

ST. JOHN, N. B., SATURDAY, MARCH 6, 1897.

WANT SUNDAY TRAFFIC.

MR. STRANGE THINKS THE SUNDAY CAR SERVICE A BLESSING

To Those who Have to go to Church Through Snow and Slush—Delicate Women and Little Children Would be Spared Much Suffering.

MONCTON, Mar. 2.—Why can't we have the street cars on Sunday, as well as week days? I am fully alive to the fact that this question has been asked before, if not in Moncton, at least in cities quite as large and as important—notably in Toronto, and up to the time of going to press, no satisfactory answer had been obtained to the query. But I am simply asking for information in a spirit of childlike receptivity, and if someone will give me a reasonable answer I will not only be grateful but will promise not to be mad at him, even if the said answer should not agree with my own opinions on the subject. I cannot see what earthly argument can be brought forward against the running of street cars on Sunday, while there are scores of excellent reasons in favor of the practice? Were they horse cars the case would be very different, and no one would be more opposed to a Sunday service than I, but the motive power is electricity, and all days are alike to that powerful agent which never needs a rest, and only on rare occasions goes out on strike. No humane scruples can be called into the question. The conductors and motormen work in two shifts a day, each shift of about eight hours, therefore it cannot be argued that running the cars on Sunday would overwork them, besides which the men themselves are perfectly willing to make the change, considering that the increase in revenue will fully compensate them for the extra work. Eight hours each day, spent in hard manual labor is quite sufficient for the average man, and it leaves him greatly in need of his Sunday rest at the end of the week; but the work of the conductors and even the motormen on the street railway, while monotonous and tedious in the extreme, is not by any means hard; beside the daily work of an ordinary grocer's clerk, it is almost play, and one shift more in the week could make little difference to them. Where the religious scruples come in it is equally difficult to understand, except on the general principle that religious people are more bigotted than others, and less amenable to reason. The chief use to which the cars would be put on Sunday would be that of conveying people to church and Sunday school, and to those living in the suburbs they would prove an inestimable blessing, sparing delicate women and little children many a long walk through slush and snow, many a suicidal hour spent sitting with wet feet, and skirts, and many a severe cold caught in consequence.

I never could understand why people were supposed to do things in the name of religion which their sober common sense would revolt from if they were asked to do them for any other reason. The woman who was invited to tramp a good mile through a blinding snow storm, and with light snow six inches deep to wade through, breaking her own track all the way—to attend a matinee would absolutely refuse to place her life in jeopardy by any such mad act, sensibly averring that it was not the storm or the walk she dreaded, but the two hours spent sitting in wet skirts and ankles. If there was no street car available and she could not afford a cab, she would give up the entertainment and dismiss it from her mind without a second thought.

But because she is going to church, instead of to a matinee that same woman feels perfectly justified in violating the laws of health, and deliberately exposing herself to danger. It is only within the last year or two that the snow plow has gone out on Sunday, and before that people used to plow their way contentedly to church, sometimes through nearly a foot of snow, arriving at their several places of worship in a condition most favorable to pneumonia and giving their wet garments every opportunity of drying on them and thereby increasing the risk. I have seen little children going in to Sunday school with their long overstockings so coated with snow that their original color was a matter of speculation, and of course it would never occur to a child that the snow should be brushed off, therefore the little creatures sit in a warm building until the snow melts, soaking them to the skin. Going home they get chilled, catch a violent cold,

and their mothers think the school room must be either badly heated or drafty, otherwise their children could not catch such dreadful colds.

A Sunday car service would obviate all this to a great extent because, though, the cars do not run directly past any but one of the city churches, they go within a block of all the others, and would be of immense service to the church going public. It would not be necessary to have the cars running all day, if they were put on at ten o'clock in the morning to run until two in the afternoon and again from half past five until nine, the shift would be less than eight hours and the church and Sunday school goes fairly well provided for. None, even the most strict Sabbatharians, would think of objecting to the sexton of their church attending to his duties on Sunday though it is in many respects his hardest day; and I have yet to hear of the congregation who are so careful of their spiritual guide that they are at all troubled by his taking the Sabbath as his working day, and slaving away from morning until late in the evening, when he is almost tired to sleep. Of course I know that the clergyman, is occupied in doing his Master's work, but it is hard work all the same, and it occupies nearly the whole of Sunday. The Sunday car service would be quite as much in the line of pious work, as that of the church sexton, since both would be ministering to the needs of christian and church going people, the one quite as much as the other, only the sexton works hardest.

