

ST. JOHN, N. B., SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 1900.

Liberal Candidates Elected.

Messrs. Blair and Tucker are the Choice of the City and County of St. John.

SMUGGLING DIAMONDS

The Great Trail is From Montreal to New York.

Nearly all the precious stones that are smuggled into this country come by the 'diamond trail,' which leads from Montreal to New York city. It is estimated that in this way \$1,000,000 worth of gems reach this country every year free of duty. The duty on the uncut gems is only 10 per cent, being made low purposely to avoid offering too great a temptation to evasion of payment. Diamonds represent such a highly concentrated form of value, and are concealed so easily, that almost no duty at all would be collected if the tariff were high. Even as it is, the business of smuggling them is sufficiently profitable to employ many sharp-witted persons, who are so clever at it that the government detectives rarely succeed in capturing a contraband consignment of this kind or in securing the conviction of an offender.

The real center of the diamond smuggling industry is in Maiden lane, New York. In that neighborhood is the famous 'jewelry district,' which supplies the trade all over the United States. Diamonds are a staple, not subject to much fluctuation, and ordinarily they are sold pretty 'close'—that is to say on no large margin or profit. Hence it comes about that the saving of the 10 per cent, duty, if it can be evaded, is a matter of no small importance, and the discovery that a dealer is selling large quantities of diamonds at prices under the market always excites a reasonable suspicion that he is importing the stones by the Canada route. Other dealers privately call the attention of the customs authorities to the circumstances and agents of the suspected concern are shadowed painstakingly.

Canada admits gems free of duty, and so there is no difficulty in sending any quantity of diamonds from Europe to Montreal through the mails. It is then a question merely of collecting them at the Montreal postoffice and conveying them to the United States. This cannot be done safely either by mail or by express, because the postal and customs authorities are too actively on the watch, and so it is necessary that some person shall carry them, and here is just where an ingenuity of the highest order is exercised. The border is watched with a vigilance that never sleeps, and inasmuch as the diamonds are always brought through by the regular routes of travel, the smugglers being obliged to pass inspection by the customs officers, it might be supposed that they would frequently be caught. Yet such is by no means the case.

Smuggling of diamonds may be said to have two branches, professional and amateur, the dealers making their illegal importations by way of Canada, because the "diamond trail" is the easy route, while individuals fetch over small quantities of stones, relying upon various methods of concealment more or less ingenious. Women are said by the customs officers to be the best smugglers, usually hiding things about their persons, and a bonnet or a pocket in a corset may contain a fortune in diamonds.

Diamonds have often been concealed in cakes of soap on the voyage across the ocean, and is a record of a maid servant accompanying a wealthy mistress on the trip who slyly robbed a candy box of a chocolate cream drop, and found on biting it that it contained a three carat diamond. A hollow cane belonging to an enterprising speculator is said to have made 12 successful transatlantic journeys, coming back each time with a load of precious stones; but the owner would not trust it for a 13th trip, and so bought a new one. The glass grapes which adorned one woman's hat were found to have valuable gems in them, though it would never have been suspected if she had not betrayed herself by nervousness regarding that article of her apparel, and in another instance several good-sized diamonds were found behind a porous plaster which ornamented a smuggler's chest.

Bustles, when they were in fashion, were favorite hiding places for jewels. Hollow

heels of shoes, bicycle tires, handles of shaving brushes, cork legs, false calves and dolls have been similarly employed. One ingenious person removed the powder from behind the bullets in several revolver

cartridges, putting diamonds in the cavities they made; while another, when being searched on ship board, dropped a small fortune in gems into the water pitcher without being observed, afterwards going

back and recovering them. Less well authenticated is the story of a pet pelican which concealed rubies in its pouch. One woman borrowed the jacket of a steerage passenger; afterward she returned it, but

bought it again from the owner at a high price. It was sewn full of jewels. The Bible of a solemn-visaged and white-whiskered clergyman was found to be hollow and filled with similar contraband merchandise.

One smuggler, with a scheme of his own would take a state-room at Liverpool, tuck a lot of diamonds under the carpets, and leave them there when he got off the ship at New York, after engaging the same room to go back on the next trip. When he went, on saying farewell to his family on board, he put the gems quietly in their hands. Of course, they were not subjected to any search, and so the stones got through all right.

ENCOURAGING THRIFT.

A Western Merchant's Way of Helping His Employees to Lay Up Money.

"I always have confidence in people who save a little money out of their salaries," said a prominent Western merchant, "and I do what I can to encourage habits of thrift. I employ about seventy-five clerks in my establishment, to whom I pay weekly salaries ranging from \$10 to \$40. Naturally enough, more of them get the former than the latter amount, but they are none the less worthy on that account.

