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PRICE FIVE CENTS

FIGHT FOR NO LICENSE.

PROHIBITIONISTS ARE HARD AT WORK WITH PETITIONS.

They Claim They Will Secure More than the Requisite Number of Names—What the Result Will Be—The Question of Loss of Revenue to the City.

Unless the friends of prohibition are very much astray in their calculations, no liquor licenses will be granted in St. John for the year beginning the first of May next.

Mr. J. Willard Smith is secretary of the executive committee appointed at the prohibition meeting on Friday night of last week, and he says he is sure there will be more than the requisite number of signatures to the petition against the granting of licenses. He adds that he wishes he was as sure of making ten thousand dollars as he is of the success of the movement. They have gone into the fight and propose to win.

The liquor dealers have been at work several weeks getting the signatures necessary to qualify them to obtain licenses. The necessary number in each case is one-third of the ratepayers in the respective districts where the licenses are to be granted. In the interpretation of terms in the Liquor License Act, a ratepayer means one who is assessed on real or personal estate, but not one who is assessed merely on income. Up to a week or two ago there seemed no reason to suppose the ordinary course of the operation of the license law would be changed this year, nor would it have been had not one of the liquor dealers tried to grasp too much. Not satisfied with doing a good business in the city, he undertook to get a license in Carleton. The result of this was such an enthusiastic meeting of protesting West Side residents that the prohibition element got thoroughly waked up, and the proposition was made to petition against the granting of license in any part of the city. The idea was acted upon at once. A citizens committee was appointed at the meeting held last week, and on Thursday canvassers began to secure signatures. So far, they say, they have met with great success, and have no doubt as to the result.

The same law which says that license may be granted to applicants who are endorsed by one-third of the ratepayers in their districts says that no license shall be granted in any city if a majority of the ratepayers petition against it. When the prohibitionists decided to act on this section, they supposed that "ratepayer" meant anybody who was assessed on income, as well as on real and personal property, which would make it necessary for them to secure more than half of the names on the assessment list. Large as the contract seemed, they were willing to undertake it, but they have since learned that a ratepayer in this instance means the same kind of ratepayer as is required to sign the petitions for the granting of license. The man who is taxed on income only does not count.

This fact has greatly simplified the work of the committee and increased its chances of success. Not only is there much less ground to be gone over, but the chance of an anti-license majority among property owners is very much better than among the voters of all classes. A large proportion of the men who avail themselves of saloon privileges are not property owners, even though they may feel they have an interest in the mansions of the proprietors whom their money has made rich. The men who are taxed on their salaries and days' wages may be important factors in a Dominion election, but when it comes to the question of granting license they have neither voice nor influence one way or the other. The prospect of getting a majority of property owners to sign a no-license petition is therefore very much better than that of getting a majority of the voters in a Scott Act election.

In this crisis the liquor dealers are absolutely powerless. In a Scott Act election they could work with great effect, but when a petition is quietly going round and the signatures rolling up, they can do nothing but wait and abide the result. It is not a case in which they can show fight. That will come at a later date.

Secretary Smith says he does not expect the withholding of license will stop the sale of liquor, but he thinks it will relieve the citizens from the responsibility which they have by a recognition of the traffic. He points out, what PROGRESS has very clearly shown, that the administration of the existing license law in St. John is notoriously inefficient and partial. When such a law is constantly violated with the knowledge of the chief inspector, he admits that the sale of liquor cannot be stopped when no licenses are granted.

The revenue from the liquor license fees in St. John is over \$19,000 a year, while the receipts from police court fines for drunkenness is several thousand dollars more. There would probably be plenty of drunkenness with or without license, as is

shown by the record of Portland, Maine, but the loss of the revenues from licenses would mean just that much of a deficiency in the civic funds to be made up from some other source. It would seem just to mean just that much added to the general assessment.

When Mr. Smith was asked what views he had on this point he said the matter had not entered into his consideration. He did not concern himself with that part of the question. If the amount of the deficiency had to be levied on the people, the burden would not be felt and he was willing to pay his share of it.

Mr. W. Frank Hatheway, who is one of the executive committee and is also president of the prohibitory alliance, was questioned on the same subject. He had not given the matter his consideration, he said, but speaking off-hand his idea would be that with no license the people would save as much money as they would otherwise spend in liquor. The people who have been drinkers would therefore be no losers, while the people who do not drink ought to be willing to pay the slight additional taxation.

