

CHAPTER VIII.

Council's First Applications to Government—Brighton Road, Sectional Change to High Street—Town Clerk's Salary Increased—Early Street Lighting, Oil and Gas, 1859—Letter Deliveries—South Park Improvements—Fitzroy Street Tree Planting—First Stone Quarry—Mitford Street Gravel Pits—Genesis of Blessington Gardens—Brighton Road— The Council and the O'Shanassy Government—A Dishonored Promise —Breach of Faith before Parliament—Concerning Tolls and Toll Gate —First Municipal Iron Roller and Street Cleansing-1864, St. Kilda a Borough—Borough Council Election—Free Public Library—Alma Park—Council's Foresight—A Modern Note on Finance, and Street Construction.

THE St. Kilda Council took the necessary steps to have the proclamation, dated June 1st, 1857, under Act 18, Victoria, for promoting public health in populous places, extended to the municipal district of St. Kilda. Through the provisions of that Act the Council became the local Board of Health, and the Council did, on July 29, appoint the following additional committee of the Council, for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of the Act. The new committee had for its members the Chairman of the Council, Councillor Cowderoy, and Councillors Fraser, Hale and Spicer. In connection with this paramount question of the health of the district we note that "the Council has had under its anxious consideration, for some time, the most effective mode of draining the lower lands of the municipality." Land levels were facts the councillors had to recognise, and it is not surprising when the terrain of the district is remembered that the Council, in its report, admitted that "it had not yet been able to surmount all the difficulties by which the question is surrounded." A full survey had been made of St. Kilda, and the district surveyor was completing a plan of his work. In the *Victorian Government Gazette*, of the issue of September 25, 1857, twenty-four of the principal streets of St. Kilda were proclaimed. The work of improving several streets, the report adds, had been let by contract.

The first applications of the newly-formed St. Kilda Council to the Victorian Government, as shown in its first official report, for the half-year ending on March 11, 1857, are not without interest. Two years before the date of the report, responsible Government had been proclaimed by Governor Sir Charles Hotham in Victoria on November 23, 1856. So that, while the St. Kilda Council was in its infancy, the Government to which the St. Kilda Council made application to for various grants, concessions, and permissions, was not so much the elder institution. We note, by the way, that in 1860, when a new street, leading from Barkly Street to Acland Street, was made, the Council named it Hotham Street. The first applications are among the steps that the Council took to set the municipality on a well-administered footing. Such steps, though they were small ones, have proved to have been the forerunners of the greater ones, that succeeding groups of St. Kilda councillors have taken towards the accomplishment of beneficial acts to ensure continued municipal progression. The Council's report thus epitomises its applications, and how they were dealt with:-

1. For making the Great Dandenong Road. Agreed to.
2. To mark out Carriage Roads and Foot Paths. Granted.
3. For information relative to the establishment of Public Baths or Bathing Ships. No information yet given.
4. For formation of Chapel Street to its junction with the Brighton Road. Still under consideration.
5. Calling attention to the dangerous state of the Channel and Foot Paths on part of Brighton Road. Representations attended to.
6. On the subject of the Reserves. Agreed that the Council should be consulted before there is any appropriation.
7. For control of the Land set apart for slaughtering purposes. Granted conditionally.
8. For Grant of Land from which to procure Stone for the use of the municipality. A site on the banks of the Yarra granted.
9. For a Piece of Land as a Manure Depot. Granted.
10. For the establishment of a Public Pound. Under consideration.

11. For Grant of the Land, North of the Police Reserve, and betwixt the Brighton and Punt Roads. Not complied with.
12. For a Grant for the formation of Peel Street. £50 agreed to be given.
13. For the "Government Gazette." Agreed to be regularly supplied.
14. For permission to enclose the Custom House Reserve. Agreed conditionally, and the work about to be done, the neighbouring owners contributing £100 towards the expense.
15. For Grant of a Piece of Land for an Abattoir. Granted since the expiry of the half year.
16. For Control of the Town Herdsman and information as to his privileges. Not yet obtained.
17. For Appropriation of an Additional Reserve from which to take Sand. Granted.
18. To Withdraw Licenses given for taking Loam from Great Dandenong Road Reserve. Complied with. And a variety of minor and collateral questions were submitted to Government.

We gather from the applications that the "Great Dandenong Road" must have been, in the year 1857, not far removed from the state of nature. Many trees were still awaiting to be cut down, and grubbed. Its condition more nearly approached a broad bush track than a main boundary road of a growing town. When the winter rains fell there was a surplus of surface water that, draining along the levels, which sloped to the west, cut irregular and often deep channels in the old road, originally intended for the use of drovers and herdsman, travelling sheep, and cattle to and from Dandenong, the town of entry, from the east, to the fattening pastures of Gippsland. A most important understanding between the Government and the Council, was the one on the subject of Reserves, and the obtaining of a promise that the Council should be consulted before there was any appropriation of Crown lands that abutted on or were within the municipality of St. Kilda. Experience was to teach the Council the wisdom of not putting its faith in princes, that is

Governments, since their component parts changed, and men, or ministers, arose, who did not always honor their predecessors' promises.

