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LABOR AND STEAMERS

THERE IS NO TROUBLE YET AND NONE IS EXPECTED.

The Ship Laborers Limit Their Membership and Say That 500 Men Can do the Work—No Chance for Outsiders—Mr. Burns is on Deck Again.

The winter port business has begun and as yet there has been no trouble among the ship laborers. None is expected by the steamship people but it is doubtful if the winter goes by without a few hitches. The laborers are not thoroughly satisfied that the import labor by-law which the common council is shortly to deal with, will not cause the steamboat manager to break faith with the union and they are taking every means to prevent such a thing occurring.

Under the present arrangement none but union men are to be employed on the steamers and they must receive union wages. If the new by-law comes in operation, by paying \$7.50, a man can become a resident of the S. L. U. could go to work with the members of that body.

The union had already taken the first step toward preventing anything of this kind happening by passing a resolution which provides that no more members will be taken in. The present members claim that this has been done, as there will not be more than enough work for the 500 ship-union laborers now in this city but it is really to prevent non-residents from flocking in and getting employment under the conditions of the new by-law.

The idea is said to have originated in the mind of Secretary Killen, who is determined, if possible, to defeat the end of the Board of trade which first started the import labor reform.

Something has already occurred in connection with the winter work which is not pleasing to the greater majority of the union men and that is the action of Donaldson Line Manager Nairn in appointing Ex-president Burns the line's stevedore for the winter. Burns was unopposed for favoring the proposed new by-law and it is felt that in the event of any trouble he will try to get back at the union by securing imported labor. If he does not do this he will at least have the chance to select what men he wants from the union to work on the Donaldson boat, and it is a certainty then that loathly those who stood by him in the union will get work.

When the import labor by-law comes up for discussion at a meeting which is to be held in the early part of next week there will be more fun in the council chamber than has been seen for some time. Alderman John M. Goldrick and a strong following will oppose the new bill, but just now it looks as if they will be overpowered. It was to have been settled at the meeting last week but was laid over so that Mayor Robertson and Aldermen Daniel and Christie who were in Montreal could place themselves on record in connection with it.

Some members of the council have already come out as opposed to imported labor and there was quite a discussion on that question at a meeting which was held in the City Hall on Wednesday. The question arose at a session of the Harbor Improvements committee and was first brought up by Alderman Smith from the West side. He called the attention of the committee to the fact that several men belonging outside the city had been employed on the work at Sand Point. Complaints had been made to him by citizens that these men were doing work while residents had to walk the streets and he thought the council should take some action at once. It was explained to him that before hiring a man Director Smith always tried to ascertain his place of residence. If he belonged outside the city he was not engaged, but of course the man did not always tell the truth. A number of the members of the committee spoke against the system of employing outside labor and to settle the question Director Smith's staunch friend Ald. Christie, who presided over the board of works, promised to order him to dismiss at once all non-residents of work at Sand Point. As a result of this four countrymen were given notice to quit on Thursday. There are several there yet but their names will doubtless be handed to the director and they too will have to go.

THEY WERE NOT RATE PAYERS.

And as a Consequence They are Now Seeking Employment Elsewhere.

The members of the city council have now a new matter to cope with and their attention has withdrawn from the vexed questions of pile driving, crib wharves, bottom strata, dredging and other uninteresting but necessary topics and turned to matters they in all probability know more about. This new topic has furnished every alderman something to think about.

The most economic of the aldermen need not now bewail the fact, that the city is "going it blind, and will surely strike trouble," for

the trouble is here in all its threatening entirety. A few days ago one of the aldermen who resides at West end made the discovery that the city had committed a heinous crime and that every alderman was an accomplice thereto.

In their hurry and haste to get the West End wharves done in time they had actually hired four men who were not rate payers. Three of these men came from Westfield while the fourth claimed the primeval forests of the Oromocto region as his birth place.

The alderman who made this astounding discovery at once communicated the news to his colleagues at a meeting a few hours afterwards and to say they were surprised would be putting it mildly.

The aldermen appeared before the meeting and in almost frenzied indignation said he wanted the first men dismissed. He held that no one not a duly certified rate payer should be employed on city works. This brought another civic fighter to his feet who said "I sent a man over to Sand Point a few days ago to get a job and he mustn't be removed." Some one asked if he was a rate payer whereupon that unfortunate person was glowered at by all present. One of the aldermen from West end was on his feet in a minute and was loud in his denunciations of the idea that any one not a ratepayer should hope to get a job on civic works. More discussion followed but before the meeting ended the dreaded fiat had gone forth. Figuratively speaking High Constable Stockford was instructed to sharpen up the axe, that he uses just after civic elections and cut the official heads off the unlucky offenders. Whether the axe was called into play or not is not known but at any rate, the Westfielders and the man from Oromocto are now walking the streets looking for work.