Easily as the prohibition boom has gone so far, there is undoubtedly plenty of trouble ahead. The liquor dealers have many thousands of dollars invested in their business, and the closing up of their shops would mean not only a loss on their investment but would deprive them of their occupation. While at present they can only stand by and see the anti-license petition grow larger day by day, they propose to fight hard when the time comes for action. In the meantime they are completing their petitions and will apply as usual for license. If it is not granted they do not propose to go out of business so long as there is a chance to contest the matter, and the opportunities for contest in this instance are by no means limited.

While the courts have decided that the Liquor License Act is within the powers of the provincial legislature as far as regards restriction of the traffic, as in requiring applicants for license to be endorsed by a third of the ratepayers, the question of actual prohibition, as is now proposed, has not been to the front. In the opinion of some lawyers, the Act in this particular is invalid, and the legislature has exceeded its powers. It may therefore be expected that there will be litigation as far as money can push it. The dealers will form a combine and put up a purse sufficient to carry the case from one court to another and appeal to the Privy Council if necessary. In the meantime, license or no license, some of them will continue to sell, and to keep on selling pending the final decision, whenever that may be. The chances are that under these conditions, the end of the matter, whatever it may be, is a long way off. There are indications of a rich harvest for the lawyers, if for nobody else.

FIRST SNIFF OF THE BREEZE.

One Alderman Candidate to the Front in the Fight in Victoria Ward.

Mr. James Seaton, the former alderman for Victoria ward, says he will be in the field this year in opposition to Ald. Law. He is not in any combination, but says he is willing to leave the choice of men to the people. Mr. Seaton was in the council elected by the T. R. A. and might have been reelected last year had he dropped the T. R. A. as most of his colleagues did. He could have had a place on the Citizen's ticket, but he believed the organization which had elected him before could carry him again. In that he was mistaken, for the T. R. A. went to pieces even more rapidly than it had come into existence. The indications are that there will be a hot contest in Victoria ward, whatever may happen in the rest of the city.

It is also stated that opposition to Ald. Waring, is to be organized in Sidney ward. The ground for this is said to be that Ald. Waring, after being elected to the board, was for a long period an absentee from the city.

A new man will have to represent King's ward, in place of Ald. Cooper, who has had enough of civic honors for the present and intends to resign. The man for the place has not yet been named, but Kings has no lack of citizens who can be brought out when the people demand their services.

This is equally true of Queens ward, where a new man will be required if Ald. McLaughlin is a candidate for the position of mayor. Queens has plenty of good men from whom a choice can be made.

It is a little over two months until election, and it is about time for brewing to begin.

Wasted His Argument.

At a meeting of the board of works, the other day, Recorder Skinner entered into an argument of some length on the question of the payment of certain moneys, under the impression that he was addressing the treasury board. He was only brought to a realization of his needless labor when Ald. Christie, who was late, walked in and took the chair. The recorder knew that the alderman was not chairman of the treasury, and then the whole situation dawned on him.

IDEAS IN VALENTINES.

SOME THAT WERE RECEIVED AND SOME THAT WERE NOT.

The Best of the Lot Was for an Alderman The Council Gets One From the Mayor, and Sends One to Ottawa—The Citizens Got the Same Old Chestnut.

Some people got valentines this year when they did not expect any, and some who were expectant are still in waiting. Among the latter are a number who have aspirations for government positions, including the two claimants for the office of appraiser. Valentine's day did not bring a missive of appointment to either Hamilton or Kelly, but as the latter was really appointed he will probably look for his valentine when pay day comes around. Perhaps the government is only waiting for that time in order to have the unwelcome appointee paid off and discharged.

Mayor Robertson sent the council a valentine in the shape of a supplementary message on the Winter Port and the need of a bridge to Carleton by the way of Navy Island. It was not a comic valentine, but was full of withering sarcasm for the St. John Bridge and Railway Company and its rates of toll over the cantilever.

Ald. Baxter got a neat an expressive valentine in the shape of a cheque for his costs in the Connolly case.

The chief inspector of liquor licenses ought to have got a valentine, whether he did or not. A suitable design would have represented him as standing with his back to a big establishment where a crowd was passing in and out of a bar, while he, with a field glass at his eye, was trying to get sight of a bottle of whiskey in the top story of a private house, or a half pint of gin in a basement grocery kept by a widow.

A valentine for him and for all the liquor dealers was ordered too late to be got ready for yesterday, but it is on its way, and as will be seen elsewhere, the prohibitionists are the designers and senders of it.