Other applications of the St. Kilda Council to the Government were for land for municipal storage purposes, between the St. Kilda railway terminus in Fitzroy Street, and the bay. The Council asked for the improvement, and repair, of Brighton Road, proclaimed as the High Street of St. Kilda, or for a grant for that purpose out of the surplus tolls collected on that road. At the time, the Council reported that no answer had been returned. The note makes it clear that the name "Brighton Road" was one in general use for the whole of the road. Even after the hill portion of the road had been proclaimed High Street, the force of constant usage kept the name Brighton Road for the newly-named High Street still alive, even in the Council's own reports. In the case of Chapel Street, the Government refused the Council's wish "for the formation of Chapel Street, St. Kilda, as a continuation of the main road from Collingwood and Richmond through Prahran to Brighton."

On August 9, 1857, the St. Kilda Council resolved to increase the salary of its first town clerk, William Goldie, from the commencement of the second municipal half year, by the sum of £50, bringing his salary up to £300 per annum. For some reason, unknown, he resigned the position of town clerk. On August 26, the Council placed David Prophet, in the office of town clerk, at a salary of £300 per year. A record was made of the satisfactory way in which Mr. Goldie had attended to his duties.

By March, 1858, the Council had erected lamp posts in the most frequented streets. and those streets were lighted at the points most conspicuous. The Council was, at the same date, having other lamps placed where most needed. A new set of lanterns having been made, the old city lanterns were removed from the lamp posts, and the new ones fixed in their places. The new lanterns were found "to act most efficiently." There were 34 of them. The "old city lanterns" were the first lanterns used in St. Kilda. They were a legacy from the days when the village of St. Kilda was within the jurisdiction of the Melbourne City Corporation. In the year 1859, the Council made arrangements with the Melbourne Gas Company to light 28 lamps by gas in St. Kilda. We are informed by the Council's contemporary

report, that the remaining ten lamps of the municipality, were out of the reach of the company's mains, and that those lamps were still lighted by oil. Thus the report discloses, that, in September, 1859, St. Kilda, at night, had its streets illuminated by gas, and oil, burnt in 38 lamps.

We interlope a current news note here taken from the Prahran and St. Kilda Advertiser, date July 8, 1857. The editor says :—"We are happy to be able to announce that arrangements have been made by the Post Master General to give a partial letter carriers delivery to the districts of St. Kilda, Prahran and South Yarra. We say partially, because we believe it is only contemplated to deliver on the west of Chapel Street." The General Post Office authorities informed the Prahran Council on July 6, 1857, that "each place, Prahran, and St. Kilda, and South Yarra were to have one letter carrier, and that he would have to deliver letters in South Melbourne."

Through the medium of its half yearly report of civic progress, issued in March, 1858, the Council informed the ratepayers that it had the satisfaction of *saying* that since the improvement in the delivery of letters, during the former half year, considerable advantageous alterations were made in the immediate past year. Letters were despatched to Melbourne twice a day, and twice a day a return mail was received. Instead of letters being sent out for delivery at eleven o'clock as was formerly the case, they were taken out by the letter carriers at eight o'clock in the morning. Receiving boxes, for letters, had been placed in convenient places in St. Kilda.

In the same year, 1858, the St. Kilda Council was able, with satisfaction, to report that the Melbourne to St. Kilda Railway Company had withdrawn its works that had encroached upon Fitzroy Street, and that the street was now left with the width of two chains. The Government had enclosed the South Park with a fence, and the road line of Fitzroy Street was clearly defined. The roadway no longer merged into the park land. The Government had "erected gates at the permanent entrances, making this street, Fitzroy Street, (the leading entrance to the Esplanade from Melbourne) the most capacious street in St. Kilda." At that time the Esplanade had been fenced on the crown of the slope "with a suitable post, rail, and chain fence. The slopes of the Esplanade had been planted with shrubs, and sown with grass and other seeds."

The planting committee of the St. Kilda Council consisted of Councillors Cowderoy, Sykes, and Ford. In their work they consulted Dr. Ferdinand Mueller, afterwards Baron Von Mueller, the Government Botanist. Dr. Mueller supplied the Council with young gum trees. As the years passed, the great worth of Baron Von Mueller, as a botanist, was recognised throughout the world of science. He was a lovable old man, and he delighted on local social occasions to pay court to the mayors, and mayoresses of St. Kilda, and to attend mayoral balls, wearing all his orders and ribbons. They blazed on his dress coat, in such a way that, the magnificence of the "dear old Baron" made a marked impression, much to the delight of the baron, for his orders of merit came next in his mind to the orders of botany that he had fathered in Australian flora. It was the baron who advised the Council to plant marrum grass on the west beach to arrest the sand from drifting. In April, 1861, the doctor wrote to the St. Kilda Council with regard to fencing the South Park for the reception of a herd of fallow deer. The letter was referred to the consideration of a sub-committee, but nothing came of the proposal.