HOW HE EVADED THE CONSTABLE.

He was Wanted for D. B. but Managed to Escape From Justice.

An amusing scene was witnessed at the Union station a few days ago, just before the departure of the C. P. R. A French Canadian peddler with his wife and child were passing through the city en route to Bathurst via Moncton. They had formerly lived in this city but for the last few months had been residing in Boston and it was from the latter place they were coming when the incident occurred. While the pair lived in this city they had contracted several large bills and as is usually the case they forgo to settle up when they departed. One of the creditors was a city grocer who kept a sharp lookout on the couple while they were in Boston and had learned of their intended return to Bathurst. Consequently he had a constable at the depot when the train came in and that worthy was armed with the necessary papers, ready to seize his prey. The peddler, however, suspected trouble so he left the train before it slowed up inside the depot, and walked around the outside of the station house until he reached the baggage room when he entered the car shed. He remained in the background of the crowd that usually assembles in the station house, until just as the train was about to move out. Then he edged his way slowly towards his car. Just as he was mounting the steps the constable saw him and exclaiming "Hi there, I want you!" rushed for the car. The peddler was on the steps by this time however and did not purpose to be taken without making some resistance. When the constable caught him and tried to pull him off he clutched the rail all the harder and managed to retain his grip. All this time the train was moving out of the station at a slow rate of speed and the constable holding his man by the coat tails was gradually moving with it. He was forced to let go however and the peddler got away, but before the bystanders in the station had a good laugh over the funny situation.

WHO IS THE THIEF.

A Hotel Where Guests Should be Careful Where They put Their Money.

HALIFAX, Dec. 3.—The loss of Boyd's money from the safe of one of the hotels in this city a few days ago was an unpleasant affair for the management but particularly so for the man whose ducaats are gone. He had come from his home in Cannes, Cape Breton with \$1,000 to pay bills and buy new stock. The money he handed into the hotel to be deposited in the safe. When he called for his first installment of the cash was all right, but a few days later Boyd was ready to settle up with business men of whom he had purchased, and he asked for his \$800. The shock he sustained can be imagined when the hotel management informed him that the safe had been opened and the money taken. The police were put on the case and did their best, no clue was forthcoming. How the money was removed or who worked the combination of the safe no one has yet found out. Boyd had to leave for home a sadder, poorer and in one sense a no wiser man than when he came to the city.

A couple of months ago \$200 disappeared from the same safe under similar circumstances.

IN DANGER OF COLLAPSE.

HALIFAX CHARITIES THAT ARE IN FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES.

The Seamen's Home is Deeply in Debt and Has no Prospect of Regaining its Former Standing—the W. C. T. U. has Also Fallen Upon Troubled Times.

HALIFAX, Dec. 3.—The Sailors' home and the W. C. T. U. of this city are both most commendable charities. Sad to say both are in dire financial straits. The Sailors' home has issued an appeal setting forth that unless they receive help, very material help, they will have to close their doors. Why is it, that with all the good the Sailors' home has done in Halifax, that it should be so lacking in friends who will put up money for it? Or why is it that an institution such as it is in a great seaport like Halifax should not be self-supporting. One answer is that the steamers, that now, do the ocean carrying of the world, do not stay in port for lengthened periods as the crews of the sailing vessels did in old time and that the revenue from seamen has accordingly been so reduced that the usefulness of the house is gone. But there must be some other reason, which it seems hard to find, why the sailors' home should be so hard up financially. There appears to be nothing wrong with the management, except that it cannot make both ends meet, for now the deficit has run far up into the thousands. There is some unpopularity somewhere. Possibly neighboring merchants, who want to do all the supplying they can to seamen are jealous when they see the home do any business of that kind. This by no means forms a sufficient reason for this inscrutable shortage. A meeting is to be held this (Thursday) evening when a final effort will be made to raise the amount of the indebtedness. If it fails the mortgage will be foreclosed and the Sailors' home become extinct, and many tradesmen will go with unpaid bills. Halifax will have one less charity. Even if the money is raised the home will be continued on a different basis and on a much smaller, different and more appropriate scale.

