

ST. JOHN, N. B., SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 1896.

MYGLORY IN THE CHAIR.

HOW THAT COUNTY COUNCIL GOT THROUGH ITS WORK.

The Warden's Way of Receiving Papers and Putting Motions to the Meeting—Where the Big Red Pencil Was Useful—What the Horse Nails Suggested.

Within the walls of the court room, the members of the Madawaska council, alias county council, huddled together within the bar, around the lawyers long tables, and there held their annual pow-wow concerning the past, present and future of all us poor fellows. The first tussle was the election of the warden of course, and who do you think got there? You would guess for a fortune and you would never strike the name of the sovereign of our municipality. Well, it is Myglory (in French, Magloire,) but nobody else's glory. He had but one opponent who, unfortunately, knew how to read and write, and that killed him on the spot, for Docite's very good reason that "he might do something we can't understand." So Myglory was shoved triumphantly into the presidential chair which squeaked under the massive weight (not of ignorance, mind you) which fell to its lot.

Here is the way the election was received outside of the railing:

"The man can't read or write!"

"Yes, he can," said a friend, "I saw him write his own name."

"How do you know whether it was his name or not, you can't read nor write yourself."

"Oh, well, he's got a big red pencil, and eyeglasses which he puts on when he's writing or doing something on the paper."

"Ah, phaw, he learned how to make a zig-zag two years ago, and called it his name."

"Well, well you'll see by and by," and everybody waited for his opportunity which was not long coming. Somebody presented a motion to the warden, but he passed it on the secretary his servant and proxy, who read the contents and it having passed, he condescendingly endorsed on it "approved" and handed it back again to Myglory to put his zigzag on it. Myglory fished into his bushel pockets, and amid the clinking horse-shoe nails and other minutiae of the iron industry, the great big red pencil was produced. Just here an incident must be related.

Myglory is the possessor of a big black mare, nearly as big as himself, but which can go a little faster than he. Felix whom you know, has a smart little mare and delights in running all around Myglory's sulky when the two meet on the war-path, that is what is called elsewhere a race course. So, one day, funny Felix, on purpose let Myglory best him, and the air rent by the noise of the victory from the Allegash down to Van-Buren. Then there was a match to test the two horses. It was a Sunday afternoon, after vesper, on Murchie's frozen mill pond, that the fearful and bloody contest was to take place. The bone and sinew of the country, the christians as well as the gentiles, those who had horses as well as those who had not, young people, old people, rich people, poor people, funny people and crazy people, everybody from afar and near was there. The gong struck and the two mares shot out like cannon balls, but something went flying behind Myglory's mare. It was her shoe. "Whoa! Whoa!" and all was over. The shoe had been two nails in it, and there were no signs of any in the mare's hoof, so Myglory was there and it caused of no less a crime than purposely hauling out the nails, so that there should be no race, and that his mare could preserve a little while longer the only laurels it ever did, or ever will get. Of course Myglory with a voice that covered the hills denounced such an imputation on Felix's part, and said he wouldn't race with him any more. The matter rested there till to-day, but when the big red pencil came out with all these old horse-shoe nails, all doubts were dispelled and his conviction was a foregone conclusion.

Myglory first gave the pencil a lick that would make a suckling colt blush, and having put out on his eyeglasses set to work. Somebody was mean enough to say that there was a hole in the table underneath the paper as nothing seemed to move. But it was the lead, dried by ages, which was not yet sufficiently moistened, so it was again dipped into the pot of saliva and came out working like a newly filled fountain pen. You ought to see Myglory write. It was worse than the kickapoo painting Sagwa on the fence, at least it took about as long.

The applicants for licenses "drew near and gave their attendance to be heard," but owing to so much time being taken up to imprint the warden's autograph, some gain had to be made elsewhere, otherwise the council had every prospect of sitting there till doomsday, and to avoid such a calamity to the country, the whole batch of licenses were granted en bloc, and Myglory again started his patent quill at a dead march rate.