Fitzroy Street, from the railway station at Grey Street, the Council's report of the year 1858 states, has been as far as the Junction, and thence down the St. Kilda Road, to the crossing of the Brighton and St. Kilda railway, planted with trees, and shrubs. Tree guards to the number of 122 had been used. While the St. Kilda Council paid tribute to beauty in the shape of street planting, it did not fail to inform the ratepayers that it was giving "anxious consideration" to the further improvement of the streets, and the effectual drainage of low-lying lands. The Council had decided to open a quarry at Stoney Creek to obtain the necessary stone for channelling, and metalling the roadways. The quarry situated on the river Yarra was granted to the Council by the Government. Small sailing craft brought the stone to St. Kilda. At the time the Council issued its report "a considerable quantity of stone had already been quarried." The stone was "about to be worked up for pitching, channelling, and for road metal. A portion of the main drain had been constructed, and bridged crossings had been placed over Barkly, and Acland Streets. A substantial bridged crossing was about to be constructed by the Government Road Board in High Street (Brighton Road)."

It is interesting to note in the Council's fifth half yearly report, dated September 10, 1859, a reference to gravel pits in Mitford Street, and also to tree stumps, awaiting grubbing out in Southey Street. The Council used bluestone metal, and also red sandstone, and gravel, for the upkeep and repairing of its streets and roads. Brighton municipality was articulated with red roads of sandstone formation. The memory of them was often revived by early residents of Brighton, but red sandstone roads were also to be found in St. Kilda, and they have also been mentioned as a highway feature of early St. Kilda. The last surviving road of that color was the road through Albert Park. When Blessington Street was formed, in the year 1861, the Council found beneath its surface a bed of red gravel. This gravel pit yielded more than 700 cubic yards of gravel that was used in metalling Patterson Street, Alma Street east, continuation, Inkerman Street east, Dickens Street across the Elwood Swamp, and part of Neptune Street. The whole of the gravel, within the reserve, between Blessington and Dickens Streets, and contained in 16 acres of land, was dug out. By having that work done the Council won 2,000 cubic yards of gravel for use on the St. Kilda roads. The excavations left by the removal of such large quantities of gravel were used as dumping holes for the town's rubbish. The Council applied to the Government to be allowed to take red gravel from the Red Bluff. The Council was told, in reply, that the Government certainly would not consent to have gravel removed from the top of the Red Bluff, the favourite picnic ground for seaside holiday makers, but the Government had no objection to gravel being taken, by the Council, from the base of the cliff.

One report, dated 1859, states further that "the Council has continued its labors as follow :—The pits in Mitford Street have been levelled, Southey Street cleared of stumps, 200 yards blue metal bought and spread for repairs. Several notice boards and two new lamps have been erected, and nine crossings have been pitched. It being considered necessary to protect the property in High Street, the Council have purchased the land in Carlisle Street east of Messrs. Edmonds, Martin and others, through which they have constructed an open drain 31 chains long as an auxiliary to the main open drain, together with the bridge over the same under Carlisle Street east, and

by this means they have entirely relieved the High Street from all the storm waters flowing from Caulfield and the south-eastwards." Acland Street was metalled with blue stone and other streets were "blanketed" with *red* metal.

At the St. Kilda Council meeting held on September 28, 1859, a motion was carried, affirming "the desirability of the reserve, bounded by Tennyson, Blessington, and Dickens Streets, in the neighbourhood of the swamp, being granted by the Government, for the purpose of a Botanical Garden, and that the proper steps be at once taken to procure the necessary conveyance." The motion brought forward by Councillor Tullett, and seconded by Councillor McNaughton, met with the warmest support from the chairman, the Hon. Alexander Fraser, M.L.C. Councillor Hale was the only councillor who did not approve of the proposed site for the gardens He expressed the opinion that some of the land east of the Brighton Road, and below the Greyhound Hotel would be more suitable.

The Council enclosed the Blessington Street land with a substantial picket fence, six feet in height, and then made the announcement to the residents, that it was proposed to form the land into a "public gardens, and promenade." Designs for the gardens, and promenade, were announced. The premium for the accepted design was fixed at M.O. The design of Mr. Gloystein was adjudged the most suitable one in the contest, and he was paid the £10. The lines of the walks, and flower beds were "trenched out agreeably with the design, and a nursery commenced, in the gardens ready for the next season's planting." In September, 1861, the half yearly report of the Council informed the residents of St. Kilda, that "a considerable proportion of the walks, and paths in the Public Gardens have been formed and gravelled, and the beds laid out, and several hundred plants and shrubs, principally contributed by the Botanical Gardens, and also by private gentlemen, have been planted, and a gardener is now kept at work, the Government having contributed £100 as a grant in aid. The slopes of the Esplanade have been trenched, and soiled, in various places where the rock protruded, and a great number of plants, and trees, planted, and seeds sown on same." "A gardener (September, 1862) has been kept constantly at work in the Public Gardens, which are now in good order, and attract a

great many visitors." In the year 1869 the fencing of Alma Street Reserve, Fitzroy Street Reserve, and Barkly Street Reserve, was completed. Upwards of 2,500 trees were planted in the reserves, in Alma Street, Barkly Street, Fitzroy Street, in the public gardens, on the Esplanade, and along the St. Kilda Road. The trees selected for the purpose were pittosporum, pines, cypresses, and tamarisk. According to the report, all the reserves in St. Kilda were in "very good order, and condition."