The W. C. T. U. is another institution which has done a work which should warrant a warm support in certain quarters. But that support appears to be lacking. This union is in a poor line of business now, running a restaurant. The hungry can get a meal just as good and as cheap anywhere else. The bicycle and the tram have rendered people independent of the lunch room in a way they were not at one time. The union should come completely out of the commercial field and out of the politico-temperance field and such lines of effort and keep to more individual work among the poor and the ignorant. These things the union is not altogether neglecting, nor are they forgetful either to feed the hungry, but possibly, if they would quite abandon the theoretical and betake themselves exclusively to the practical, they would find themselves better off in heart and in pocket at the end of the year.

THEIR PROFITABLE OCCUPATION.

St. John Shoplifters and How They Fly Their Dangerous Work.

Captain Jenkins of the police force made an arrest a few days ago that brought one of a peculiar class of criminals into the police court. The arrest in question was that of Mrs. Hannah O'Brien of German street who was arrested on a charge of shoplifting preferred by F. A. Dykeman & Co., Mrs. O'Brien when arrested pleaded entire innocence of the charge but after a sharp cross questioning she admitted that she had some things, but they were given to her by a lady clerk in Mr. Dykeman's employ. When confronted with the clerk however she denied this story, also, and said that the lady was not in the least concerned in the matter. She was sent to jail for a day or two but the charge was finally dropped as Mr. Dykeman did not wish to prosecute.

Mrs. O'Brien was however only one of the many shop lifters operating in the city. Merchants say there has been a great increase in crime of this kind during the past year. They can assign no reason for this but say it is true nevertheless. The manner in which the O'Brien woman and others operated was described by a King street dry goods merchant who on one occasion recently, caught a woman in the act of stealing from his shop. Shop lifters usually work in pairs; one engages the attention of a clerk while the other wanders about the store in an apparently aimless manner. There is however "a method in her madness." It asked by any of the clerks if she is being waited upon she always replies that she is waiting for Mrs. Blank," indicating her companion. Meanwhile she is industriously pocketing everything within reach and often manages to make off with a good many dollars worth.

A few months ago a woman was caught in Waterbury and Rising's, stealing a pair

of boots. When the case came up in court the police officers found great quantities of goods ranging from ostrich feathers and small ornaments, to large pieces of dress-goods and valuable silks, aggregating in value well into the hundreds of dollars.

The arrest of Mrs. O'Brien acts as a reminder to the merchants generally and this with the approach of the busy Christmas season will probably make them use greater vigilance than ever with an idea of stamping out the business.

THREE CENTS COST TEN DOLLARS.

A Postage Stamp that Took a Second Journey and Was Worth Ten Dollars.

A good many people will appreciate the position Mr. J. R. Vanwart found himself in this week all on account of a postage stamp. This particular stamp was not fresh from the press but had seen service and yet borne up so well and with its first experimental journey through her Majesty's mails that when it came to the attention of Mr. Vanwart he was unable to see that it had been disfigured in the slightest degree. The only drawback to this image of Victoria doing service a second time was the lack of an adhesive back. The front of the image was presentable but the back needed such an application of mulligan that when attached again to a letter the sticky substance oozed out all around the sides and caught the eye of one of those curious mail clerks who have at least as much time as salary on their hands. Now this particular mail clerk not taking into account the approach of the forgiving season diverted the course of this postage stamp and instead of sending it to its destination, there perhaps to be stored away and in the misty future to come forth as one of a stamp collectors assortment, he took pity upon the army of unemployed in the dead letter office at Ottawa and sent it there for their close inspection and kind attention. There all possible respect was paid to this poor postage stamp and by the aid of a microscopic eye a portion of a cancellation stamp was discovered upon it. Then it was worth many stamps, if not to the government, at least to that department of justice where the culprit resided who had dared to save three cents at the expense of the dominion government. Then with the label of trouble upon it the stamp was returned to Inspector King of the post office department in New Brunswick and perchance it also accounted for the widespread despatch sent out from Ottawa that an official was coming from the capital to inspect the accounts of the New Brunswick head office. If that was so the inspector got ahead of the fellow who was following the stamp for he laid an information against the man who wrote the letter, Mr. J. R. Vanwart, and nearly scared the wits out of that thrifty groceryman. Mr. Vanwart lost no time in seeing Inspector King and the result was that that obliging official made the journey to the police office and introduced him to Judge Ritchie. He was invited to plead guilty but hesitated. It was quite true that the government had lost three cents and that he had saved it but why should he plead guilty to that fact? So the first interview was of no moment and Mr. Vanwart went away again. He came back however and when invited again by the P. M. to plead guilty he thought it would be better to do so than face a crowd in a court and run the chance of being found guilty. So he said he was guilty and was fined ten. He paid it and calculated as he felt how long he would be dead before the interest of the three cents he saved would amount to ten dollars. Then when he found that even the newspapers interested themselves in the journey of that postage stamp he remembered that he had not been imprisoned, that he was not a common culprit but had "owned up" and paid up too and that in consideration of these facts it was inconsiderate of the magistrate and the P. O. inspector to divulge the facts. Poor Mr. Vanwart! And then to remind the public of what he had done and that he had ill used that postage stamp he put a letter in all the newspapers to the effect that "he did not mean to."

