

# PROGRESS.

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## THE GROCERS OUTING.

TUESDAY'S PICNIC NOT SO SUCCESSFUL AS LAST YEAR'S.

The Weather May Have Interfered With the Attendance—How the Horticultural Society is Likely to be Benefited by This Week's Affairs—Other Matters.

The grocers have held their second picnic, and although a fairly large crowd attended, the success of the outing is yet a matter of doubt. Last year a number of optimistic grocers started the movement and by their untiring efforts the first outing held was a huge success. Much money was paid for attractions such as the McLeod-Sullivan boat race, yatching contests etc; in fact no expense was spared to make the day one not soon to be forgotten. The Isle of Pines, some eighteen or more miles up the river, was selected as the scene of festivities and a more charming spot would have been hard to find. The long sandy beach, shady groves, open fields and rocky heights supplied room for games, nooks for quiet retreat, and bathing facilities. True the steamboat expense was very large owing to the exceptionally long distance yet withal the committee of management after all expenses were paid handed over to the treasurer of the Horticultural association the handsome sum of one hundred dollars towards the new park. By the way one of the avenues out there has been named "Grocers Avenue" in recognition of the last year's picnic committee.

The undertaking of such a gigantic affair as that of last year, the largest ever attempted in the lower provinces, was indeed a daring one on the part of the comparatively small committee of instigators including, Messrs. John W. Vanwart of Vanwart Bros., B. Vanwart of North end, George Magee, of Magee's grocery and Frank Worden. These gentlemen are the fathers of the grocers' picnic movement, a most excellent institution, and although not so actively engaged in this year's outing, aided in carrying out the plans of the very large committee.

The weather had undoubtedly a great deal to do with the attendance at Watter's Landing last Tuesday. The first boat at 8.30 took very few, the 10.30 trip was a good one as was also that of 1.30 p.m. The five o'clock trip did not leave until 7 o'clock and many were disappointed. On the grounds the scenes were kaleidoscopic. All of course was gaiety; children flitting here and there, baseballists "balling", athletes contesting, swings swinging and nine-tenths of the multitude eating. Officer George Baxter the police force pet promenaded the sward and sands, often collaring a mischievous fellow or interfering in a more serious affair. His presence acted like a charm and although a pretty weighty man he had to parade his unlimited heat at a swift gait in order to preserve the peace in every corner of the grounds.

The sail down river by moonlight was perhaps the best feature of the whole show which although considerable expense had been put out upon it was not near the success the outing of '96 was. However considering the differences in steamer rates, outputs for attractions etc., the grocers this year should be able to add another hundred dollars if not more to the funds of the Horticultural Association.

Next year it is to be hoped another and even more successful picnic will be held for the people of St. John as commencing now to number the grocers' outing among the sure things of each summer.

### His Charitable Reports.

HALIFAX, Aug. 19.—The record of drowning accidents in Halifax this summer is unparalleled. Hardly a week passes without an instance of death from drowning. Medical Examiner Finn is kept busy holding his examinations and granting certificates. Some of Dr. Finn's findings reflect credit on his kindness of heart, but occasionally it seems as if he fails to go thoroughly enough into the circumstances of the disasters. It is all very well to speak nothing but good of those who are gone, but on the other hand duty demands, too, that the truth be told even if it is painful. Drink is sometimes the direct or the indirect cause. This is reported to have been notoriously the case in one accident this week, though nothing was said of it in the examiner's report. The law probably does not demand that the medical examiner go back of the fact of death and the immediate cause, but the way some of the

reports read are almost as much a mockery as were the old verdicts of the now defunct coroner's jury. Examiner Finn is a good officer and he has given great satisfaction, but it is impossible not to think that sometimes he does not go far enough in his examinations.

### NOT ALWAYS THE SMALL BOY.

That is the Cause of Mysterious Disappearance of Goods.

The Bay Shore, delightful spot as it is on pleasant days, is not the only place near Saint John that is favored by private picnic parties. Duck Cove and Sand Cove are also popular though the use of a bus is required for comfort and conveyance in regard to the last named place. Each is a lovely spot and each place furnishes ample opportunity of pleasant shade and open beach as may be preferred.

