idle.

Some of its directors went to members of the council with whom they had business transactions, and intimated that it would be better for them not to be too active in the matter. It was not a threat, by any means, but as a friendly and gentle intimation it was expected to have a timely and wholesome effect. Nothing more was heard about electric lights for some time. The matter was in the hands of the committee, which had handed it to a sub-committee, which would report when it got ready, so it was said. That was all that anybody could learn about it.

In the meantime the gas burned merrily and the stockholders of the company pointed out its intense illuminating power with pride and satisfaction. Indeed, such confidence appeared to be placed in it by some of the city officials that a lamp which had been twisted around to light the steps of the Old Burial Ground was twisted back to its original position under the impression that the light would shine through the iron frame. The faith was misplaced. The experiment was not a success.

In the meantime, somebody started the idea that to avoid offending the Gas company by giving the contract to its rival, a happy solution of the difficulty would be found by the city going into the electric lighting business on its own account. It was not denied that the Calkin tender was below the figure paid in most of the American and Canadian cities, but the city was ambitious, to show that it could buy plant, erect buildings, employ experts and run the machine cheaper than people who were already fitted up for the work.

Besides, there would be a dispensing of patronage about the affair, which would be pleasant. New offices would be created, and various aldermen could prove themselves grateful to their constituents at the expense of the city.

Some of the North End members smiled gleefully as they recalled the history of the electric light in Portland. It will be remembered that they had lots of fun over it for a while. So did PROGRESS.

At last, however, the matter was handed to the active and practical end of the Public Works Department, and it began to get "figgers." As the gentlemen now at work on the task are believed to be fairly independent of the Gas company, it is

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understood that something is likely to be done.

Whether that something is likely to be the manufacture of light by the city itself, or the awarding of the contract to the lowest tender, remains to be seen.

But some things are tolerably certain. The city will not continue to depend on gas for a limited number of nights in each month; the streets will be lighted every night and all night; and the Gas company is out of the fight.

Bound to Go Up.

The opera house company has had its second annual meeting, and its affairs appear in a more advanced and prosperous condition. A good start has been made upon the building, and there are some funds in the treasury ready to stimulate operations when spring opens. Since the raising of the guarantee fund of \$3,000, much reasonable doubt does not remain of the completion of the opera house. There have been many objectors to the site and to the methods of the company; there has been some direct opposition, but in spite of all this, the building is going up. PROGRESS understands that as soon as building can be begun Mr. Dockrill intends putting up the front through which the entrance will be. The opera house has been supported and boomed by PROGRESS since it appeared, and like a good many other things PROGRESS has supported, is going to succeed. But before that is an assured fact more stock is wanted. Do not hesitate to subscribe it.

It Was a Great Hit.

PROGRESS made a great hit last week, if the demand for it is any evidence. Early in the day every copy was "cleared out" from the office, and the newsboys were clamoring for more. Nor did the demand end with Saturday. People have been coming to the office every day this week for copies of last Saturday's issue, only to be disappointed in not getting them. The newsdealers were equally short, and several hundred more copies could have been sold had they been printed. Altogether, it was a great day for sales.

The reason of it was that PROGRESS treated the political situation fairly, fully and without prejudice. It was the organ of neither party, and it told the truth about both.

The public appreciate a live paper, when it is both clear and honest in its tone.

That Kind of an Expert.

Mr. Sawyer, of Boston, wants somebody to pay him \$857 for telling what he didn't know about handwriting in the McDonald case. It is not likely that the municipality of St. John will pay him that amount, if it pays anything. Despite the fact that the solicitor-general has directed the council to pay it, the councillors are looking into the matter to see if the people have any rights in the matter. Mr. Sawyer is undoubtedly an expert in writing. That is to say, in writing bills.

Less Than Five Thousand.

Ald. Knodell's idea that the city should issue debentures to the extent of \$5,000, to put a fence around the Old Burial Ground, did not commend itself favorably to the council. There is a general impression that the work can be done decently and well for a good deal less than that sum. Now that the Board of Works is to prepare plans and advertise for tenders, there is a prospect of something being accomplished.

Added to the Oath.

One of the election anecdotes, which did not appear last week, is that of a voter in a North End ward who was suspected of perjury and challenged. He took the oath manfully but excitedly, and at its conclusion amazed all hands by adding: "And Dan gave me \$5 to vote, so help me God." He did not vote that time.

Good Medicine for La Grippe.

An extract from a private letter of a Nova Scotia newspaper man dated Saturday, reads:

I am still confined to the house with La Grippe, and I found PROGRESS a good medicine this morning. I enjoyed reading your election "Guff" and almost imagined I saw Kelly lift McKeown on the table.

It Aims at It.

Rev. Arthur J. Lockhart, of Cherryfield, Me., who has won a reputation as a critic, as well as a poet, is of opinion that "PROGRESS prospers finely. It has snap and jingle, and general adherence to truth." Its aim is in that direction.

His Way of Putting It.

A Fredericton gentleman, who is well known in St. John, has sent the following telegram to his wife's mother, in this city:

The government are as sure of having a majority as you are of being my favorite mother-in-law. Mac.

Open All Night.

No man knows when la grippe arrives, but if it happens after midnight and you want medicine, remember that the Golden Ball drug store is open all night.