The St. Kilda Council was sitting on Monday, March 24, 1873. Present: The Mayor, Councillor W. G. Murray, and Councillors McNaughton, Tullett, Lord, Crouch, Simpson, Connibere, Johnston, and McIntyre. The planting committee's report was under consideration. A clause in the report stated that in the event of the Council agreeing to carry out the planting recommendation, in this report, the committee suggest that the corporation of the City of Melbourne be requested to continue the planting on the west side of the St. Kilda Road, on the same plan, herein recommended from our boundary to the River Yarra, and then there would be an approach to the City of Melbourne, from the south, which, for magnificence and beauty, might in time, vie with the world-famed avenues, which adorn many of the capitals of Europe."

The St. Kilda Council therefore can claim to be perhaps the first public body, we know of no other, that had vision clear enough to see the possibilities of beautifying St. Kilda Road, that the highway should be one of the finest boulevards in the world. These municipal records, dusty and forgotten, are not known, and new generations, are naturally ignorant of the true stories of the inceptions of many such city improvements, without they read municipal histories, wherein such records should be found.

From the St. Kilda Council's half yearly report (September) 1873, we extract the following paragraph referring to the gardens :—"The Public Gardens, bounded by Blessington, Tennyson, Dickens, and Herbert Streets, under the care of Gardener Kimpton, have been greatly improved, and the Council acknowledges the liberality of those Ratepayers in the Borough who contributed between £50 and £60 towards the cost of planting forest trees around the main drive and other improve-

ments. The Alma Street Reserves, the Plantations in Fitzroy Street, Barkly Street, and the St. Kilda Road north of the Junction, under the care of Gardener Burton, have progressed satisfactorily. In a few years the value of the late planting operations will be more apparent."

During the year 1884, the Council was active in having "tree planting largely carried out, more especially along the Brighton and Melbourne Roads. Two rows of trees are now planted from the northern boundary to the Junction, and from Carlisle Street to the Elsternwick Hotel on the southern boundary, which in a few years' time will resemble the far-famed 'Rotten Row' of London. Street planting has also been carried out in other portions of the Borough."

Complaints, to the Council, of the awful insanitary condition of the newly created municipality, were made, on various occasions, by the Central Board of Health. To drain St. Kilda, to compel residents to observe sanitary rules, and to restore the healthful record of the village, were among the most pressing problems, which the councillors found awaiting them. One of the Central Board of Health's complaints referred to the south of Inkerman Road, where this is (May 15, 1857) a large swamp, which after continued heavy rains receives the washings of the upper ground, and which, as well as the offensive condition of the low streets of this locality, cannot fail to exercise a prejudicial effect upon the health of the inhabitants of that portion of St. Kilda." In some cases the inhabitants kept swine in their back yards, which was, "a practice very objectionable in the neighbourhood so populated as the western portion of St. Kilda." Remittent fever was prevalent. Two cases had occurred within a few doors of the shop of Priestley & Limon, butchers, Fawkner Street, a few days before the complaint was dated. Too many dead fowls, etc., were lying about the streets. Sanitary conditions, bad drainage, manure heaps and offensive rubbish, were to be found in houses near to and past the Star and Garter Hotel, and to the shop of Patrick Matthews, the druggist, of Robe Street ; also, at the Junction Hotel, at Brice Brothers, butchers, in Clyde Street, at the Hare and Hounds Hotel, Grey Street, in Fawkner Street at Priestley & Limon's, butchers, where there were pig styes," and so, the comprehensive report runs on, and half the tale was not told. Drainage! Drainage!

and the enforcement of sanitary laws are the thoughts ever pricking at the corporate mind of the Council. The Councillors were not allowed to forget that St. Kilda was, when rains fell, overflowed, in its low-lying parts. They knew more of the difficulties they were faced with than those residents, who were free with their suggestions of how St. Kilda should be drained.

James A. Hanan, on September 3, 1857, wrote to the Central Road Board, complaining of the flooded state of his properties, on Brighton Road, and suggesting that channels be cut across Brighton Road, to drain the water, instead of a ten-foot open drain, as intended by the Town Council of St. Kilda. The Secretary of the Board, John Steavenson, sent the letter on to the Council, with a covering note, in which he said :—"I have informed the Council that, on the adoption of any plan of drainage by them, this Board would co-operate, so far as the drainage of the Main Brighton Road was concerned. I have referred Mr. Hanan to the Council."

Hanan's letter, which is before us, is informative of how St. Kilda and Brighton Road looked to him on September 3, 1857. He wrote, *inter alia*: "The Brighton Road and the new road (Clyde Street) by the Hare and Hounds Hotel stops the water from getting away." He describes where, in his opinion, the channels for the water to escape should be cut. One of them was opposite the Inkerman Road, by Marden's, the butchers. And then he goes on: "From where I am writing now (there is) from the Main Brighton Road, to the other (Clyde Street) by the Hare and Hounds Hotel, a distance of a quarter of a mile, is one sheet of water, and likewise, in the opposite direction (a sheet of water), on both sides. A boat could be propelled for some distance, and yet the water has not yet flowed over the crown of the main road. There is a wooden culvert, about five feet by two, opposite my house . . . where the water forms two edges, with pieces of wood, and empty bottles, revolving in a circle, and dancing the polka to the amusement of the bystanders."

