

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

*The Town Clerks of St. Kilda—George Sprigg Suggests a Municipal Association of Interests—M'Culloch's Municipal Bill, 1869, Contains Errors—Corporation Bill Follows to Remove the Errors, but Creates Power of Ministerial Patronage—Sprigg's Fight Against Political Patronage—Town Clerks, J. N. Browne and F. W. Chamberlin—The New Era of Municipal Efficiency—Other Executive Officers, and Employees—The Mayoral Chain and the City's Seal and Coat of Arms—Councillor Sir George Turner—The Hon. Nathaniel Levi.*

**O**N March 14, 1857, William Goldie was appointed by the St. Kilda Council to the office of the town clerk of St. Kilda. He resigned the position on August 26, and David Prophet was selected to fill the vacated position. Prophet resigned his position to enter the service of the Brighton Council. On May 22, 1858, E. T. Bradshaw was appointed to succeed Prophet as town clerk of St. Kilda. Bradshaw relinquished his position on September 14, 1868, and George Sprigg entered into the office of town clerk. Sprigg was the fourth son of the Rev. James Sprigg, M.A., a Baptist minister of Ipswich, England, who attained to some celebrity, by his advocacy of the anti-slavery movement. George Sprigg was a brother of W. G. Sprigg, the secretary of the Melbourne Omnibus and Tramway Company. George Sprigg was apprenticed to the paper trade, that led him to spend the early part of his business career in Antwerp, and Paris. These continental experiences were not without their educative influences on Sprigg. Neither he, nor his brother, were time servers. Both of them showed administrative qualities. George Sprigg, being a capable man when he arrived in the colony of Victoria in the year 1859, was not long in finding employment. He became the Secretary of the Victorian Acclimatisation Society, which society was founded in the year 1857, by Edward Wilson, one of the proprietors of The Argus newspaper. A St. Kilda resident, Dr. Black, was the first President of the Society, and as he was a man of influence, Sprigg's appointment to the vacant position of townclerkship of St.

Kilda may have owed something to the doctor's advocacy. The Government had withdrawn its annual subsidy to the Society, leaving the Society without any revenue. Fortunately for Sprigg, at this time, Bradshaw resigned and left the office of the townclerkship of St. Kilda vacant.

Sprigg commenced the duties of town clerk, at a time, when there existed a strong party spirit in the St. Kilda Council. Sprigg went through the period of the "burning questions," of a market, a town hall, and a fight as to whether the borough should be divided into wards. The wards were gazetted on November 27, 1868, the Chief Secretary granting the petitions being Sir James M'Culloch. The Council permitted Sprigg to hold the office of the Clerk of Petty Sessions, St. Kilda, in addition to the one of the Town Clerk of St. Kilda. Some interruption of the normal routine of the St. Kilda Police Court office must have taken place at the time of Sprigg's police court appointment. Our researches concerning the inception of the St. Kilda Court of Petty Sessions show that Butler Villiers was the first assistant Clerk of Petty Sessions at St. Kilda, and that he also acted as the Registrar of the Electoral District. Definitely we know, that George F. Bartrop, was the Clerk of Petty Sessions at St. Kilda, on March 5, 1858. Bartrop afterwards became a police magistrate, and retained to his death the title of Major Bartrop, a legacy from the days of the volunteer corps. He had a sharp military way of talking, and he favored an eye-glass that seemed to have some microscopic power when he focalized his eye on the prisoner at the bar. George Sprigg's end was untoward. He was found in the town clerk's office, at the St. Kilda Town Hall, in a dying condition, on November 14, 1881.

