

POLITICAL NOTES.

A Glance at the Leading Measures Carried in the House of Assembly of New Brunswick, from the Year 1854.

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No. 25.

Opening of the Session of 1860—The Common Council of St. John—Who should Appoint the Civic Officers?—Railways Again—Estimates for the Year—Book Stealing from the Legislative Library—Sharp Accusations—Invitation to the Prince of Wales to Visit the Province—The whole Management Finally Lett with the Government.

SESSION OF 1860.

The Legislative Session for this year opened on the 9th February. About this time news reached us from Nova Scotia of the defeat of the Johnson (Conservative) Government by two votes only—the division stood 28 to 26. The leader of the opposition was Wm. Young, Esq. (late Sir Wm., afterwards Chief Justice.) The Government accordingly resigned, and Mr. Young was called upon by His Excellency to form a new one.



MR. J. W. LAWRENCE.

On the 11th Mr. Lawrence, (New Brunswick), introduced eight bills from the Common Council of St. John. The Attorney General complained that the Legislature was besieged every Session by bundles of bills for St. John, and argued that the Corporation should be vested with power to control their own local affairs; he stigmatized the present system as monstrous. Mr. Watters thought it better to have the various Bills published in the St. John morning papers, as it would be a saving of time and a satisfaction to the house. Mr. R. D. Wilnot was opposed to vesting any further power in the Corporation, and affirmed that the Common Council did not, nor never did represent the feeling of the City of St. John, and declared his intention of opposing every measure tending to increase the taxes of the City. Mr. Tilley was in favor of extending the powers of the Corporation, and it such was the case the citizens would take more interest in choosing their civil officers.

[The Common Council are still amenable (1894) to the Legislature for any action to be taken. The Recorder and members of the Police are appointed outside of the Council, as in former years when the Mayor was likewise appointed by the Executive. No opinion is expressed here whether or not a change in these respects is desirable. But it is a noteworthy fact that in his Message to the Common Council of the City of New York (1883), the Mayor attributed most of the difficulties in civic matters to State Legislation, while the City is Democratic, the Legislature is Republican, and therefore there must naturally be considered party friction. However, the respective cases are not altogether analogous.]

On the 14th a long discussion took place upon Railway matters, in which Mr. Lawrence was the mover and chief central figure, and held his own with much force and ability against some of the ablest men in the House. This Railway business had of late years been brought prominently forward, and an immense deal of talk followed. The subject matter, however, is not of sufficient importance to show the arguments used, or the cause of them, as Railroads are now established, and therefore no precedents require to be put on record.

On the 28th of February the Provincial Secretary brought down the Estimates for the year and delivered his budget speech. The amount of money required for the ordinary service was £195,128 13s. 10d., and the estimated available amount is £105,507 19s. 11d. Some of the ordinary items provided for are somewhat curious—for instance, £250 for revolutionary pensioners. These old heroes were considered at the time (1860) to be very long lived. As the revolutionary war terminated in 1783, if a person was 17 years old at the time, these Pensioners must have been about 94 years of age. It is presumed that when Confederation took place in 1867, this Pension List must have been cut off.

On the 3rd March, the attention of the House was directed to the Legislative Library management. Mr. Smith (late Sir Albert) said that a large number of books were missing from the Library, and no one was responsible for them. Mr. Gray said he had been informed that 300 volumes were missing, and 44 sets broken. Mr. Hanington thought the Library Com-

mittee should take some action upon the matter, in order to remedy the evil; and he was sure the House would sustain them. Mr. Gilmour thought that the Library was a standing monument to the extravagance of the country; he thought there should be a strict supervision over the Library, as he observed that all of the best information was out of the Library, and he thought the people of Fredericton got the full benefit of them; he noticed that some volumes from the Library were used for propping up windows, &c. Considerable time was occupied in talking about the affair; the general feeling of the House was that there should be a complete revision in the management; the majority of the members also expressed full confidence in Mr. Needham (father of the late W. H.) as Librarian, but thought that the duties were too onerous for so aged a man, and recommended that one or two assistants should be furnished him. [It used to be a notorious fact—I do not know how it is of late years—that members carried volumes with them to their homes on prorogation, and generally failed to return them. When the first volume of "Political Notes" was published, a copy was placed in the Library, but it too disappeared—another and another volume placed there also went in the same fashion—so that the Library today is without a book which of all others should be on its shelves. Another volume might be presented provided the Library Committee would be willing to chain it to one of the tables—although I am inclined to believe that this sin of petty pilfering passed away with former Houses, and so the prayers of the Chaplain have not been in vain.]