Hanan was opposed to the open ten-foot drain, and to the expenses that would be incurred by putting a stone bridge over it. The water, he said, could be conveyed through a sandbank, by the Royal Hotel, to the sea. He writes that in the main drain that was to be enlarged, "one man, coming home drunk, by

the name of -----, was drowned in the present drain." Men, women, and children were liable to be drowned in the proposed drain. The flood water was then percolating under his house's foundations, and softening the bricks. He was "deeply concerned to save his house from falling down." So were many others, too, living on the flats of St. Kilda, liable to be flooded, by overflows of storm water, from what was known as the main drain.

The present line of the main drain, running west, between Blanche and Vale Streets, sufficiently indicates the levels of this low area, where the flood waters always rose to their maximum height. Roughly, the main drain is the bed of an old creek, that served in part to carry storm waters from Caulfield, and Malvern watersheds to the sea. The Central Road Board was concerned with the drainage of the whole district, and with the main creeks, or channels, just as it was responsible for the upkeep of the main roads. When the drainage, from a municipality, was delivered on to a main road, such as Brighton Road was, the Board was prepared to carry the water onward to the sea. In October, 1857, the Board told the St. Kilda Council, that it would provide for any water brought on to the Brighton Road, and it proposed to do so, in part, by using the main drain of St. Kilda. It had carried the drainage of the Great Dandenong Road to St. Kilda, and the Board admitted its liability to help St. Kilda in forming the Main Drain. The Board's engineer, Crawley, estimated the cost of constructing the drain would be £8610/10/6, and the Board was willing to pay half of the cost.

A deputation from the St. Kilda Council, consisting of Councillors Hale, Tullett, Mooney, Gardiner, Bradshaw (town clerk), and Smith (municipal surveyor), waited on the President of the Board of Land and Works, Dr. Evans, on Monday, April 18, 1859. The Hon. Alexander Fraser, chairman of the municipality, acted as spokesman. The Council was concerned about various works. The first subject mentioned was the deepening of the main municipal drain, from the east side of High Street to the level of the high water mark. This drain was one in connection with a culvert built in High Street, under the supervision of Mr. Higinbotham, and by his evidence low enough for the permanent, and improved level, but too low for the present drainage. The St. Kilda Council claimed that £1,500

was due to it by the Government for the drainage of Brighton Road in accordance with the improved level. The deputation informed the President, that the Council only required a definite promise, of a definite amount, and the Council would immediately set to work, and come to the Government for money after the completion of the drain. The President replied that he would consult his colleagues, and with their concurrence, place a sufficient sum for the purpose in the estimates for next year.

As a consequence of that deputation, in the year 1860, a sum of £5000 was placed on the Parliamentary estimates for the purpose of making the main municipal drain of St. Kilda, but the money was not voted. In the same year storm waters from outlying districts swept into St. Kilda, and flooded the lower lands lying between Barkly Street, and the eastern boundary. Residents of the flat had to leave their houses, and seek shelter in the higher parts of the town. Along the line of the main drain much damage was done by the overflowing waters. Then the Caulfield Road Board started to drain Leman's swamp, that was one square mile in area, and the Board sent the swamp waters along to St. Kilda Council to deal with. The Council had, at any cost, to meet these recurring invasions of water from the neighbouring districts, and in the year 1861, they entered into contracts for enlarging, and for making the main drain to the sea. In 1861 the Hon. the Treasurer, George Frederic Verdon, a member of the Heales Ministry, obtained the sanction of the Legislative Assembly to cut the grant-in-aid to St. Kilda by 50 per cent. That financial shearing of the Council's resources crippled its power to carry out the drainage works of St. Kilda. We have recalled these initial difficulties the young Council faced in trying to construct the main drain, as a sample of the ways in which the Council was harassed in its endeavour to drain St. Kilda. There were many more difficulties faced, innumerable deputations formed to wait on Ministers of the Crown, before the drain was constructed as it exists to-day.

To return to the deputation of the councillors before Dr. Evans, the President of the Board of Land and Works:—

The Councillors made a further request to the President for the repayment of the moneys the Council had expended on High Street, and the cab stand, at the Junction. There was

also the cost of pitched dished crossings in High Street. It had been intended that the money to pay for these improvements was to have been taken from the surplus receipt of tolls. That money had been swallowed up in paying £60,000 for the building of Princes' Bridge, and the extra cost of substituting blue metal for red metal, in the formation of adjacent roads. Dr. Evans promised the Council that, if the money did not come out of the surplus tolls next year, he would insert the amount due to the St. Kilda Council, in the next year's estimates. The deputation then submitted a claim on behalf of the St. Kilda Council, to share in the proceeds of the Richmond Bridge Toll, more particularly for the formation of a very bad piece of road at the St. Kilda end of Chapel Street. The councillors were given the promise that if there were any surplus receipts, from the Richmond Bridge Toll, after paying for the maintenance of the bridge, he, Dr. Evans, would expend the surplus, as far from the bridge itself as it would reach. Such deputations, past and forgotten, by the St. Kilda Council, were not infrequent, and though perhaps the records of them may not appear to modern readers to be of much moment, still the outcome of such deputations was the laying of the foundations of the roads, and drains of St. Kilda, and that is local municipal history.