The municipal councils, in the year 1869, were without almost any co-ordination of purpose, though the municipalities were largely interested in the same questions of administration. We learn from the newspapers, in March, 1869, that "Mr. Sprigg, the town clerk of St. Kilda, has issued circulars, inviting the various councils, in the colony, to take action, with the view of expunging the objectionable clauses from law, empowering the Government to appoint auditors of municipal councils." Such a proposal may seem extraordinary, to a modern reader, who recognises the appointment of Government auditor for municipal

accounts, as a well-established safeguarding precaution of civic accountancy. Political patronage in Victoria had attained such wide-spread ramifications throughout the civil service, that it had become a Government scandal. The town clerk of St. Kilda was making a forlorn attempt to try to preserve the purity of public service, at least so far as lay within the ambit of his duties.

Municipal government had been carried on up to the year 1869, under certain Acts, since 1863. These Acts were passed by the O'Shanassy administration. In 1869, the Municipal Bill (M'Culloch Ministry) passed both Houses with very little discussion taking place upon it. Afterwards it was asserted that the marginal notes of the bill only, and not the clauses, to which the notes related, were read. The Bill was one of errors, omissions, and anomalies, but nevertheless it became an Act and law, with its imperfections. Four amending Bills were prepared, to correct the results of too much haste in rushing the original Bill through. To clear up the situation, the Minister of Justice, the Hon. James Joseph Casey, sponsored the Borough, or Municipal Corporations' Bill. In one of the Bill's clauses, the power to appoint Government auditors for municipal accounts, was placed in the gift of the Governor-in-Council, which St. Kilda's town clerk, Sprigg, contended, was a veiled way of placing in the hands of the Honorable James Joseph Casey, so long as he was a Minister of the Crown, the patronage of about 320 appointments of more or less value. The M'Culloch administration had a partiality for exercising political patronage, and it had held the power of appointment of Electoral Registrars since the year 1863, and it was alleged, that "none but a devout worshipper, at the shrine of M'Culloch, could expect to enter into the kingdom of Electoral Registrars." The Borough Councils, when canvassed by Mr. Sprigg, thought much the same as he did, but Casey was too powerful for the municipalities, as Sprigg must have feared, when he set out to right what was wrong in the political aspect of the municipal world.

Sprigg's attempt to prevent political patronage in the sphere of municipal auditors recalls an instance, where a Government auditor, and the St. Kilda councillors did not agree. The difference arose over that hardy annual flower of protest, presented each year, to the municipal councils of Melbourne, by the

Government auditors, when they find that the councils have allocated, some of the municipal funds, for the purpose of presenting the retiring mayor, with a memorial address of his year of office. The protest made its appearance, on the St. Kilda Council table, at the end of November, 1880. The auditors' report read : "In the disbursements of the year are two amounts of £10/10/- each for testimonials, which we are of opinion are not such as come within the meaning of Section 68 of the Act." The auditors' report was remitted by the Council to the Legislative Committee, and the Committee considered the report required an answer. It printed its answer, and its opinions for distribution. The Committee admitted that the power to cover this expenditure was not contained, in Section 68, of "The Local Government Act, 1874." This clause has only reference to an allowance that can be made to the mayor by the Council of an amount fixed previous to his election. The Chairman of the Committee was Councillor George Pilley, and he happened to be mayor at the time the Committee sat. The payment for the two mayoral testimonials, 1878-9, and 1879-80, just happened accidentally to be made in the same year. The Committee, in its report stated : "Up to the present time, no allowance has been made to any mayor of St. Kilda, and were one made, it would be manifestly improper for the Mayor, on his retirement from office, to pay for a testimonial to himself."

We might have passed by that report, had it not been that the Committee indicated what its members considered were the duties of the mayor of a municipality. The unique report reads:—

"The Council expects its Mayor to be regular in his attendance at the Court of Petty Sessions (the magistrates attending this Court have been pleased to elect every Mayor their chairman) ; to be generally accessible to the rate-payers ; to see the officers duly perform their several duties ; to be punctual in his attendance at Council, and Committee Meetings, to be present on deputations, and generally to see that all municipal matters work smoothly; he likewise incurs expenditure for hospitalities, and is called upon during his year of office, for subscriptions for charitable, benevolent, and other objects beyond his usual contributions for such purposes."