On the 19th of March the Attorney-General moved a resolution to the effect that an invitation be extended to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales to visit this Province. He said that it was the intention of His Royal Highness to visit Canada during the ensuing summer, and the idea is to induce him to extend his visit to us. Mr. Fisher supported the resolution in a speech that occupied three-quarters of an hour in delivery. Mr. Brown would support the resolution, if the expenses were paid by subscription; he was willing to contribute as much for that object as any other man, considering his circumstances, but would oppose the expenses being paid out of the Province Chest. Mr. End hoped we would not let our hearts get the better of our heads; he concurred with every word that had fallen from the Surveyor General; the Province was in debt, and he did not think it advisable to incur any additional expenses for any such object; he did not wish to throw cold water upon the movement, but was afraid the expense likely to be incurred would be greater than the present state of our finances would warrant. Hon. Mr. Tilley spoke at length in favor, during which he remarked that, considering the matter in a financial point of view, he thought it would be a benefit to the Province. His Royal Highness would be invited to open the railway, and this fact being made known thousands upon thousands would flock to see him, and it would be impossible to calculate the indirect benefit that would result from this visit. He was confident that the people of this Province would cheerfully comply with and sustain their representatives in voting for a grant for this object. He felt sure that his constituents would censure him should he vote against extending an invitation to so distinguished a personage—his visit would be a lasting honor to our country,—he was satisfied that upon his arrival in St. John, there would be a loyal demonstration, such as was never witnessed in the City before; he thought he would visit Miramichi, and during his stay in the Province, he would make the Government House his headquarters. During his visit thousands of American subjects would come to our Province to embrace this opportunity of seeing the future Sovereign of the British Empire. If there was a Sovereign in the world that the Americans loved it was Queen Victoria, and they also felt a deep interest in her successor. Mr. McLellan thought it would not be advisable to incur a large expense for the purpose of entertaining His Royal Highness, as we are engaged in the construction of great public works and could not well spare so large an amount as would be required for this purpose. Mr. Lawrence said he would cheerfully vote for inviting His Royal Highness, but he would object to granting a large amount for his entertainment, in fact he was not prepared to trust the Government with the expenditure of so large a sum as £5,000, which some had calculated the visit would cost us; he was willing that the Government should do the inviting, but he would leave the entertaining part to the discretion of the people at large. Mr. Hanington made a lengthy speech; he said he would be happy to have the Prince visit our Province, but did not like to incur the expense. Mr. Kerr also expressed himself against appropriating so large an amount for such a purpose; he did not like

to tax the people who would never see His Royal Highness, and he thought that if any benefit would accrue from the visit it would be confined to a few. Mr. Grey made a lengthy speech in support of the resolution of the Attorney General. He was glad to see him take so bold a stand, he was sure we would derive material benefits from the visit, it would be the means of making our country favourably known in the father land; he ridiculed the idea of sending around a subscription list to raise money for the entertainment of England's future Sovereign, and protested against it being in accordance with the views of the loyal people of this country, to hand their future Sovereign over to the tender mercies of a subscription list; and went on to show that it expediture in connection with his visit amounted to over £1000, it would not be over 1s. a head for each inhabitant there Province; and he felt confident there was not a poor laboring man in the country, but would cheerfully pay over that amount for the attainment of the object in view. If the question was to be narrowed down to a matter of pounds, shillings and pence, he was sure the people would cheerfully comply with the expense; and humorously remarked that if the matter was brought under the notice of the people of the United States, they for the credit of America would immediately raise the required amount. After four hours had been consumed in the discussion, the matter was finally left with the Government to make all necessary provision. During the following Session of 1861, the Accounts in connection with the affair were laid before the House, amounting to the snug little sum of \$39,632—whereupon Mr. Connell rose and remarked about the extravagance exhibited throughout. Other hon. gentlemen tore their hair and made terrible faces, but finally swallowed the whole dose. So much for His Royal Highness' visit to New Brunswick in 1860.

On the 9th April His Excellency closed the Session in a short speech. The most article will be devoted altogether to the visit of the Prince of Wales to this Province, and will contain matters in connection therewith, that have never yet been published. Portraits will appear of His Royal Highness, of that period—also of the Mayors of St. John (T. McAvity, Esq.) and of Fredericton (James S. Beek, Esq.)—altogether a history of this great event worth preserving.

THEY WEAR NOTHING ELSE.

But the Natives of Nicobar have a Great Fancy for Old Top Hats.

One of the peculiarities of the inhabitants of the Nicobar Islands is a passion for old top-hats. Though these savages, save for the conventional strip of cloth, have a rooted objection to clothes, young and old, subject and chief, endeavour to outvie each other in their collections of old top-hats. On a fine morning, the surface of the water in the vicinity of the Islands is dotted over with canoes, each having for its occupant a noble Nicobarian, dressed in a large white hat with a mourning band, busily engaged in fishing.