In the parish of Saint Hilaire, the majority of ratepayers had petitioned against the granting of any licenses in that parish, as they did last year, but without any more success. The petition was duly filed but when it came before the council it had lost by the "roller process" the one hundred and sixty signatures attached to it. The wise men from the east got their heads together, and gravely decided that they could not entertain a notehead, after which routine and day-day pipes were indulged in for the rest of the day.

The second day's proceeding at first threatened to be very short, as no one spoke nor moved, and the secretary kept prompting them that if there was nothing to do they had much better adjourn. After receiving such a hint three or four times, the fun began. Myglory drew forth a paper from the pocket which sheltered the big red pencil, and handed it to Levite, which being read, consisted of an offer by a responsible party to perform the duties of Inspector of Licenses for one hundred dollars a year instead of \$175 00, the salary then paid. So a motion was at once written out, to reduce the salary to one hundred dollars. Coun. Cyr was the seconder of the motion and presented it to the warden, who immediately handed it as usual to the secretary for interpretation.

But Coun. Cyr had not been sitting at the board for twenty years for nothing. He jumped to his feet, indignantly snatched out of the secretary's hands the unfortunate motion, and all crumbled up in his vigorous clutch he brought it down with a bang on the table in front of the warden:

"You are the warden," he shouted, "and do your work, or we'll bolt."

"Can't I have my work done by another, inquired Myglory."

"No; You can't," thundered Coun. Cyr.

"Read the motion, I tell you, and put it to a vote or you'll be declared incompetent."

Myglory betook himself to thinking of McKenzies Bowells late troubles, and he decided to hang on to office. So bending towards the councillor at his right, he whispered, showing the motion. "Say, tell us, what's in that paper, will you?"

"The devoted neighbor failed not in his duties to charity, and after a few rehearsals the warden thought he had it all off by heart. Rising in all his might, he freed himself of his glasses, and glanced at the paper;

"Well you know, this paper..... is to..... hem, hem, it is moved and seconded that the Inspector..... hem, hum, hoem..... well you have heard the whole story, this is that, the price of the inspector "go down to one hundred dollars."

"Drink hearty!" said some rascal in the crowd. "Didn't I tell you that Myglory could read," repeated his friends on all sides.

"Well now," said the warden, all those who don't want the inspector to get one hundred and seventy five dollars, stand up."

Eight sturdy and stalwart men rose to the command. After counting them aloud, Myglory intent on showing he could count higher than eight rose; "Me too! that makes nine."

"Sit down!" vociferated the irritated member for St. Anne;

"You have no right to vote except in case of a tie. I'll learn you."

"Ah, well," said the warden, "that's only eight then."

The councillors voted themselves a dollar and a half a day for their care and diligence and this was well earned. As the warden expressed it. "Say bon saw."

By this time the warden could sign his name inside of ten minutes and he was complimented on his progress by one of the board.

The dying gasp of the council was a motion that the warden treat the crowd. This was "hollered," unanimously, everybody standing as they do at theatres to the strains of the national anthem. REGIS.

P. S. It was also ordered that the minutes of the meeting be published as soon as possible, and that ten copies at least be forwarded to each councillor. The secretary will probably communicate with you for the required number. R.

Why Is It?

That when you put your hand in your pocket for a nickel and find a quarter, you are disappointed?

That, if a woman, you insist upon telling the conductor to stop the car at the next street when you have already seen him pull the bell cord for somebody else?

That, when you owe your grocer a small bill, you trade and pay cash at his competitor's?

That you wear your old coat without flinching, provided you have a better one at home?

That the weather gets cold so early in the autumn if you have a new sealskin saque?

That you say you "used to play a good game," when you can't make a single caram at billiards?

That you use a half a dozen towels on the sleeping car when one is sufficient at home?

That you tell an utter stranger facts you wouldn't whisper to your dearest friend?

That you grapple with and overcome a present trouble or misfortune when you worry over a theoretical one in the future?

—St. Paul Dispatch.

IN OLD MINSTREL DAYS.

RISE, DECLINE AND FALL OF THE BURNT CORK ARTIST.

One Reason for the Change in the Fallure of the Younger Generation to get new fun—The Story of the Beginners, and Success of the Minstrels.