The Brighton Road, and its intermediate section—High Street, was a highway that crippled the young Council. There was no permissible alternative to the plain necessity that the Brighton Road had to be kept in a passable condition. In the year 1859 the St. Kilda Council spent the sum of £2,481 in making the St. Kilda-Brighton Road. A promise was made to the Council by the O'Shanassy Government that it would contribute the sum of £600 towards the cost of the work. Before the O'Shanassy Ministry could redeem that promise it was defeated, and William Nicholson "the father of the Australian ballot" came into power (October 27, 1859), with James Service as President of the Board of Land and Works, and Commissioner of Crown Lands and Survey. Some of the members of the Government refused to vote for the payment of the sum to the St. Kilda Council, even after the money was placed on the estimates. James Stewart Johnston, Archibald Michie's fellow member for St. Kilda, moved a resolution on March 8, 1860, in the House to the effect:—

"That this House will, on Thursday next, resolve itself into a committee of the whole to consider the propriety of presenting an address to His Excellency the Governor requesting His Excellency to place upon the additional estimates for 1860, the sum of £885, to reimburse the municipal Council of St. Kilda, a portion of the cost of kerbing and channelling the main road through St. Kilda, and the cost (£120) of constructing a cab stand on the main road; also the cost of a pitched crossing on the main road at the intersection of Carlisle Street."

Johnston said he quite admitted that the items should never have appeared on the Estimates, and the arrangement was that a portion of the sums expended by the Municipal Council of St. Kilda was to be repaid from the toll funds. It was found, however, that the revenue from the toll fell short, and the Government then said it would place the amounts necessary to reimburse the municipality of St. Kilda on the estimates. If the reimbursement was refused it appeared as though the Government had laid a trap for the Municipal Council of St. Kilda. The expenditure was incurred on the distinct guarantee from the Government for its repayment.

The President of the Board of Land and Works deprecated any display of warmth on the part of Johnston, who, he said imputed into the discussion some of the warmth that the gentleman at the head of municipal affairs at St. Kilda had recently manifested.

In saying that, the President referred to Councillor Cowderoy, who had denounced the Ministry for what he considered its repudiation of a former Ministry's promises.

The President went on to say, that the fact that the Treasurer did not support the vote was merely an expression of his personal opinion, but it was absurd to say, as had been said, that the Government was not bound, in cases like the present, to sanction promises of the Government, even if given in excess of their powers.

John Myles (member for South Grant) did not see why an exception should be made in favor of St. Kilda, because it was a wealthy suburb, and the residence of many honorable members.

Dr. Evans told the House that it was during the period he was in office that the money had been put on the estimates. Certain works had been promised the St. Kilda Council both by Mr. Duffy and Mr. Moore. The Government had appropriated for the maintenance of a considerable length of road, which belonged to the municipality of St. Kilda, and that the municipality had, in order to save time, undertaken the several necessary works, which it was the business of the Government to carry out. He thought the House was bound to reimburse the sum expended.

John O'Shanassy, member for Kilmore, supported the motion, while Johnston, in reply, pointed out that it was not to be expected that the St. Kilda people would make a road if they were deprived of the tolls.

Richard Heales said the cab stand was not in the main road. If a municipality made a cab stand on an off road, he, the member for East Bourke Boroughs, thought that the Government should not be called upon to pay for that cab stand.

Johnston read a letter to prove that the St. Kilda Council had been requested to make the cab stand by the Government, and promising that they would be repaid the money they had expended.

On being put, the resolution was carried, and the members of the Council, after a considerable amount of trouble, and not a little fighting, obtained after many days, what was legally due to the Council on demand at the completion of the work.

Johnston, as member for St. Kilda, fought shoulder to shoulder with the Council to secure the ratepayers' rights. He had studied at the Edinburgh University for the medical profession, but owing to his health breaking down, he went a voyage to the West Indies. In 1838 he arrived in Tasmania, where he was appointed, by the Government, Superintendent of Convicts. Eventually he crossed the Straits, the Rubicon of many a man's fortune in those days, to Victoria, and started as an hotel keeper in Melbourne, but he ceased being one in 1840. He purchased, with Mr. Edward Wilson, in equal partnership, "The Argus." He afterwards sold his share in the newspaper to Mr. Gill, who resold the share to Lauchlan Mackinnon, one of the early purchasers of Crown Lands on Dandenong Road, in St. Kilda.

The town clerk of Melbourne, E. G. Fitzgibbon, informed the St. Kilda Council in July, 1877, that tenders for the lease of the Brighton Road toll had been received. The tenders were Robert Atkinson, £686/8/- per month ; Mitchell & Newell, £683/10/-; David Waddick, £680, Richard Meagher, £675/3/4; George Boileau, £666/151-; Hugh Hunt, £655. Atkinson's tender was accepted by the Melbourne City Council.