There is another aspect to the subject also. The street railway is not proving by any means the paying investment that it was hoped it would be, and since some of the worst storms of this season have been on Sunday the increase of business which would be likely to result from the new departure, should largely increase the financial return of an enterprise which the citizens of Moncton could ill afford to dispense with now, but which would surely have to be discontinued if it were proved to be running at a loss to the promoters.

GEORGE CUTHBERT STRANGE.

ABE TURNING TO STONE.

The Story of two Sisters who are Slowly Petrifying.

In a pretty little cottage in Fox street, in Rome N. Y., live two sisters—Mrs. Emma Palmer and Miss Stella Ewing. Both are beautiful women, both are totally blind and both are slowly dying of a frightful disease. They are literally turning to stone.

For nearly a quarter of a century one of these women has watched the coming of spring conscious of the fact that each day was binding her more firmly in the chains of a living death. Her sister for nearly half that time has been her companion in misery. The physicians who during the past few years have attended them say that medical history does not offer a parallel of this wonderful dual case of ossification.

Dr. Thomas M. Flandrau of Rome, an authority on like diseases, says the peculiar malady from which Mrs. Emma Palmer and her sister, Miss Stella Ewing are suffering is chronic rheumatism of the joints, which gradually results in ossification and utter helplessness of the patient. Dr. Flandrau says their blindness is the result of rheumatic inflammation of the eyes. Yet both of them may live for years to come, as the ossification, although of deadly certainty, is snail-like in its progress.

This disease, Dr. Flandrau says, is neither contagious nor infectious, and the fact that two sisters are alike afflicted is only a very remarkable coincidence. Dr. H. C. Sutton, another well-known physician of Rome, says the disease is rheumatoid arthritis, the most hopeless of all the forms of rheumatic disease, ossifying in time the whole body, so that it becomes like death. He is inclined to think the case of Miss Ewing, who was the last to be afflicted, was partly the result of nervous sympathy, as it is not inherited, none of their family before them having ever, so far as he could learn, been afflicted in like manner.

Mrs. Palmer, who is now forty, taught in a school at Holland Patent, N. Y., for several years, both before and after her marriage. Miss Ewing, who is about thirty was a trained nurse at the State Hospital in Utica. She was engaged to be married

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to one of the hospital physicians, but her illness which began nine years ago, made it necessary to postpone the wedding from time to time, and at last Miss Ewing broke the engagement.

I saw these patient gentlewomen in their little cottage, writes a correspondent of the New York world. I shrank from the ordeal, but nerved myself for the shock. I had heard so much of the dreadful appearance of these women from those who had never seen them that I was prepared to encounter a gruesome spectacle. A maid-of-all work showed me into the parlor, where, on a raised stretcher, lay a motionless figure, covered in such a manner that it looked like a corpse. For a moment I was unspeakably shocked, for I thought one of those I had come to see was dead. Soon a sweet voice from the depths of what looked like a winding sheet said:

'Did some one come in? And will, whoever it is, come here to speak to me? You see I am not able to be polite as I would like to be.'

The maid lifted the veil from the face of the sufferer, and then for the first time I knew she was blind. Strange as it may seem, none of those in Rome who had told me of these women knew they were sightless. They only knew they were ossified.

Mrs. Palmer then told me the story of her affliction.

'Nearly twenty years ago I began to have attacks of rheumatism or of severe pains in my lower limbs, from which I suffered more than tongue can tell. After each recurring attack I found I grew weaker and did not get back to my normal condition. I felt my joints getting stiff. And so, year after year, I found my life one of dire affliction—almost more than I could bear. But do you know God never sends anything to us we are not able to endure? Fifteen years ago my vision began to fail, and for fourteen years I have been blind. I was brought to Rome about seven years ago from Holland Patent because I had a sister living here, and it was deemed better for me to be with her. My poor sister began to be afflicted about nine years ago just as I had been, and now she is here with me, helpless and blind as I am. She lies just to my right in the next room. Go in and see her.'

Stepping through the open door I found Miss Ewing, her pale, wan face and sightless eyes turned toward the ceiling. She was stretched upon the same sort of a couch as that on which Mrs. Palmer lay—something like an operating chair, mounted on three wheels.

Miss Ewing said that although her sister and she could not see each other and could never again clasp each other's hands, yet they were good company for each other and were thankful to be together.