One of the things that puzzle some observers of the American stage is the entire decline of negro minstrelsy says the N. Y. Sun. Time was when the personation of the negro was regarded as an incident of every actor's work. Edwin Booth in his younger days played a negro role, and Lawrence Barrett did the same. This was not looked upon as undignified for any actor, and many actors began their apprenticeship in this line of work. Negro fun was for a long time the one distinctive American school of stage humor. Within the last fifteen years, which about measure the period in which its fall has been accomplished, there have been numerous minstrel companies travelling over the country. Now there are probably not so many as three that find their way to the first-class theatres in any cities of the country. There is one prominent organization of the kind, and it seems about all that the country can support.

The amount of genuine negro fun in any of the negro personations now is so slight that the performances are more like a vaudeville act done with the aid of burnt cork. This fact is mentioned often as the most potent reason for the decadence of the amusement, which was at one time the most popular form of comic entertainment in this country. Some say, however, that the introduction of features not distinctly characteristic of the negro did not begin until it had begun to be manifest that public taste was drifting away from minstrelsy. In the attempt to win back the minstrels took on features that had become popular in other forms of amusement, and ended by absorbing so many of these that the old-time negro flavor was crowded out. Spectacular display was called in to help the waning popularity of the songs and dances. The genuine negro dresses gave way to satins and velvets. Men rattled the bones and beat the tambourine dressed as Hamlet, Macbeth, and other Shakespearean characters. Every innovation of this kind seemed to hasten the end. Declining interest was not to be revived by any such devices. Multiplication of performers did no more to win back popularity to the negro minstrels. They seemed doomed. So it happens that one of the questions of the "show business" today is:

"What killed negro minstrelsy?"

Whatever the answer may be, its inference is invariably that nothing will revive that old-time diversion. It has had its day. It was a long one and a prosperous one: but there is no doubt that it is done for good.

An interested observer of this present condition of affairs is William, or rather, "Billy" Birch, who, with Backus, Wambold, and Bernard, founded the old San Francisco minstrels, which from 1865 until 1885 played in New York city. Birch is an old man now for the minstrel business, and his three partners are dead. Despite his bad health, Birch finds his way to the theatres two or three times a week, and his reflections on the minstrel business are more cheerful than those of most of the men who have been in it, even if they are not flattering to the men who are engaged in a similar line of work today.

The end of negro minstrelsy came," he said to the Sun reporter the other day, "not because the people grew tired of it, but because the younger men who took it up were not able to create any new fun, but went on doing year after year just the same things that had been done by their predecessors. They did the same old acts, told the same old jokes and expected people to keep on laughing at them. Even if the jokes had kept on using, they ought to have remembered that the way in which a joke is told has a good deal to do with its effect. You know how much an ordinary story depends on the way it is told. In the old days we were always on the look-out for something new. Sometimes it came to us suddenly; sometimes we had to work hard for it. The people would laugh just as much now as they ever did at negro minstrels if the men would give them something new. But they won't. They tried to cover up this lack of novelty with marches and lots of men. But one good joke that they weren't tired of and one good man to tell it would have been worth all these things put together. They won't get the new jokes, and minstrelsy is dead for that reason."

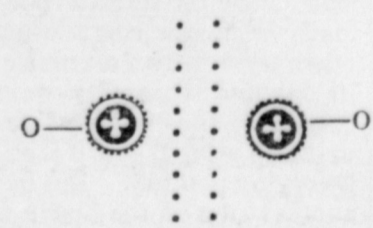
"It used to be a newspaper joke that all the minstrel sayings and conundrums were taken out of comic almanacs, but, in fact, more of them came out of the minstrel business. I remember when we were playing down at 685 Broadway that I started the joke about the country cousins visiting the city, and then sending a few provisions to make up for it, and that joke is still doing duty in the comic papers. I had a cousin that lived up in Utica—he's living there

