

EDUCATING THE PEOPLE.

PUBLIC GARDENS IN THE CITIES OF NEW ENGLAND.

What The Experience of St. John Has Been.—The Dog Problem And How the Yankee Citizens Solve It.—Personals About Providence People in Boston.

BOSTON, May 24.—An announcement in the St. John papers to the effect that King Square is to be converted into a public garden calls to mind similar attempts to beautify the city and the invariable results. Hitherto the public, or more properly speaking, a large part of it have not appreciated efforts made in this direction.

Trees planted were either pulled up by the roots or cut up into switches, the fountains were scratched or chalk marked, and everybody knows that the Fred Young monument was trampled under foot by persons with hob nailed and muddy boots who climbed up on it and lighted matches so that they could read the inscriptions.

In the cemeteries and grave-yards the same thing has been experienced only to a greater extent, and people who would have taken pleasure in beautifying the lots with flowers refrained from doing so, simply because they would no sooner get out of the gate before the plants and flowers would be carried off.

The papers did everything possible to prevent the vandalism but the bump of distinctiveness seemed to be so strongly developed in a large proportion of St. John people that nothing short of club seemed to take the swelling out of it.

Then again the people who had an eye for the beautiful did not seem to take any particular interest in anything not their own private property and that public spirit which characterizes even the humblest in thriving and beautiful cities always seemed to be lacking.

Too much was left to the police. "They are paid to look after these things and why should I trouble myself," people used to say. But the police, did not halt look after these things. They couldn't even break up the crowds on the street corners.

It may be that people have as yet "educated up to these things," as in many others, but, no matter what the reason, attempts to beautify St. John, have as a rule been dismal failures.

Take Haymarket Square, for instance. When the polymorphians took it in hand, it was their intention to make it a beauty spot in which they could take pride, which would make that section of the city more attractive, more pleasant to live in, and possibly increase the value of property.

If the picture of Haymarket Square, in the imagination of a large proportion of the polymorphians at that time had been carried out, the band stand would have been the centre of a park, which would have been a credit to any city.

A lot of hard work was put in, considerable money was spent, and the place was made quite different from what it is in the days when cars loaded with cord-wood and hay made it unsightly.

Why was the work abandoned? Simply because very few took any interest in it after the first excitement had worn off; because the common council offered no encouragement, in which it represented to a large extent the class of people who seemed to elect that body; and the few men who still wanted to see the original plans carried out, and worked hard to that end, could not keep up with the vandals who pulled down the fences and rooted up the trees faster than they could replace them.

I do not know whether there has been any change in the people during the last year, but that was the way matters stood this time last summer.

Yet other places have beautiful gardens, open to the public day and night, and one seldom hears of any vandalism.

Here in Boston more people wander through the public gardens in twenty-four hours than will pass through King Square in a week. Men and women, children of all ages; all classes of people go there, and even the humblest seem to take a delight in viewing the beautiful flower beds, in walking among the bushes and drinking in the fragrance which pervades the place.

Bushes with pretty blossoms hang over the paths, yet nobody ever thinks of plucking one. It could be done by raising the hand to the shoulder.

There is the big Back Bay Park, covering a great stretch of ground, with trees and open spaces, flowers, and bushes which almost invite a jack-knife to cut off a switch. There is very little fear of being detected by the police, yet there are no broken limbs, no disordered flower beds, no signs of vandalism whatever.

Why? Because the great majority of the people take a pride in Boston's beauty spots, and those who do not are afraid of those who do.

A little incident I heard not long ago will illustrate the point. The gentleman who told it, is not a public official, simply a private citizen, one of thousands who take an interest in the city in which they live.

He was driving through Back Bay Park, with a party of friends, when he saw two young men about to cut switches from one of the bushes. He stopped his horse and remonstrated with them. They wanted to know what business he had to interfere and became abusive, but put their knives in their pockets.

How many St. John people will stand abuse, for the sake of saving a bush in the old burial ground? Quite a number no doubt, but pride in the appearance of the city has hitherto never been general enough to offer any encouragement to the aesthetic few.

The afore-going incident was related in the presence of half a dozen business men, whom one would suppose would take very little interest in such things, but the contrary was the result. Every one of them affirmed that he would have done the same thing, only that he would not have let the offenders off so easily.

Dogs are even worse than destructive humanity where flower beds are concerned, but even they seem to have a respect for these places, and a St. John cur in Boston, or some other cities would not be allowed to live.

I remember a notice painted on the entrance to the Old Burial Ground in St. John, to the effect that dogs were not allowed inside the fence. When the fence was standing, or trying to stand every man who owned a dog used to think his was a privileged canine, and the notice was as ineffective as the Saturday night closing law is, when the barrooms of the big hotels are considered.