Great Reduction in Books.

A visit to the store of D. McArthur Bookseller, 90 King street, will convince the most skeptical that from 25 to 50 per cent, can be saved on books, fancy goods, dolls, mechanical toys, games, albums, bibles and miscellaneous books of all kinds. Mr. McArthur has purchased large quantities of all of the above lines at lowest cash prices, and is offering great values on all lines of new goods. All of last year's stock carried over will be sold at about half the regular price. Padded leather poets 99 cents each, cloth bound books from 15c each to \$3.00, dolls, \$1.50 to \$2.00 each. There is also a large line of silver novelties, necktie cases, dressing cases, work boxes, writing desks, Japanese novelties, glove and handkerchief boxes, as well as vases and other goods too numerous to mention. Show room up stairs.

AN HOUR WITH ALBANI.

THE FAMOUS SINGER TALKS ABOUT MANY THINGS OF INTEREST.

She Shows Her "Treasures" to "Progress" Among Them Portraits of Her Majesty and Emperor William—The Portrait of the boy who Loves "Mamma's Singing."

"Madame Albani is very busy but she will see you for a few moments," was the message brought to a member of PROGRESS staff whose card had been sent to the apartments of the Canadian "Queen of Song" last Saturday afternoon; and a moment later the visitor was being graciously welcomed by Albani herself, in spite of the fact that very many ladies and gentlemen had already called on her before during the day.

On the stage Albani gives no hint of her nationality, but the fact is quite patent when Madame grows enthusiastic as she did once or twice over some subject under discussion. The expressive French gesture, and the charming French accent are then brought strongly into play; and watching and listening to her it is quite easy to understand the fascination she exercises over all who are brought into contact with her.

When the visitor expressed regret that the prima donna should have encountered disagreeable weather during her visit to St. John, and ventured to hope that it would not give her an unfavorable impression of the city, Madame said that she had "hoped to see something of St. John," and not knowing, of course, that she was treading upon delicate ground incidentally remarked "upon both my visits to Halifax, I have fortunately had the most delightfully bright weather—not a sign of fog anywhere," and—"Ah, but Madame!" laughingly expostulated PROGRESS "you must not hint anything of that sort in St. John. Here we have an especial brand of weather that is considered quite superior to anything in that line on the market."

"Oh, I assure you I meant nothing by that remark" was the prima donna's reply. "and indeed I like the fog; having spent so much of my life in London I feel quite at home in a mist. It never affects my voice or spirits in the least."

"You were present at the concert?" questioned Madame Albani when some passing reference had been made to the great event of the week; "Do you not think the house looked exceedingly bright and pretty?"

Upon being assured that the audience had paid her a compliment in the way of elaborate dressing Madame continued, "I thought the house looked very charming; but of course it was impossible for me to know whether the pretty gowns were in my honor or not. Oh yes, the scene from the stage was very bright but are St. John audiences always so reserved?"

When it was explained to her that the average St. John audience rarely unbends from its dignity long enough to indulge in applause, even where applause is due, Madame was distinctly relieved.

During the call the great cantatrice related many incidents in her eventful career and graphically described a scene in a St. Petersburg theatre when she had been recalled twenty four times. Albani grows very enthusiastic when she refers to the deep interest which the Queen has ever taken in her and among what the famous singer calls her "most precious treasures" are several autograph photos of Her Majesty.

"This picture" said Madame passing to her a cabinet photo in a massive silver frame, "is the one I like best. It is the Queen and the Princess Margaret of Connaught, I always carry it with me and it is among the first of my possessions unpacked," and as she replaced the picture, upon the table Albani murmured as it to herself "Yes she is a very dear friend." Then selecting a folding frame containing two photographs, from among a number of others on the table, and with a new light shining in her sympathetic eyes, held it out to her interested guest for inspection. This time it was not the famous singer exhibiting a memento of royal or queenly favor, but simply a mother with a world of mother love and maternal pride in every feature, showing the portrait of her only child—a bright noble looking lad of sixteen years, with his mother's face; and of this perfect resemblance Albani is very proud. "Isn't he a darling?" she pathetically remarked. "He is in Germany now, studying for the foreign office and in three years more he will have his examinations. I grow very homesick sometimes for a sight of his face, but I have to content myself by sending off a cable just to ask how he is getting along. Musical? Oh no, not at all, but he has always loved 'mamma's singing.' The picture on the other side is of my brother, a priest in Quebec." This portrait too brought out so many interesting reminiscences that the best part of an hour had fled ere the visitor remembering, with an uneasy conscience the "few moments" stipulated rose to say good bye.