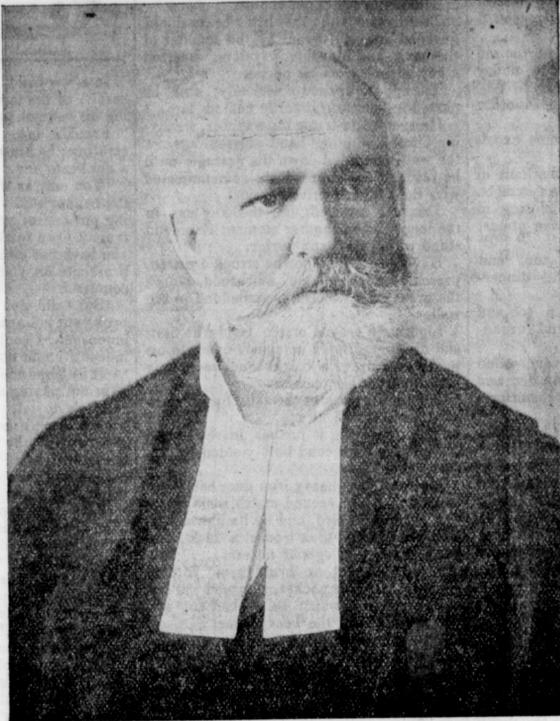
"In the beginning, when I employed only two people, I lived pretty close to them, and I knew how thriftless they could be when they were not encouraged to do otherwise. I have discharged more clerks for that sort of thing than for any other cause. They spent their salaries, large or small as might be, in a reckless fashion, and let debt accumulate quite regardless of the rights of creditors. As my business increased, and with it my profits and my force of people, I began to give the matter more study, and in the end, when I felt able to be of material assistance in encouraging thrift and honesty, I proposed a yearly recognition to those who would save something out of their salaries. It was small at first, but was so successful that today I haven't a clerk who has not some kind of a bank account, and not one who wilfully refuses to pay his debts. When we get a new one who refuses to take advantage of the opportunities afforded we let him go at the end of the first year.

"My present plan is to double the savings of all clerks who receive \$10, \$12 and \$15 a week, to add per cent, to all who receive from \$15 to \$25, and 10 for those over \$25. A clerk on \$15 a week or under cannot save much, but as a rule that class of clerks have no one to maintain but themselves, and if one cannot save more than \$25 out of his years' labor, it is rather pleasant for him to get \$25 clear profit. Those who receive the larger amounts usually have families and their savings are not large, but whatever they are they are comfortably increased. One of my \$1,200 a year clerks, with a wife and two small children, saved \$400 last year, and my check for \$100 additional was deposited to his account the day after New Year. A young woman in charge of a department at \$900 a year has almost paid for a nice little cottage in the suburbs out of her extra, and so the list runs on through every branch of the business. I make it a condition that all our rent obligations must be met at the end of the year, so that the savings are actual net profit. Every year some of the clerks are not entitled to any extra, but if this is the result of sickness I assume a part or all of the doctor's bills. You may say it costs something for me to do this, and I am under no obligation to do it, and you are right. But I have the best class of clerks in the city, and as a result I have the best class of custom in the city, and I guess I don't lose enough by it to necessitate an assignment at an early date," and the merchant smiled with a very confident satisfaction.

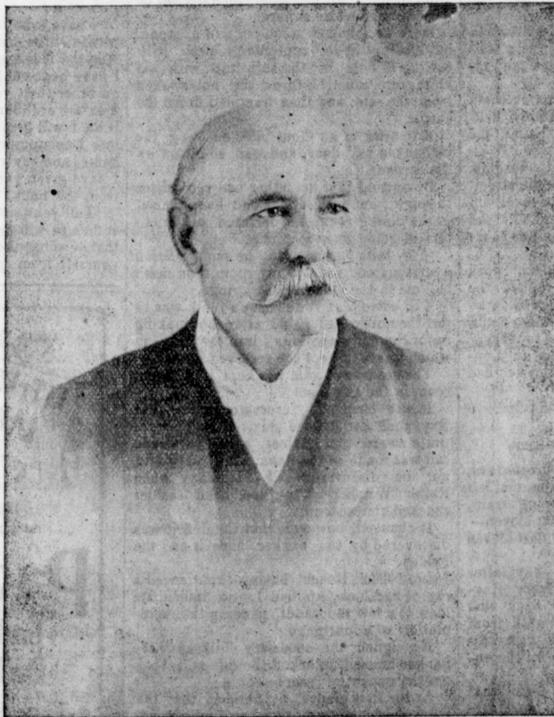
'Why do you say he is such a good actor?'

'He did such good work in the character of a fool that—'

'But that wasn't acting for him.'



HON. ANDREW G. BLAIR, Minister of Railways,
Elected on Wednesday by the Liberal Party for the City of St. John.



COL. JOHN J. TUCKER,
Elected on Wednesday by the Liberal Party for the City of St. John.