After the fence was taken down the sign on the gate was looked upon as a huge joke. The sense of humor is as keenly developed in the average American citizen as it is in a St. John man, but if that notice had been displayed at the entrance to a public garden under similar circumstances, nobody would have seen anything funny in it.

On the contrary every other person would have regarded it as something in which he was especially interested and for the enforcement of which he was to some extent responsible.

Perhaps another little incident will show to what extent this idea prevails.

One afternoon a few years ago, after spending a couple of hours with friends roaming through Roger Williams Park in Providence, R. I.—one of the prettiest parks in the east, by the way—we sat down on a bench near the entrance to wait for a car.

The big gates were wide open and inside the fence the ground was laid out in beautiful flower beds.

While we were talking about them, I asked how it happened that dogs did not play havoc with flowers, when they were so near the street and not protected in any way.

"The dogs would not think of going near them," was the reply, "and if one did happen to wander in now, I, or anybody who happened to be around would lose no time in chasing him out."

The man who said this formerly lived in St. John, but I doubt whether he would have expressed the same sentiments, if it had been a few years previous and we were sitting in the old burial ground.

It happened that about that time a dog did come along, and we were curious to know what he would do. It was a collarless mongrel, and if anybody owned him he was not in sight.

The dog stopped at the gate, looked in curiously as a poor boy might at the entrance to the grounds of a lord, sniffed around for a while started to come in, then, apparently changed his mind; went along and stuck his nose through the fence; put one foot through, then took it out again, and after a few more repetitions of the same performance, went off on a run.

Now this may seem trifling talk, and nineteen out of every twenty who read it may smile incredulously, but it is the little things in life, things which are seemingly of no importance which bring along the grand results people wonder at when the great body of the people feel that the city they live in, and pay taxes in, is as much their own and should be cared for just as much as one's own garden, or as a member of a firm would look out for the interest, of his business the same as he would if he owned it all, instead of being merely a partner—then it is that great things can be accomplished, enterprises pushed forward, and public places made beautiful, so that when a stranger comes along, any citizen may show him the sights and tell about them with as much interest as he could point out the remarkable qualities of the articles he has gathered together in his own home.

While talking about the beautiful public gardens, private gardens, cemeteries, and all that sort of thing—in which by the way, the people up this way take a violent interest—a great prejudice has arisen against fences. The most beautiful streets in the suburbs are those in which there is nothing but a stone curbing in front of the lawns and flower beds, and a row of houses all more or less alike, with well kept grass plots in front, presents a beautiful appearance. This is becoming general, and now I notice that the companies owning cemeteries are requesting the lot owners to do away with the fences, which are at the present time looked upon as hideous.

I happened into the Crawford House last Saturday night, and run across Mr. G. Linden Penney, formerly PROGRESS' book-keeper, spending an hour or so of a week's vacation watching the crowds on Scollay Square.

A few little later Alderman McGoldrick came along. He is dividing his time between private and civic business; looking up fire hose, and the Boston methods of making assessments. Ald. McGoldrick admires the United States, but wants no part of annexation, and with illustrations from his own business, offers stormy arguments to show that the United States wants Canada about as bad as Canada wants the United States.

There are a number of prominent men in Massachusetts who are of the same opinion.

City editor Wetmore, of the Herald, who has been seriously ill, is improving rapidly. During his illness Mr. Walter Adams, Washington correspondent of the Herald, had charge of the local staff. Mr. Wetmore's father, Mr. E. J. Wetmore, was here during his illness.

The St. John friends of Mr. Walter L. Sawyer will be glad to learn of his promotion to an editorial position of much greater responsibility on the staff of the Youth's Companion.

R. G. LARSEN.

HIGHEST TOWER IN THE WORLD.

What Sir Edward Watkin's Great Structure will be Like.

I had the unique experience (writes a representative of Cassell's Journal) of ascending the Eiffel Tower in Paris perfectly alone, and as the lift moved upwards with its solitary passenger I felt it rising as a balloon. This great structure is 985 feet high, but the tower which Sir Edward Watkin, M. P., has promoted at Wembley Park is nearly 200 feet loftier, and, moreover, as it stands upon a hill 170 feet above sea-level, its total altitude will be 1,300 feet, the tallest thing to be found anywhere.

The tower will be the highest in the world. After the Eiffel Tower the Washington Obelisk, 554 feet, has the greatest altitude. Cologne Cathedral, 521 feet, comes next in order; and then follow Rouen Cathedral, 492 feet; the Great Pyramid of Egypt, 479 feet; Strasburg Cathedral, 467 feet; and St. Peter's, Rome, 433 feet.