Those who intend to pass the day at either place go well supplied with eatables and the basket picnic is the mode generally adopted for these outings. Until a year or two ago the shore was infested with a lot of urchins who not seldom made free with the contents of the baskets which the owners would wander away from, never doubting their safety. It was often a painful revelation they experienced on their return. The presence of policemen along the shore has put an end to this state of things so far as the small boy is concerned, but many persons yet suffer loss of no trivial character sometimes, as for example, in the case of a private picnic party, each one attending brings something for general use, forks and spoons, cups of unique design, napkins, etc., quite frequently get mixed after the feast is done, and in such a manner that many a lady will miss and even permanently lose silver spoons or forks in a way that certainly appears mysterious.

It is a peculiar fact that such a weakness as kleptomania exists, and when any one who is supposed by social position to be above or who ought to be above such a meanness as petty thieving, is unwilling to aid in search for missing articles at a picnic, it is only reasonable to suppose that they are victims of that serious disease—kleptomania. Only this very week occurred an instance of this kind at a private picnic held near the city. When the ladies were collecting their effects preparatory to going home, one lady discovered that she was minus several silver spoons and forks another had lost similar articles and still others had suffered loss of different things of of more or less value. Upon the loss being mentioned most of the ladies present, but not all of them, searched their baskets to see if by any accident or mistake the articles might have been mislaid, this thorough search did not reveal the missing articles however. It was noticed that one young lady in particular took special pains that her basket should not be re-opened—of course her assertion that her basket contained nothing but what belonged to her would be accepted among the rest as a fact. She must have been very much inconvenienced by her devotion to the care of the basket for the remainder of the evening. Whatever may be said of the wisdom of taking articles of silver to an affair of this kind it would be advisable to make a general search the rule.

### HIS NARROW ESCAPE.

Didn't Know it was a Fugitive he had Threatened to Punish.

Persons on board the train which brought most of those who attended the Sussex races this week back to the city, witnessed a funny incident that illustrates the fact that though a man may have a pretty good opinion of himself and his belongings in time of peace, he sometimes makes himself scarce when war clouds are to be discerned anywhere on the visible horizon.

To many the result of the races had been most disappointing and they sought to revive their drooping spirits in the usual way; while those who had won felt so jubilant that the only satisfactory way to celebrate seems to be in purchasing a Sussex jag, so that victor and vanquished in that respect stood on an equal footing. Many of spectators' followers chagrined and several of arclights happy admirers forgot for a time their sorrows and joys, and when the party boarded the train for the city, many were in a very hilarious condition.

Discussion of the merits of the two horses merged into argument until finally two of the party showed a disposition to settle the question by force. Loud words were quickly

followed by blows and the other occupants of the car were quickly attracted to the scene of the encounter. Among those who tried to restore peace was the owner of one of the horses that had trotted during the afternoon. He threatened all sorts of punishment to the two fighters and it looked as if at one time he was going to administer it himself, when suddenly some friend called out to him not to interfere as one of the contestants was a well known St. John pugilist.

The thoroughly frightened peace maker needed no second warning; but at once fell back into the arms of a friend. He has ever since been congratulating himself upon the narrow escape he had from being done up in real professional style.

### HE GOT GOOD EVIDENCE

Before He Accused His Parishioners of Their Indiscreet Conduct.

HALIFAX, August 19.—The local council of women for Halifax have for some time been agitating for a curfew ordinance under which young girls would be compelled to be at home or under proper escort after a specific early hour at night. Nothing has come of this agitation so far beyond a few resolutions by those women. There is great need of some reformation or of some means to prevent what undoubtedly is an evil in this city as in others. There are girls in Halifax of respectable parentage whose conduct in our streets is far from what it should be, so say the police, and the wide-awake women who are headed by the Countess of Aberdeen, and so evidently thought a clergyman not long ago. At least his conduct would indicate that he thought so. This clergyman resides on Pleasant street. Some one came to him with a story that two girls of his parish were conducting themselves in a manner unbecomingly modest women. They were, he heard, proper subjects for the curfew. But this clergyman was not one of those people who believe all they hear, and he determined to secure all the evidence before he arrived at a conclusion. This was not easily done, but it was successfully done.