"But you must not go yet," said the kindly entertainer "I have not shown you half my souvenirs. Do stay a little longer. You did not notice any particular one of my

bracelets last night I presume and I want to show you this one given me by the emperor William. It has his miniature set in diamonds and sapphires; and his remark as he presented it to me was 'Madame, a photograph might fade but this, never.' A pretty thought wasn't it?"

The songstress was evidently in a reminiscent mood and every photograph or souvenir, whether of the tiniest English royalty, or the Czar of all the Russias, recalled some interesting anecdote, told in Madame's own fascinating way.

Of her social life Albani remarked "I have very little time for social gaieties for my life is an essentially busy one. In Halifax we were feted, but at the last I was obliged to decline many invitations. I presume the public have an idea that the life of a public singer is one long round of sunshine and triumphs, but indeed we all have our troubles and our dark days; people as a rule are not interested in our private life; they only see us in the dazzling glare of the footlights; and, after all it is the artist they care for not the woman."

As the visitor finally rose to leave Albani in her gracious way selected one, of what is considered her best photographs and remarked "you will let me give you this as a memento of a very pleasant hour—perhaps you will appreciate it more if I sign it" and as the visitor looked down at the still damp signature "E. Albani-Gye" the only words which would come in reply were the ones Albani had uttered a moment before "Madame, a photograph may fade—but the memory of this interview, never."

HELD AGAINST ALL COMERS.

The Police Magistrate and His Seats at the Albani Concert.

A curious example of the helplessness of the law against the law has come to PROGRESS' attention this week and of all places to occur in—the opera house on the evening of the Albani Concert. Everybody knows the seats were all taken and in some way, the idea having got abroad that the upper gallery was unreserved and that there it was a case of first come first served, a number of people less proud than their fellow men, or more easily satisfied, did not bother their heads about seats but took their chances in the gallery. Among them was the police magistrate and a friend and as they went early they secured seats that were perfectly satisfactory to them. Perhaps they did not notice the little tickets on the back that indicated something and certainly it did not enter their heads that they had chosen seats reserved and sold to two other people. In common with many people they thought no doubt that the gallery was unreserved.

But it was not, and a dollar only gave one the privilege of rubbing his nice new coat against the dirty wall of the opera house. Still when the owners of the two seats in question arrived at a somewhat tardy hour they found them occupied and impossible to persuade the occupants that they had not a perfect right to them. Perhaps it was too much to expect the judge of the city court to face an audience and retire from his post upon such an occasion. At any rate Manager Harris, when appealed to referred the owners of the seats to Constable Beckett, who in a bran new suit and an impressive smile was doing duty upon the occasion. Sending something to his liking in the air Constable Beckett accompanied the plaintiff, working his muscles up on the route. Where was the culprit who dared violate the sanctity of another's seat? And when he was pointed out and the constable saw before him the chief of his court of justice, he buttoned up his coat, cast a glance of mute helplessness at the plaintiff and begged to be excused. So the magistrate held the tort—or rather the seats—and the former owners of them were conducted to seats near the stage where they were nearer at least to the performers.

THE CROOK GOT FIVE DOLLARS.

A Clear Case Where it Did Not Pay to be Obliging to a Ciller.

The ladies in charge of a certain church entertainment which was held this week and which has proved very successful are telling very hurt over the way they were victimized by a member of the shady set, commonly called a crook. While the entertainment was in progress a man put in an appearance at the door and asked the young ladies who were selling tickets if they could change \$5. Anxious to be courteous to all visitors and not knowing who their questioner was they at once replied in the affirmative. A ragged \$5 bill was produced and paid over and the man got his change. One of the ladies objected to taking the bill in its mutilated condition so the takir said, "Well give it back to me, I see Mr.—over there and I'll get him to give me another one for it, if he cannot give me the small change." He took the \$5 bill back and with the money he had received as change in his pocket he walked out before the ladies could stop him or raise any alarm. They ran to the church door but he was not to be seen and though some of the gentlemen in connection with the church made a lengthy search, their efforts were fruitless as he had made good his escape. The church people are on the \$5 change how ever and the young ladies who presided at the door have made a solemn vow not to trust strangers in future.