Having enlightened the ignorance of the Government, and its auditors, regarding the duties of the Mayor, even if his duties had not any direct bearing on a "protested payment," the Committee, in a polite manner, intimated, that it had no intention of changing its custom, and moreover, that, in its opinion, the Councils' power to incur this expenditure for mayoral testimonials, to those who deserved them, was contained in Section 248, which stated that 'the municipal fund shall be applied by the Council towards the payment of all expenses necessarily incurred in carrying this Act into being.

A Municipal Act came into force on October 1, 1863, that required the Council to elect an assessor and auditors. J. A. Grubb was elected assessor, and Messrs. Mathieson & Bramwell, auditors. Under the Local Government Act the ratepayers appointed a local municipal auditor, who acted in conjunction with the Government auditor. This practice went on for years, and then the office of the local municipal auditor was done away with as a needless expense to municipalities. It was said of some of the municipal ratepayers' auditors that though they could win an election, they had not the ability to audit municipal accounts. For the first time in the history of the Borough, a contested election for the office of local municipal auditor took place in August, 1884. There were four candidates. The voting was :—Tullet, 783 ; Lemme, 531; Martin, 490 ; Watts, 202. The successful candidate was Frederick Tullett, auctioneer, son of the late Councillor Tullett; the second on the poll was Victor Lemme, who afterwards became a councillor, and then mayor (1895). His office was memorable for the occasion of the first official vice-regal landing being made at St. Kilda, for it was Councillor Lemme who welcomed, on behalf of St. Kilda, Lord Brassey. During the term of his mayoralty, the body of a storm-driven white seal was washed ashore at the Esplanade, St. Kilda. Other visitors to the St. Kilda waters, within the last fifty years, have been two shoals of pilchards, and one shoal of barracouta. These shoals of fish acted as magnets to hundreds of people. The scenes of amateur fishermen, women, and children netting, and basketing, the fish close to the shore, were most extraordinary.

In January, 1871, Henry Wilkinson, who had acted as the rate collector of St. Kilda, retired from his position, and Walter Wilson was appointed to the vacated office. On May 26, 1881,

the St. Kilda Council terminated Wilson's engagement, and John Narberth Browne was appointed rate collector, on June 24, 1881. On the day of the town clerk, Sprigg's, death, J. N. Browne was placed, by the Council, in the office of acting town clerk. On December 5, the acting town clerk was elevated to the office of the town clerk and treasurer of St. Kilda. Mr. Charles Gordon was appointed to the office of the city's rate collector, and the assistant clerk, Henry Wilson, was appointed to the position of acting rate collector.

J. N. Browne, born at Narberth, Pembroke, Wales, arrived in Melbourne on June 15, 1855. The same day J. N. Browne started his connection with St. Kilda when he went to live with his brother, who resided in Alma Road. By chance Benjamin Cowderoy offered him work, and when Browne was through with it he went to the Ovens goldfields. In the year 1880 Cowderoy's political influence, exercised on his behalf, secured him the position of a Government auditor, and the officer for the Census, in the Prahran District. In 1881 he was temporarily engaged in the Government Statist's office, and he left that position to enter the employment of the St. Kilda Council. He resigned his office of town clerk on April 30, 1913. The Council voted him a retiring gratuity of £500. The citizens of St. Kilda also presented a testimonial to him, recording the ratepayers' appreciation of his municipal service. He died on June 6, 1916.

For some time before Mr. Browne resigned he must have recognised that the dawn of a more strenuous and exacting period of municipal administration was already clearly visible in the morning light. Towards the end of his townclerkship much of his work had been undertaken by the chief civic clerk, Frederick William Chamberlin. In him we have another instance of the persistence of links in St. Kilda with Devonshire. All his forebears came from Devon. It was in Barnstaple, in the north of Devon, where the present town clerk of St. Kilda spent part of his boyhood. Mr. F. W. Chamberlin came to St. Kilda with his parents in the year 1881. He continued his education at All Saints' Grammar School, and he was, for some years, a choir boy at All Saints' Church, St. Kilda. He entered the service of the trustees of the St. Kilda Cemetery as a clerk on New Year's Day in the year 1887. He was appointed assistant town clerk of St. Kilda in August, 1897, and when the town clerk,

J. N. Browne, resigned, Mr. Chamberlin, having the necessary qualifications under the Local Government Act, was appointed town clerk of St. Kilda on May 1, 1913.