The clergyman's information was that his young lady parishioners were in the habit of walking Barrington street and making the acquaintance of self-introduced young men of varying reputations for probity two in particular were the objects of suspicion so he decided to try for himself now matters stood. They knew his appearance quite well, of course, and a disguise was necessary. The clergyman accordingly fixed up his face to look like a dude of the first water. His garb was similarly fixed, and with a cane in his hand he started out in quest of amorous maidens, but with his attention concentrated specially on the two in question. It was not long till he met them; with a smirk he greeted his prey in the orthodox "pick-up" fashion. The guileless or guileful maidens replied to his advances, meeting him fully half way. The cleric in duded garb obtained permission to accompany the girls on a walk and it was a fairly long one. The tenor of the conversation has not transpired, but according to all accounts it was animated and spicy. But everything comes sooner or later to an end, and so did this walk. The home of the girls was reached, good nights were said. Then came the denouncement. The clergyman tore the mask from his face, he threw aside his cloak as it were, and there with his prisoners before him was the Rev. Mr. —. Denials in future would be as useless as trying to walk on the sea. The sermon the clergyman preached there on the doorstep late at night as it was, and with so slim a congregation, was the most impressive ever delivered in the hearing of his auditors. They trembled and shook with a fear they never before experienced, and the pleasures of the clandestine walk with that "sanctified dude" were more than neutralized by the "roast" with which it ended when the mask was removed.

Whether the clergyman enjoyed the walk or the sermon most is a question that has not yet been answered or asked. His conduct might cause some questions among his brethren in the church as to whether or not his conduct was justifiable, but one thing is sure, what he did was preferable to the conduct of those who accept any damaging story regarding their fellows, who are ready to believe the worst. While this is true there may be a little trouble in store for our clergyman who adopted the novel method referred to in securing evidence for and against his parishioners.

## MONARCHS OF THE ROAD

WHERE ELECTRIC CAR MEN FIND LIFE A PLEASANT DREAM.

They Have few Passengers to ask Troublesome Questions—They are Obliging with Ladies—and will Wait While Shopping is Done—a Change Coming.

Moncton, Aug. 20.—There is no disguising the fact any longer, that Moncton's electric street car system is not the success its promoters anticipated, and the wisecracks who shook their heads dolefully, when the enterprise was first suggested and gave it as their opinion that the city was not large enough to support an electric street railway, have found their misgivings fully justified by the result. The street railway is not paying, and if it is not actually losing money, the stockholders are in a better position than the outside public think. It is discouraging sight to see the cars running past, trip after trip, occupied only by the motorman and conductor, and one's heart goes out in sympathy to those two poor souls who must be so utterly weary of each other's exclusive society.

The most attractive fare is sure to pall upon the jaded palate in time, if it is not sufficiently varied; and even the racy epigrams and jovial bon mots of the big motorman from Boston must have grown flat, and unprofitable to the conductor who is condemned to them for a steady diet, and he must pine in secret for a different kind of fare—any kind in fact so long as there is a sufficient variety and quantity to dispel that terrible sense of emptiness which pervades the cars now.

If the conductor pines and longs for more company, what must be the mental condition of the motorman already mentioned. He is a friendly soul, bubbling over with bon hommie, and bon camaraderie, and everything else "bon" and he is always ready to oblige a customer so it is no wonder, that he is a favorite with the patrons of the road who are so few that they all know each other and the officials very well indeed. He will scare a too venturesome boy almost from under the wheels of the car, with a grace that comes from long practice, and in the same breath inquires with truly paternal solicitude which side of the street a lady passenger prefers to alight on. He has been seen cheerfully stop the car for a lady who wanted to stop at a certain shop to collect her parcels and hurry home, the conductor, and he, patiently waiting while she ran into the shop, gathered up her belongings, and rejoined them when they all proceeded happily on their journey. But even this cheerful soul is beginning to show the effects of the life he has been leading for nearly a year. Accustomed to the life and bustle of Boston, where the "standing room only" sign is almost perpetually hung from the rear platform of the electric, and the entire population of the city have contracted a peculiar swaying notion in walking, the result of hours spent daily in hanging from car straps; what wonder that he should be slowly pinning away from loneliness finding it utterly impossible to endure the existence of almost complete seclusion to which he is condemned! For the other motorman, who is younger, and therefore better able to support the strain, besides being more accustomed to a quiet life, there is not so much sympathy, but he and his conductor have an equal opportunity of getting tired of each other's society, and yearning for a change.