The traders from Calcutta, every now and then, make excursions to these islands with cargoes of old hats, which they barter for coconuts; the older the hats the better, as the simple islanders are said to look upon new ones with suspicion.

The market value of a white top hat with band is, at the present time, about sixty coconuts, though this is apt to vary with the supply.

A rare work of art or a valuable edition in a London auction-room will not create more excitement than does a white hat amongst the Nicobarians. If several of them are after the same one, up goes the bids, and a coveted hat will fetch as many as one hundred nuts. The sale being over, out comes the rum, and it is not an uncommon sight to see a noble chief drinking himself drunk over a newly-purchased top-hat.

Advice to a Young Man. "I want you to advise me, Miss Bakerson," said the young South Side exquisite. "I am going to take a lady to the theatre this evening, and after it's over I expect to give her a nice lunch on some swell restaurant. What had I better order?" "You want a 'swell' luncheon, I suppose?" said the society belle. "Regular swell. Way up." "You are not particular as to the expense?" "Want it got up regardless." "And you want to try the proper thing?" "That's it exactly." "Well," observed the young woman thoughtfully, "suppose you ask the lady what she would like."



INFLUENZA, Or La Grippe, though occasionally epidemic, is always more or less prevalent. The best remedy for this complaint is Ayer's Cherry Pectoral. "Last Spring, I was taken down with La Grippe. At times I was completely prostrated, and so difficult was my breathing that my breast seemed as if confined in an iron cage. I procured a bottle of Ayer's Cherry Pectoral, and no sooner had I begun taking it than relief followed. I could not believe that the effect would be so rapid and the cure so complete. It is truly a wonderful medicine."—W. H. WILLIAMS, Crook City, S. D.

A COSTER'S VERSION.

A Synopsis of the "Merchant of Venice" that Would Delight Shakespeare.

During the run of "The Merchant of Venice" at the Lyceum, a coster, who had witnessed the production, was explaining the plot to a less fortunate confrere.

"D'y'er see?" said he, "it's like this ere. There's a cove what's fell in love, but 'e don't like to go courtin' without bein' togged up a bit; so 'e goes to a pal and asks 'im to lend 'im a trifle. His pal says 'e ain't got no 'ready,' but is willin' to get bail for 'im."

"So they go to an old joker in the city, an 'e lends 'em some oof. Then they says, 'What int' rest?' and he says, 'Garn away! You're all right. If yer don't pay me at all I shan't summons yer; only, if yer don't I'll have a pound off yer chest!' 'e says, like as if he's jokin'. Then they laughs, 'cause they've got some stuff a comin' over what's bound to turn up in time for the market, as they thinks."

"But it don't turn up, an' the old fakir comes down on 'em, an' 'e won't settle it without the pound of flesh. 'Well, this girl what was agoin' to marry the bloke, w'en she 'ears as 'e's in trouble, makes it up with the solicitor for the defence, takes his place, gets 'er 'air cut, an' appears in the trial at the Law Courts, 'cause she's got something up her sleeve. 'Then the jury gives a verdict of guilty, an' the judge says the prosecutor is a outsider."

"Up jumps the gal, an' says, 'Ain't yer goin' to give 'im a chance?' 'An' the old fraud says, 'No, I 'ate 'im.' 'Then she says: 'Very well, go on with yer performance. But,' says she, 'this yer case don't say nothin' about the danger of the entertainment. Now, if you draw one drop o' blood we shall come on yer for damages, an' sell yer up!' 'Well, Bill, w'en she says that, you never see Irvin' look so took down in all your life."

NO SNAKES IN NEWFOUNDLAND.

A Chance for a Newfoundland Essayist to Make Himself Famous.

"Everybody knows that there are no snakes in Ireland," said a native of St. John's, Nfld., "but very few I guess, know that Newfoundland is just like Ireland in that respect, and there is no record that Newfoundland had a St. Patrick to drive the snakes off, either. 'There is plenty of game in Newfoundland, but not a reptile of any kind—snake, toad, frog, lizard, or even turtle. Another queer thing about the province is that while some wild animals are abundant there, no one ever saw a squirrel, porcupine, mouse, or lynx anywhere within its boundaries. This is all the more singular because the adjoining provinces of Nova Scotia and Cape Breton have all of these animals and many kinds of snakes and other reptiles. On the other hand, the Arctic hare is abundant in Newfoundland, but is not found in Nova Scotia or Cape Breton. The summer nights of Nova Scotia are made brilliant by fireflies, but no firefly ever lights up a Newfoundland nocturnal landscape by its sparkling flight. Yet there are swamps and bogs innumerable in Newfoundland which one would naturally suppose would be the choicest kind of breeding places and retreats for reptiles of all kinds, to say nothing of insects, of which there is a remarkable scarcity in Newfoundland."

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