The appointment of Mr. Chamberlin marked the new era in municipal service in St. Kilda—the starting point of the modern systems of efficiency. The new town clerk belonged to the age of youth in civic affairs. Unresting progress made the change that came inevitable. A growing city, like St. Kilda, could not fail, as its population expanded, to leave behind the *days*, when the faithful discharge of borough routine work sufficed for the requirements of the municipality. The appointment of Mr. Chamberlin as the town clerk of St. Kilda, synchronised with a municipal forward movement. Unquestionably the St. Kilda Council found in the youthful energy, and driving force of its young town clerk, the necessary qualities to carry out the policy of progress that St. Kilda as a city was straining at the leash to have set afoot.

The new era was full of new problems, or rather old problems presented in a new form. More especially was this in evidence on the shore front. St. Kilda beach had become the seaside playground of the people of Melbourne. Unlike some suburban cities, wherein the works of development have been completed, and where the councils have little else to do than to maintain a well-ordered progression of civic services, St. Kilda is always advancing. The scope of its services not only increases in volume and variety, but the services have to be rendered on a much broader basis than is the custom followed by any other municipality. Everyone, wonderful to relate, appears to claim a common right in St. Kilda! And more particularly these presumptions assert themselves on the beach front. The St. Kilda Council might be pardoned, if it was ever tempted to ask whether the municipality of St. Kilda belonged to its ratepayers and to the Council, or to the General Public, and the critics? The work of development in St. Kilda must go on, the beauties of the shore line must increase, and it is clear that such transformations and additions cannot take place without work. That work must continue for years.

At the latter end of the year 1926, the Council granted to Mr. Chamberlin six months' leave of absence for a visit to Britain and Europe, and the Council also gave to him a bonus

of £400. This amount was supplemented by a testimonial from the citizens of St. Kilda, wherein it was stated how much the citizens appreciated the man, and his works.

In the first years of his townclerkship Mr. Chamberlin had as his chief clerk John F. Jeans, a son of the late Councillor S. E. Jeans. He was appointed junior clerk on July 8, 1901 and became the chief clerk in May, 1913. He died on July 3, 1922. Mr. William Henry Greaves was appointed assistant town clerk in December, 1922.

St. Kilda City has been well served by its municipal officers. Some of them have practically spent a large portion of their lives in its service. Long periods of employment are quite common in the records. There is one, however, that is believed to be the record for office in municipal service in Victoria. It is that of Robert Ashton, the St. Kilda rate Receiver, who has passed his fiftieth year of employment by the St. Kilda Council. On May 6, 1928, Mr. Ashton, by invitation, was present at the Council meeting and occupied a seat on the dais. The Mayor, Councillor F. L. Dawkins, referred in highest terms of eulogy to the loyal and conscientious services rendered to the municipality by Mr. Ashton—32 years in the capacity of rate receiver, and the 18 years prior to that on the outside staff, and for most of which period he acted in the capacity of overseer. The Mayor moved :—"That the Council heartily congratulates Mr. Robert Ashton on the completion of 50 years' service—a unique municipal record—and records its very high appreciation of the faithful and conscientious discharge of his duties during the long years of his loyal service to the municipality." The motion was seconded by Cr. O'Donnell, and declared carried. Applause followed, and then Mr. Ashton thanked the Council for their appreciation of his years of service.