Under these circumstances the company have humanely decided to provide the desired change which is to be from dual, to solitary confinement having recently decided to dispense with the services of a conductor altogether and make the motorman do double duty. This will scarcely be a popular move as it insures the unsatisfactory performance of one of the two duties, either the motor, or the passengers must be neglected, for, unless it is possible to lash the crank of the motor in place, as a seaman lashes his wheel, and thus insure the steering of a straight course while the motorman collects the fare, or assists passengers off, as ladies and children often need to be assisted—one man will find his hands over-full. Of course the company have been forced to this decision from motives of economy and it is an unpleasant comment on our lack of progressiveness as citizens, that such an enterprise should be allowed to languish and perhaps actually fail, through lack of support.

The building of the road was a very venturesome performance in the opinion of

many sensible people, as the circuit was a short one, only two and a half miles, and the distances in our city really too short to make the establishment of electric cars a necessity. But now that the road is in operation it would be a terrible reproach to us if we allowed it to fail, and in the event of its proving such a losing investment that it would have to be abandoned, we should miss it more than we are capable of realizing now. It has always seemed that one reason of its own success is the extraordinarily early hour at which the cars make their last run, a quarter past ten o'clock. There seems little reason for starting them out as early as a quarter past six in the morning, and every reason for leaving them on until at least eleven in the evening. The evening is the time people are tired and would rather spend five times five cents, than take a long walk home, but that is just the time they have no choice in the matter. Only a few nights ago the writer formed one of a large and weary party, chiefly American tourists who had stopped off at Moncton to see the famous Peticoodiac horse, and who were standing near the power house waiting for a car to take them up town. It was just ten o'clock when they came up from the wharf, and they had been waiting for his boreship over an hour so they were tired and anxious to get home. Naturally the Americans made inquiries about the car service, and wanted to know how soon a car would be due. The residents of Moncton were eager to uphold the honor of the city and of their new electric railway, so they promised all things, and strained their eyes for an approaching car. After they had employed themselves thus for fifteen solid minutes which seemed more like fifty, they started hopefully to meet the car—which they succeeded in doing, and also in seeing it turn peacefully into the power house for the night, before their longing eyes. The Americans were too polite to say what they thought and the residents said nothing at all but a hasty good night, though they thought a good deal, and the result of their cogitations was the conviction that a company who made so little effort to suit the convenience of the public would scarcely be likely to secure a large share of patronage. There is no lack of courtesy on the part of the employees of the road; in fact they are especially obliging, and anxious to please, but there does seem to be something lacking in a service which takes so little trouble to secure business. A few weeks ago there was a theatrical performance in the opera house, and as it began to rain quite sharply at a quarter to ten o'clock, the audience reasonably expected to find both cars waiting outside when the entertainment was over, feeling sure that instructions would be given to keep them running half an hour later than usual, but they were destined to a bitter disappointment for only an empty and terribly wet street met their sight when they emerged, and there was nothing for it but to walk home through a furious rain-storm. Had the cars been there they would have not only been crowded, but people would gladly have waited for them to make a second trip, and they would without doubt have earned more in that short time, than during the whole day. The same thing has occurred since then, but as the night was fine, it did not matter so much; only it served to illustrate the fact that there is something to be said on the citizens' side as well as that of the company, in the matter of the poor patronage which the railway has received thus far. An extension of the system is proposed, which it is believed will have the effect of largely increasing the business of the road, and it is to be hoped that by that means it will be made to pay as it should.

### WOULDN'T PAY THE BILL.

And the Chinaman Refused to Give Him His Work Till He Did.

Closer than the bonds of unity that knit the many fraternal societies together are the ties which bind St. John's Mongolian population. If one Chinaman is wronged you administer the slap to all of them, nor will they forget these little uncongenialities no matter how far back the incident dates. Only a few days ago an electric car conductor tried his best to enquire an Indian town laundryman out of \$1.42 for "washee" done. He was refused his linen until the bill was paid, consequently the shirts and collars remained with the washermen. Next week the conductor took his bundle to another laundry, the garments were washed and ironed, and when the owner called for them he was asked to pay a certain amount plus \$1.42, the old bill due the other shop. The conductor refused; so now he has to buy new shirts.