In conversation with the manager of the company I gleaned some interesting particulars about the latest giant. It is to stand at the southern extremity of Wembley Park, which is a charming wooded locality at present unpopulated, but within a quarter of an hour's railway ride from Baker Street. The park itself consists of 280 acres, but 130 acres are reserved for a building estate, to be developed at some distant date.

The remainder has been laid out as a place of amusement, which will be open to the public in June. A pleasure lake of eight acres for boating has been constructed by widening the River Brent, along the banks of which, under the trees, there is a pretty walk. In addition there are landscape gardens, a cricket and football ground with a huge pavilion, a running and cycling track and bandstands. A spacious winter garden to hold 7,000 persons has also been constructed.

I understand that the musical entertainments, ballooning, athletic sports, and pyrotechnic displays are to begin this summer, and that an additional attraction will be the building of the tower, which is to cost £200,000, or £80,000 less than the Eiffel tower. The girders of the first tier are already manufactured, and some of them may be in their place by June; but the work of construction will take about two years to complete.

The erection of the tower having been decided upon, the first step taken was to invite designs, two prizes being offered, the value of which were 500 guineas and 250 guineas. In response, some monstrosities were suggested by competitors from all parts of the world. The biggest was to be a granite circular tower 2,296 feet high, of 574 feet in diameter, to weigh 196,702 tons, and estimates to cost £1,104,325.

A spiral iron column was also proposed, 2,000 feet high, to cost over £3,000,000. Some architects borrowed ideas of existing structures in India, one copied his outline from Sir Christopher Wren's spire of Bow church, Cheshire, and another (a large London shipbuilder) selected as his type a monolith of Ancient Egypt.

A daring mind proposed to run a locomotive and train half-way up a spiral gradient to the height of 1,000 feet above the ground.

Instead, however, of being octagonal the tower will be square, standing on four legs; and it will have three platforms only instead of four, as proposed by the designers. It will have an electric lantern on the summit.

Of more graceful outline than the Eiffel Tower, because it will be less squat and taper gradually from the base to the top, the steel structure will be of such vast dimensions that on the first stage, 150 feet above the ground, besides a concert hall of 20,000 square feet area, there will be space for 200 shops for a bazaar.

Midway to the summit will be the second stage, with another hall half the size of the first, and at the top of the tower there is to be an observatory for astronomical purposes.

Not Hard to Find.

Do you see that handsome row of tall poplars on the Canadian shore, standing apparently at equal distances apart? asked a melancholy-looking man of a group of passengers on the Fort Erie ferryboat at Buffalo.

The group nodded assent. "Well, there's quite a story connected with those trees," he continued. "Some years ago there lived in a house in Buffalo, overlooking the river, a very wealthy banker, whose only daughter was beloved by a young surveyor. The old man was inclined to question the professional skill of young rod-and-level; and to put him to the test, he directed him to set out on the Dominion shore a row of trees no two of which should be any farther apart than any other two."

"The trial proved the lover's inefficiency, and forthwith he was forbidden the house, and in despair he drowned himself in the river. Perhaps some of you gentlemen with keen eyes can tell which two trees are farthest apart."

The group took a critical view of the situation, and each member selected a different pair of trees.

Finally, after much discussion, an appeal was made to the solemn-faced stranger to solve the problem. "The first and the last," said he calmly, resuming his cigar and walking off with the air of a sage.

A Watch That Talks.

It is said that a watchmaker in Geneva, Switzerland, named Casimir Livan, has just completed a watch which, instead of striking the hours and quarters, announces them by speaking like a phonograph. The mechanism of the watch is based, indeed, on phonographic conditions, the bottom of the case containing a sensitive plate, which has received the impression of the human voice before it is inserted. The disc has forty-eight concentric grooves, of which twelve repeat the hours and quarters, and twelve more those of the hours and second and third quarters. If the hand on the dial shows the time to be a quarter past twelve o'clock, one of the fine needle points crosses the corresponding groove, and the disc, which turns simultaneously, calls out the time. The lower lid of the case is provided with a tiny mouthpiece, and when the watch is held to the ear the sound is all the more plain.

Get More Than a Divorce.

It is a custom among the Brahmins that when a woman runs away from her first husband, the king causes the unfaithful Brahman woman to be devoured by dogs in the middle of a public place, and her

accomplice, if he is not a Brahman, is stretched upon a bed of iron heated over a fire. In China if a wife elopes from her husband she is sentenced to be whipped, and he may dispose of her as a slave. Should she marry another whilst her first husband is living, he is at liberty to have her strangled. Among the Kabyles, whoever carries off a woman and flees with her becomes a public enemy, and the village where the fugitives have taken refuge must give them up on pain of war. The man is put to death, and the woman is restored to her family, who do not spare her.

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