'We are only waiting for the sweet hereafter, she said, 'Which we know will be all the dearer and more blessed for our sufferings here. The one thing we feared above all others was poverty. The thought of being objects of charity was terrible to us. We have managed through our housemaid and others who have been kind enough to help us to sell the household commodities to support ourselves outside of a little money left by our father, our sister, who live here, gave up their share to us. We may live many years. I hope not. But if we do I hope we will not want, and I know we shall not, for God is good.'

Miss Ewing is very pale and shows signs of great suffering, while Mrs. Palmer has a complexion and color which would suggest perfect health. While their limbs are stiff and utterly helpless and their bodies rigid, the flesh of both their faces is soft and pliable.

THE RETIRED BURGLAR.

A Most Uncomfortable Situation for Him and How He Escaped from It.

'At the rear of a farmhouse that I was looking around one night,' said the retired burglar, 'I found an extension containing a single room that appeared to be used as a washroom. I thought if I went in through this extension I should be less likely to wake up the folks in the house, and so I got in at a rear window and started for a door at the other end opening into the main part, which I hoped to find unlocked; but I never really did find out whether it was unlocked or not, for when I had got about half way across the room I stepped through a hole in the floor and dropped into a cistern.'

'I suppose that of all the uncomfortable places a man can get into one of the most uncomfortable is a cistern. It is a very difficult place to get out of, and it may be impossible to get out of it without help. The water in this cistern was just over my head, but I could swim, and the water wasn't very cold. I kept afloat and felt around the walls for something to climb out by. I did find something—the pipe from the pump; but it wasn't of any use to me, for it left the cistern just where the walls began to arch over to form the top. If it had run up under the arch a little it might have helped me to reach the edge of the opening, but it didn't; it started out from the top of the straight wall. It was on the side toward the house, and I suppose this cistern must have been outdoors, and they built the extension over it.'

'I kept paddling all the time to keep my head above water, and every now and then I looked up at the opening I had dropped through. I could make out the outline of it by the starlight in the washroom, and I wished they hadn't left the cover off. And how I did wish I could get my hands on that rim! But the nearest I could get to it was about two feet away. I found that by making a great effort I could reduce that distance to about a foot and a half, but that was all; and it might as well have been a mile and a half.'

Paddling around in the water one of my feet struck my tool bag lying on the bottom where I had dropped it when I first went down. The little bound from that, instead of from the floor of the cistern, which I had touched a few times before, threw my head a little higher out of water than usual, and then I found the satchel

with both feet and stood on it. That gave me the first rest I had had since I dropped into the cistern. It raised me up so that my head was clear of the water down to just below my mouth; and I could keep in that position without very much effort and breathe easily. It was a very great relief.

'Then, of course there was a chance to think things over with some kind of comfort. I had my jimmy in my bag, a useful tool in many ways; and no doubt I could have got out of the cistern by the aid of it; but the work would have been very difficult, and it would probably have taken too long; and as a matter of fact I had already thought of a very much simpler way of getting out. Standing on the bag not only raised my head above the water, but, of course, it raised me just so much nearer the opening at the top of the cistern. If I could get something a little higher still to stand on, a foot higher, or even less than that, I could reach the rim and, of course, the thing to do was to end this bag up and stand on that. This seemed so extremely simple that you may wonder I hadn't thought of it before; but the falling into the cistern had been in the nature of a surprise to me, and I hadn't got around to this idea yet; I would have thought of it in time, even if I hadn't happened to strike the bag with my feet.'

'Well, I balanced myself on the bag as it was until I had got a good rest, and then I bent down in the water and ended the bag up and got one foot on it to hold it, and then I stood on it. Then I found I could reach within six or eight inches of the rim of the cistern. But it was a mighty shaky support; rigid enough in itself, with the bones in it, but not fixed, it was wobbly and of no use unless I could get it right in line with my body when I jumped. But I steadied it up under my feet and tried it up the best I could and made aspring from it. I caught the rim of the cistern with both hands and then I raised myself up and chinned it. Then I got my right elbow up ever onto the floor; and after that it wasn't very long before I had worked myself up over the edge and out, but I didn't try to do any more work that night.'

HONORS TO A DOG.

Here is a paragraph for dog-lovers, and dog-baters, also,—taken from the London Telegraph:

At a meeting in Bolton, town hall, held on Saturday under the mayor's presidency twelve Humane Society's awards for bravery were distributed by Lord Stanley M. P. A unique incident was the presentation by his lordship of a collar and silver medal to a sagacious New Foundland dog, "Princess May." The animal saved the life of a child playmate py snatched it from beneath a tram-car. The incident was declared authentic, and unparalleled of its kind.

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