The toll gate was close to the barracks on St. Kilda Road. The old toll gate and house were taken down and removed in December, 1878. We can further contrast St. Kilda Road to-day with the St. Kilda Road made of bluestone in 1878, the public vehicles on the road consisting of cabs and omnibuses, mostly coming from St. Kilda and Prahran, and returning to those places. Some of the cabs were two-wheeled, and called Albert cabs, but the cabs were colloquially known as "jingles," for it was a "jingling" ride in them at times. "Jingles," as a word in common use for the cab, ousted the princely name of "Alberts." The jingles were built like Irish jaunting cars with the difference that the seats were run across the cab, instead of lengthways as in a jaunting car. We remember that the springs rising from the axle were very large for the size of the two-wheeled vehicle, and the back seat was not a safe one when the cab was travelling on a bad road, and St. Kilda Road, in places, filled that condition. We can recall the cabs stopping at the toll gate, and the driver giving the toll gatekeeper threepence. The cab with four wheels, called a waggonette, came in but slowly, but they were popular as a carry-all for picnic parties driving to St. Kilda. Dozens of such cabs, on a holiday, were to be found waiting on and about the Upper and Lower Esplanades.

In the year 1860, the St. Kilda Council had a "very substantial iron roller cast for levelling the surfaces of roads." By way of an experiment in the same year, the Council laid down in Fitzroy and High Streets a pavement formed of cement. Worn and tested, as to its qualities beneath the tread of countless men and women, the Council considered the pavement had proved satisfactory. Its durability induced the Council, in the year 1876, to lay a like pavement on the Esplanade, and in High and Grey Streets. We learn that the pavement was used "on an extensive scale," and that its quality met with the inhabitants' "very general approval."

We find, in the year 1860, a reference to lowering Bull Street to meet "the deep cutting in the Dandenong Road, made by the Government." The Council had purchased land in order to connect Grosvenor Street with Brighton Road, and complete the main line of drainage. In 1861 "Inkerman Street east, the hill next the boundary, Orrong Road had been cut down and formed, rendering the ascent now comparatively easy." Work at the Esplanade was referred to in the words, "the western footpath, from Fitzroy Street to the lower road, near Acland Street, has been kerbed and metalled, and the width increased to 18 feet, making it a most agreeable promenade." In the year before (1860) "the bridge at Barkly Street had been lengthened to the full width of the street, thus completing this line of communication." In 1861 the bridge at Acland Street had been widened from 25 feet to 66 feet, and stone piers placed to same."

At the beginning of the St. Kilda Council's administration of the streets of St. Kilda, the streets were cleansed under a contract system, the contractors being mostly laborers. These petty contractors were kept up to the work of scavenging by "the vigilance of the Inspector and all nuisances were prevented." In the year 1861 the Council deemed it desirable to place some men at the disposal of the town surveyor. Three draymen were kept constantly at work cleaning the streets and attending to the channels. Under the surveyor's directions they repaired damages, and carried out many minor works that were too small to be let by tender. The councillors stated in one of the Council's reports that the change made in the system of cleansing the streets had proved satisfactory. Work done in that way had saved time and money. Later, in 1865, a note states that the draymen had been constantly at work cleansing and repairing the streets. "One man is constantly kept at work repairing and maintaining the Brighton and Dandenong Roads." No doubt the "one man" found much to occupy his time in attending to the two roads.

We learn from the Council's half yearly report (1864) that the Municipal Corporations Act, 1863, had come into operation, and that the powers of the Council were increased. Under the Act the councillors in office were constituted the Council of the Borough. On August, three councillors, Councillors Tullett, F. Sydes, and Ford retired, under the operation of the Act. The

number of councillors had then to be made up to nine, five vacancies having to be filled. Ten candidates offered themselves for election. Councillors H. Dyer, H. Tullett, J. Oldham, W. Ford and W. Peterson were returned. In 1863, the Council established a free public library, contributing towards its upkeep £75. This amount was supplemented by private subscriptions, and by gifts of books. The library contained, in the first year of its existence, 500 volumes. Subscribers to the library paid £1 per annum. The average attendance of visitors to the library, which was opened at night, was 16. Councillor B. F. Bunny, barrister-at-law, afterwards Judge Bunny, held the office of mayor during 1864.

In July, 1910, the St. Kilda Library was still located in the St. Kilda Police Court building, the old Town Hall. The Council was asked by the Balaclava Mutual Improvement Society to transfer it to the City Hall, and to stock it with suitable fiction, and works of reference. It was said by Councillor Stedeford that to do so would require £1,000 a year. Councillor Barnett said the library was only one in name, not in fact. On the contrary, Councillor O'Donnell asserted that about 6,000 people visited the library every year. Councillor Hughes gave notice of motion, to move that the library be removed to the City Hall, where a suite of rooms had been for many years set apart for the library. For the whole of the winter months the notice of motion "that the Public Library be removed from its present location to the Town Hall," stood upon the business paper of the Council. In December the sum of £150 for the library was placed on the annual estimates, that sum being double the ordinary expenditure. At the Council meeting held on December 12, 1910, the mayor moved the adoption of the resolution. By the Council's permission, the Rev. Dr. Watkin and ex-Councillor Simpson were present to oppose the motion being carried. The Rev. Dr. Watkin said the St. Kilda Library was no credit to St. Kilda. The reading room in it was only open from 7 o'clock to 10 o'clock in the evenings. He said there was an understanding that when the new Town Hall was erected the library should remain in the old Town Hall. The mayor denied that there was any understanding that the library should remain at the Court House. The Council had only permissive occupancy of the room. He thought that the library should be closed, and