Perhaps the funniest valentine of all was that sent to Postmaster Hanington requesting him to keep the outside clock at the post office on local time, so that the people would not be confused. According to the Telegraph, at Thursday's meeting of the council, "Ald. McCarthy moved, seconded by Ald. Wilson, that the post-office and custom house clocks be shifted from standard to local time. After discussion the resolution was changed to read that the post office clocks be changed to standard time, and it was carried."

When the startling statement reached the public Friday morning, some people must have had an idea that the city was on the verge of revolution against the Dominion Government. Both Ald. McCarthy and Wilson are usually pretty level headed men who do not want to get the city into trouble, but in this instance they appeared to have taken a most unheard-of and radical step. The post office clocks had been changed to standard time by Postmaster Hanington, while the custom house clocks had been changed by an order from Ottawa, issued at the request of the board of trade. If Ald. McCarthy was to cause the city to order them shifted, there was every prospect of a collision between the civic authorities and the Dominion government. The city might direct the police to go in a body and make the change, but both in the post office and custom house there was a body of men who might bar the door and offer stout resistance. Should the police persist, a telegram from Ottawa could promptly place a force of militia around both buildings and thus the clocks would continue to go as they have been going for the last four months. It looked like a serious matter.

By reference to the Sun's report, however, it appears that there was no intention to precipitate a conflict. The motion really was "that the Dominion government be asked" to make the change, which was much more regular, though not less funny in some ways, considering that the change to standard at the custom house would not have been made if the citizens had not asked it only a short time ago. The motion finally got down to the point when the request was made that the outside clock on the post office be changed, and this was carried.

In the course of the discussion, Ald. McCarthy alleged that "the post office clock, showing as it did Eastern standard time, got people all mixed up." This was a funny part of the valentine to be sent to the government or to the postmaster. The trouble is the outside clock on the post office shows every kind of time, from Eastern standard to the time of Eastern Asia. It is sometimes half past six by it when the sun is due south at noon, and a man going home at five o'clock in the morning may be in a position to swear that it was not quite midnight when he passed the post office. The clock is apt to be stopped just when people think it is going, and that is why they get mixed up rather than because it is supposed to show standard time. The re-

solution should have gone further. It should have asked that the clock be made to keep correct time of some kind or be put out of commission.

This was the time for Ald. McGoldrick to have got in his valentine in the form of motion for a plebiscite on the question of city time. The discussion showed that the council was as much divided as the public on the question. Ald. Blizard thought the matter should be left to the people, but did not make any motion to carry out his idea. Ald. Christie thought there should be a public meeting, but offered no resolution that one should be called. Thus, the first recent attempt of the council to touch the time question resulted in no more than asking for the changing of a clock that cannot be relied on to keep any kind of time.

No reference was made to the fact that, months ago, the time question was referred to the general committee of the council, with the idea that all sides could be heard and some kind of a report made. That committee has not yet been called together and the chances are it never will be.

Thus the valentine the citizens got from the council was the same old chestnut of nothing done or attempted to be done to simplify the time question.

THE DOCTORS WILL WAIT.

The Reason No Action Has Yet Been Taken on their Petition.

Some weeks ago the doctors of St. John, outside of the staff of the General Public Hospital, prepared a petition asking that the institution be thrown open to them for the reception of private patients. The plea of the commissioners heretofore has been that no formal request has been made upon which they could take action one way or the other. The doctor decided that the excuse should exist no longer, and so they drew up their paper with a great deal of care, and secured the signatures of no less than 27 practitioners, or all but three of the medical men in St. John outside of the staff. Then the document was entrusted to one of the commissioners, a friend of the scheme, who was to present it at the regular monthly meeting on Friday last.

The doctors awaited the issue with much interest. Chairman Bayard and others were known to be opposed to the project; some were known to be friendly to it, while others were an unknown quantity and might vote either way according to circumstances. One thing was certain, the board would have to do something and put itself on record one way or the other. There might be delay by referring or postponing action, but the ball had been started and was bound to roll.

Last Friday found the doctors in a state of high anticipation, speculating in this way and that on the chances, and wondering what the board would have to say about the matter. When one medico met another, the meeting of the commissioners was the first topic of conversation, and all were anxious for evening to come that the result of the maniftests might be learned.