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now, too—and one summer when I was on a visit to him he showed me a butternut tree in bloom. 'Send me down some of those nuts when they're ripe,' I said to him and he promised he would. That was the last I thought of it. Well, when Christmas came, he sent down to my house in West Third street, where I used to live, a bag of the nuts, a barrel of apples, a tub of butter, and a cheese. That afternoon I went to the stable, where I kept a pair of horses, to take a ride. I saw the veterinary, and he asked me what I got for Christmas. I told him I had one present from the country. 'Oh, damn country cousins,' he said, 'they come down to town and stay a month with you, then go home and send you a pillow case of hickory nuts at Christmas, and call it squire.' I thought several times during the afternoon of what he said, and that night at the theatre Charley Backus said something in the first part about Christmas, and I said something about a present I had from a country cousin, leading up to the joke about how they visited you and what they sent you, telling the story about the pillow case of hickory nuts. It was new then and it took. One night we did a sketch called 'school,' and introduced the line, 'Who was George Washington?' with the answer, 'First in war, first in peace and first in the hearts of his countrymen,' crossing the feet and stamping just as it's done now all the time in farces and burlesques.

"De Wolf Hopper did it last year at the Broadway Theatre in exactly the same way. I always accused Gilbert and Sullivan of taking that business in 'Patience,' where the twenty love-sick maidens follow Bunthorne around the stage, from something Charley Backus used to do it in a burlesque of 'Pinafore' that he played. Gilbert and Sullivan were in this country at that time, looking after the first production of 'The Pirates of Penzance' here. Backus used to follow the man that played Little Buttercup around the stage. He never said anything, but stared at him in a love-sick way. Both the men came to see it several times, and when they went back to England wrote 'Patience' and introduced exactly the same business in it.

"Sometimes we had to work mighty hard to make the people laugh, but we did it. I remember one night it was a little harder than usual to do it. They wouldn't crack a smile. Backus looked at me in despair and I looked back at him. The audience were as quiet as if they were in a church. After I had got off one of our best jokes, and they seemed gloomier than ever, I turned to the boys and said solemnly, 'Let us pray.' The audience understood what I meant, and it set them to laughing, and it was not hard to keep them at it all the evening. After that we were always thinking of something new to amuse them, and a great deal of it came on the spur of the moment. The trouble about that was it made the boys laugh too. Somebody said to me once: 'You fellows are all right, but you laugh too much at your own jokes.' We could not help it. They were new to us all the time, and we didn't have to wait for the audience. It was only in that way, by putting in something new all the time, and something we thought of ourselves, that we were able to play for so many years in New York.

"The multiplication of variety theatres was another thing that gave the minstrel a black eye. I look at the number that there are in New York today and wonder where all the money comes from that support them. The people can't seem to get to much of them. There's Tony Pastor gone into this new continuous business. The variety theatres gave the people negro sketches with other things that amused them, and that took the personage away from the minstrels. Then in the old days there wasn't so much music on the stage. When we had a quartet first, and we had a good one, we hit the people mighty hard. Now there's singing in everything and nearly every company that goes out of New York, from a melodrama to a farce comedy, carries a quartet along with it. All these

things helped to kill the negro minstrels. Then they tried the experiment of having real negroes, but they were never funny on the stage. They imitated us and were never themselves. I got a boy once who could sing and dance and put him on the stage. I tried him before my friends and he amused them, but as soon as he got before an audience he started right in to imitate the men he had seen, and there was nothing funny about him. The same has been true of all the negroes I ever saw on the stage. They lose their own spontaneity and humor and make hard work of imitating others."

From 1844, when he was 13 years old, until the close of the old San Francisco Minstrels, Birch was continuously in service. His first appearance was made in the town of New Hartford, where he was born, and during his long career he rarely played what is known professionally as a "white-face" part. His first professional appearance as a minstrel was with Raymond's Minstrels in Stamford, Conn. This was a half century ago—in 1846, two years after his first amateur effort. Two years later he was liked enough to find an opportunity in New York at a hall on Grand street. A few years later he was playing in Philadelphia with old Dan Emmett, now 80 years old and still travelling over the country with a variety show, not figuring very actively in the performances, but very popular as a curiosity. "The oldest living negro minstrel," is Emmet's claim to public attention. Emmet was the author of "Jordan," and also professes to have composed "Dixie." In 1854 Birch came to New York and acted in George Christy's minstrels, at 44 Broadway, for the first part of the evening and appeared later at 472 Broadway in another minstrel show of which Christy had been the principle feature during the early part of the evening. There was a good deal of negro minstrelsy in those days in proportion to the rest of it at the amusement offered.