what there was of its contents of value should remain at the new Town Hall as the nucleus for the future. Councillor Billson asserted that the attendance at the library was 10 to 12 a day, out of a population of 34,000. Councillor Hewison favored the library being at the new Town Hall, but he was opposed to a library when money was wanted for making roads. Councillor O'Donnell said there had been an agreement that the library should remain at the Court House when the Government gave the Council permissive occupancy. The Government had not asked them for the room. It paid the Council £2,500 for the old Town Hall, which money the Council spent in putting mantel-pieces into the new Town Hall, the west ward's share of the purchase money going there. Councillor O'Donnell was in favor of postponing the motion for twelve months, and that a librarian be engaged to go through the stock and report. The motion was carried that the library be removed to the City Hall.

The St. Kilda Public Library, though it started well, in the year 1863, in the old Court House, was not altogether a success, though, on that point, different opinions, during the course of the library's existence, were held by successive councillors. When the City Hall was built in Carlisle Street, provision was made, as stated by Councillor Hughes, for a library room, but it became necessary, owing to office expansion, and the need of a lodge room, to take the library room, and to use it for purposes more nearly related to materialism than to literature. The books were removed from the old Court House to the City Hall where they were housed and protected from dust in book-cases with glass doors. Among the books are some valuable files of early Melbourne newspapers. Books, and papers are stored safely now, in the City Hall's basement, awaiting the day, when space will be available in the City Hall to re-establish a Free Public Library in St. Kilda. Some isolated attempts, by motions in Council, have been made, notably by Councillors Hughes, and Burnett Gray, to re-establish the library, but after consideration by the Council, the proposal has repeatedly slipped back into the pigeon box of things, that are coming, but upon which, as yet, is endorsed the halting legend, "No action taken."

Foresight on the part of the St. Kilda Council is responsible for many conveniences and privileges which the citizens enjoy. We have already observed the repercussional effects of past acts

of the Council on present day social conditions and also on the outline of the city's topography. Had not the mayor of St. Kilda, Councillor Bunny, waited on the Minister of Lands and Survey on Wednesday, January 18, 1865, to ask him to have removed a dilapidated building on the beach, which had been used for 'a bathing establishment, and also to urge upon him the desirability of retaining a block of land known as the Church Reserve (Alma Park) in East St. Kilda, for recreation purposes the whole aspect of that portion of Dandenong Road might well have been different to what it is to-day. The park site would be traversed by streets, and the "lung" would not exist, but instead of an opening breathing space so necessary to cities, the area would have been congested with a nest of modern suburban houses. Fortunately, the mayor of St. Kilda attained success in his interview with the Minister, who issued instructions that the objectionable building was to be removed, and the block of land was to be temporarily reserved from sale. In the year 1865 the St. Kilda Council, through its persistence, obtained the permanent reservation of the block of land lying between the Great Dandenong Road and Alma Street as a place of public recreation. In the following year the Council extracted a promise from the Government to earmark £140 out of the Parliamentary grant for public parks and gardens for the purpose of fencing the Alma Street Recreation Reserve. In addition to that sum the ratepayers and residents made a private subscription towards the cost of the fencing.

St. Kilda Council was not a powerful corporation in those days, and though it spent modest sums per year, the expenditure was liberal so far as the Council's means went. The estimated expenditure for 1865 was £10,982/8/-, and of the sum the Council purposed spending £7,968 in public works. Compare this with a modern expenditure on roads alone to-day, the spending of £65,000, and yet the day there was when the St. Kilda Council argued whether it could afford to have four or six lamps on the Esplanade for lighting purposes! The town clerk, Mr. F. W. Chamberlin, interviewed in the year 1928 stated to a newspaper reporter that provision had been made by the Council to repair certain St. Kilda roads, and here is the advance that appears so extraordinary when compared with the modest expenditure of the first municipal days of St. Kilda. Mr. Chamberlin said

"Of the £102,000 loan recently authorised, £65,814 would be for street reconstruction, and £19,000 had been set aside for the reconstruction of Brighton Road, on both sides, from Carlisle Street to Milton Street, in wood paving. The completion of the reconstruction of Brighton Road to Glenhuntly Road by penetration asphalt macadam would cost £4,000. That work, Mr. Chamberlin said, was already in hand, and was complete to Kendall Street. The reconstruction of Wellington Street, in wood paving on concrete had called for the allocation of £10,500. In connection with the reconstruction of Wellington Street, the roadway would be widened by reducing the width of the foot-path. The sum set aside for the reconstruction of High Street was £18,500, which would provide for the continuation of wood paving to St. Kilda Junction. That would complete High Street, from the Junction to Carlisle Street, in wood paving. The reconstruction of Chapel Street on the east side from Argyle Street to Carlisle Street in wood paving on concrete, from Argyle Street to Dandenong Road (east side), and from Argyle Street to Wellington Street (west side), in penetration asphalt macadam, would absorb another £8,000 of the loan. Other streets not referred to in the article, but which however had been provided for in the loan, were Goldsmith Street (£2,000), Shelley Street (£2,364), and Morris Street (£650)."