The next day there was a surprise which had not been counted on. When the doctors hastened to find out what had been thought of their bold step, they were pained to learn that the commissioner had gone to the meeting indeed, but had either forgotten to take the document with him or had mislaid it in his office where it could not be found at the moment. Thus it did not get before the commissioners, there was no battle fought and the meeting adjourned in peace at an early date.

The doctors will now have to wait until the first Friday in March, but when that date comes they will probably make sure that the document gets there as soon as the commissioner does.

Thought It Was a Post Office.

A resident in the eastern part of the city was surprised the other day by a woman ringing the doorbell and wanting to buy some postage stamps. Curious to know why she should think he had stamps for sale, the householder questioned her, when she stated that she had seen the word "letters" over the slit in his front door, and supposed that if letters were to be dropped there there would naturally be stamps for sale. She was evidently from the rural districts, where the letter carrier is an unknown species.

In Regard To Estates.

The information in regard to the management of estates given on the editorial page by the Imperial Trusts Company must be very interesting reading to many people who are much in doubt as to the proper persons to place in charge of their property after their death. Sympathy or sentiment favors the selection of relatives who with some inexperienced or negligent lawyer frequently wreck valuable estates. The claims of the Imperial Trusts Company are strong and their arguments convincing.

Crowded out Again.

Social and personal news from Musquash and other outside places reached PROGRESS on Friday morning, too late for insertion in this issue.

LATE ELECTION ECHOES.

A PRESBYTERIAN CLERGYMAN IN OPPOSITION TO HIS FLOCK.

He Believes in Sir Charles Tupper and They Do Not—Insulted by the Bribery Oath—How Bishop Cameron's Letter Became Public—Other Echoes.

HALIFAX, Feb. 13.—One of the echoes of the Cape Breton election campaign is the trouble that has arisen between Dr. Isaac Murray, a prominent Presbyterian clergyman of North Sydney, and his people. Dr. Murray is a scholarly man, a deep theologian and an earnest preacher. Politically he is a liberal-conservative, and politically the great majority of his congregation are liberals. Dr. Murray endorsed the position taken by Sir Charles Tupper "in the Manitoba school question, as the 'champion of equal rights to all,' and in other ways exerted his influence on behalf of the secretary of state. The workers in the country commenced to get even with the Rev. gentleman on election day by putting the bribery oath to Dr. Murray at the polling booth. On the Sunday preceding the election his choir absented themselves from the church and now the majority of the congregation have stated an agitation to secure his resignation from the pastorate.

Referring to the part taken by clergyman in this contest all the protestant ministers are said to have voted, if they did not work, for Sir Charles Tupper, except Rev. Messrs Lockyer and Draper, of the church of England, and Mr. Friggins of the Methodist church.

It turns out now that the "pastoral" of Bishop Cameron was a private letter written by the bishop to one of the priests of Cape Breton, and which fell into the hands of the father of this clergyman, who is a pronounced liberal. By him the letter was given to the newspaper correspondents and by them it was made to do duty as a "pastoral."

The bitterness of the election fight in the county was not equalled by the intensity of a scene that occurred on the train that brought to the city Sir Charles Tupper and many of his principal workers, as well as the principal speakers on the liberal side. One of the latter was a prominent member of the local legislature on the government side. This gentleman made a remark which was considered by a conservative member of the local house to be an insult to Sir Charles. In an instant the liberal politician found his throat in the iron grasp of the conservative representative, and had it not been that friends intervened the chances are that one of the antagonists would have received facial disfigurement permanent enough to remain till the general elections came round. As it was the "scrap" ended with that vice-like grasp, and many angry looks.

Still another echo is the news of the refusal of the North British society to allow their paper Major, Mr. Masson, to go to Cape Breton to furnish music for one of the parties. The society held that one of its paid officials could not be permitted to take part in a partisan conflict.

MORTON HARRISON'S JOY.

He Gives Expression to it at the Revival Services in Halifax.

HALIFAX, Feb. 13.—Evangelists Hunter and Crossley have attracted immense congregations in this city. Ever since they came the largest churches in the city have been inadequate to contain the crowds desirous of obtaining admission. Well on to 1,000 people have expressed a desire to lead a new life, and the churches will soon be reporting additions to their membership. The story told by Mr. Rauthenburg the converted Jewish infidel, is a stirring one. This well-known commercial traveller, who was one of the most pronounced and talented opponents of Christianity, has changed into an earnest champion of the once-despised cause, and his addresses have thrilled thousands of hearers in this city. Rauthenburg was converted in Fredericton.