To or three trips to California, a shipwreck, and a rescue, brought Birch's career down to the formation of the troupe that played for so many years in New York. The profits of this company were close to \$1,000,000 during its long period of activity, Mr. Birch proudly says. He has not much of that himself now, and only a few weeks ago Tony Pastor gave a benefit for him. A stroke of paralysis has weakened him physically, and most of his time is passed in the house in the society of his wife and a devoted dog. With the assistance of his stick, however, he is able to go to the theatres, and he is keen to observe what the changes in the times and the tastes have produced in the public's demand for entertainment.

THAT IMPALING CASE

Mr. H. E. Hudson, of Combermere, Severely Injured.

Protruding Knot Wound—Entered the Body Four Inches—Bladder Injury—Kidney Disease—One Box of Dodd's Kidney Pills

Barrie Bay, Feb. 3, (Special).—Universal interest has been taken throughout this newly-settled region in the cure of Mr. Hudson of Combermere, hunter, trapper and lumberman. Personally well known to every man, woman and child, his case, both before and since the cure, has created much talk.

The accident occurred over eight years ago when he fell upon a protruding knot in such a way as to enter the body from beneath, injuring the bladder and affecting the kidneys. Speaking of his sufferings and cure he says:

"I was confined to my bed for six weeks to commence with, have suffered from pain across the back, weakness and loss of time for eight years.

"I have taken one box of Dodd's Kidney Pills, and since taking the first four doses have been free from pain.

"One box to me has been worth more than one hundred dollars, as only one was necessary to complete my cure.

"I have had not the least symptom of any return and am able to work as well as ever I could in my life."

Very Pronounced Medical View of its use Three Centuries Ago.

It needed a very bold man to resist the medical testimony of three centuries ago against water drinking. Few writers can be found to say a good word for it. One or two only are concerned to maintain that, "when begun in early life it may be pretty freely drunk with impunity," and they quote the curious instance given by Sir Thomas Elyot in his "Castle of Health" 1541, of the Cornish men, "many of the poorer sort, which never, or very seldom, drink any other drink, be notwithstanding strong of body and like and live well until they be of great age." Thomas Cogan, the medical schoolmaster of Manchester fame, confessed in his "Haven of Health," 1589, designed for the use of students, that he knew some who drink cold water at night or fasting in the morning without hurt; and Dr. James Hart, writing about fifty years later could even claim among his acquaintance "some honorable and worshipful ladies who drink little other than most of them that drink of the strongest." The phenomenon was undeniable, but the natural inference was none the less to be resisted. Sir Thomas Elyot himself is very certain, in spite of the Cornish men, that "there be in water causes of divers diseases, as of swelling of spleen and liver." He complains oddly also that "it flitteth and swimmeth," and concludes that "to young men, and them that be of hot complexions it doeth less harm, and sometimes it profiteth, but to them that are feeble, old, and melancholy, it is not convenient." "Water is not wholesome cool by itself for an English man," was the opinion of Andrew Borde—monk, physician, bishop, ambassador, and writer on sanitation—as the result of a life's experience. And to quote the "Englishman's Doctor":

Both water and small beer, we make no question. Are enemies to health and good digestion. But the most formal indictment against water is that of Venner, who, writing in 1622 ponderously pronounces "to dwellers in cold countries it doth very greatly deject their appetites, destroy the natural heat and overthrow the strength of the stomach, and consequently confounding the concoction the cause of crudities, fluctuations, and windiness in the body."—The Hospital.

Her Favorite Animal.
She—Yes, I am very fond of a pet.
He—Indeed? What, may I ask, is your favorite animal?
She (frankly)—Man.

The valuation of Ireland for rating purposes in 1895 was £14,280,203—an increase of nearly a quarter of a million sterling as compared with 1891.

Nine Times Out of Ten

We are sure to please our customers. We will have to admit with everyone else that there are a few cranks in this world that are never satisfied, but we have the pleasure of calling them down once in a while. Our motto is to please and prosper, in our Laundry and Dye Works.

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