Morton L. Harrison, of St. John, has been here for some days with the evangelists, assisting in their musical service by playing the violin. He has wonderful power over his instrument. Mr. Harrison also adds to the interest of the meetings by relating his experience and the joy he experiences in his new life. At the academy of music meeting on Sunday afternoon Mr. Harrison spoke of an orchestra of twenty pieces in St. John, every one of the members of which had been converted and who were persevering in the new way. The evangelists are now on their way to Bermuda.

Mayor Robertson's Bridge.

The bridge across the harbor by the way of Navy Island might have been built over thirty years ago, had the people of St. John realized the need of it as much as they do now. The plans were drawn, soundings were taken and a bill for an act incorporating a company went before the legislature. It was thrown out through the influence of a legislative councillor who

was a wharf owner, and had the curious idea that the construction of a bridge would lessen the value of his property. A few years later he saw his mistake, and was then most anxious to have the projector of the bridge renew his application, but it was then too late, and every year since the need of a bridge has been felt more and more.

BEATING THE BOX.

Tricks Tried by Some People who Want to Cheat the Electric Railway.

The other night the sole passenger in an electric car had scarcely taken his seat when the conductor approached, handed him a ten cent piece, and presenting the fare box politely requested the passenger to drop the coin into it. Inquiry disclosed the fact that two persons had just before got out of the car in a hurry and one of them had handed the money to the conductor without waiting for the box. The rules strictly forbid conductors to drop in the money for passengers, and a violation of this rule may result in suspension. In this instance the conductor was bound to be on the safe side, though as there was nobody in the car to notice what he did he could have dropped in the money himself, or have put it in his pocket, if he had been disposed to be dishonest.

Conductors have not only to watch their own course to keep a clean record, but they have to watch the ways of some of the passengers as well. The other day a passenger was found in the act of folding a six-ticket strip in such a way as to make seven tickets out of it, but this was probably an exceptional case. There are others, however, who are found now and then trying petty frauds by giving short change, such as professing to pay for two fares and dropping in only a five-cent piece. The longer a conductor is in the service the better he learns whom to suspect and catch in these tricks. Sometimes they are young men, but more frequently young women. One conductor whose ear is quick to detect the difference between the sound of a five and a ten-cent piece, presented the box to a young man who was with a lady. The youth dropped something into the box and said, "two", but the conductor distinctly heard the sound of a five cent piece. He had partly turned away, but he again presented the box. "I paid my fare," said the youth. "Yes, sir," was the reply, "but you have not yet paid for the lady." The young man looked confused, but hunted up the required coin and exclaimed, "Oh, if you want five cents, I will give it to you."

Another case was that of two girls, one of whom was accustomed to put in the fare for both. She held the coin concealed in her fingers and said "two" when she dropped it. The conductor was morally certain she put in only five cents, and decided to watch her. The next time the two made a trip on his car, she put her hand over the box and said "two", but at that instant the conductor moved the box aside and put out his hand to find that the coin was only five cents, as he had suspected.

People who think they are beating the railway overlook the fact that they are beating the conductor. Not only do they make him charge himself with more money than the box will show, but frequent discrepancies between the box and the indicator are apt to act in the nature of black marks against him by giving the impression that he is careless. With a record of this kind he never knows what may happen to him when changes are to be made.

Bicycle Club Minstrels.

These talented performers, assisted by the best vocal talent of the city, will make their third appearance in the Opera house stage on Monday and Tuesday evenings, February 24th and 25th. Their record in the past is substantial evidence that they have plenty of talent which they do not permit to lie undeveloped; and it is stated on the best of authority that the coming productions will not only exceed any of their previous efforts, but will easily discount any amateur show ever given in St. John. Rehearsals have been going on assiduously for nearly two months, and great care has been bestowed upon the music part of the programme, under the efficient leadership of Mr. Ford. Mirth and merriment is promised in plenty during the second part, which will introduce a number of old favorites and also a few new faces. A burlesque, in black, of "Trilby" in which "Nunk Duff" assumes the title role, will complete a bill of fare that must appeal to the taste of young and old alike.

Should Amend the Law.

The law forbidding the sale of partridge in this province but permitting the shooting of them has been a conspicuous farce during the last season. It has had no effect in preserving the game, for the partridge has been shipped to the city from all parts of the country during the entire season, and have met with a ready sale on the sly. Nobody who has wanted to buy such game has had any difficulty, the only difference from the sale in other years being that it was conducted more secretly.