The hall-keeper of the St. Kilda City Hall is an important official in the sphere of his duty. He it is in the last phase of the hiring of the City Hall for dances, or for any purpose whatsoever, the hirer has to see. Hirers have many moods, and that, in their divers numbers, they include many diverse temperaments that have repercussions, in different ways, on the head of the hall-keeper. To meet this breaking tide of admiration, or of abuse, as may be the fortune of the hour to provide, requires a diplomat, humble perhaps in rank, but still a diplomat.

For forty years William Isaac Dod, born at Geelong, on March 17, 1858, has been practising the art of diplomacy in the environs of the St. Kilda Town Hall. He was appointed hall-keeper in June, 1890. Dod probably holds the record among municipal city hall-keepers for length of service. He is the best-known and esteemed city hall-keeper around Melbourne. In his forty years' service he has seen councils come and councils go. He has had forty years' experience of mayors, and their robes. He knows their weaknesses, and their vanities, and yet William Isaac Dod covers everything with a silent smile that is with him more golden than speech.

On December 12, 1921, the Council received the resignations of four day laborers, who had toiled in the streets of St. Kilda for many a long year. Their names and records of years of service were :—F. G. House, aged 77 years, 39 years' service; J. White, aged 69 years, 30 years' service ; G. Price, aged 65 years, 28 years' service ; R. Whyte, aged 66 years, 39 years' service. The Council gave them each a gratuity of £104.

The first surveyor of St. Kilda was Sydney William Smith, C.E. He was a faithful officer of the St. Kilda Council. He was the son of Lieut. John Smith, R.N., of Godolming, Surrey, England. Sydney Smith arrived in Sydney in the year 1852, and he was appointed municipal surveyor to the municipality of St. Kilda on April 1, 1857, at a salary of £250, which was increased on August 5 to £300 per year. He occupied the position of surveyor for fifteen years. His death, at the age of sixty years, took place at "Farncombe," Princes Street, St. Kilda. He was succeeded by James Daskin for a short time.

Remembering the literary tang there is in the notable group of street names in St. Kilda, it is a coincidence, which often caused a smile that the surveyor of St. Kilda for ten years was named R. Henry Shakespear. Shakespear resigned in January, 1883, and G. R. B. Steane, who had been city surveyor of Sandridge for twelve years, was appointed surveyor in place of Shakespear.

In August, 1884, Steane resigned the office of borough surveyor, and in the same month W. B. Downe, engineer to the Shire of Echuca, was appointed to Steane's vacated position. On September 28, 1903, Downe resigned his office of City Surveyor, and the Council expressed its great regret to lose, through

his ill-health, such a conscientious officer. On November 1 of the same year W. B. Downe died. On November 23, Henry Edgar Morton, C.E., was elected City Surveyor, which office he resigned on April 30, 1904, to become the City Engineer and Building Surveyor of the City of Melbourne. W. J. M. Woolley was selected to succeed Morton, and after nine years' service, resigned in December, 1912. Mr. C. J. McCormick, late of Manley, N.S.W., was appointed surveyor on January 23, 1913, but he resigned in October of the same year. He was followed by Mr. Richard Terence Kelly, who was appointed on November 11, 1913. He was formerly surveyor to the Richmond City Council.

The mayoral chain of the City of St. Kilda had its inception in this way. On July 8, 1904, Councillor J. H. Pittard, then occupying the office of Mayor of St. Kilda, gave a ball to the citizens. The citizens on August 9 returned the compliment by tendering a ball to the Mayor and Mayoress. The return ball was a very successful one, both from a social standpoint, and a financial one. With part of the surplus moneys from the receipts of the ball it was decided, by the ball committee, to buy a mayoral chain, and to present the chain to the Mayor, which intention was carried into effect on October 24. A medallion on the chain bore an inscription, telling the story of how the chain originated, and also that the chain itself was intended to be a memento of Councillor Pittard's term of office as mayor. The presentation of the chain was made by Mr. F. Wimpole, the chairman of the return ball committee. The Mayor, after returning his thanks, handed the chain to the Town Clerk, with the request that the chain be made a municipal heirloom, to be worn by succeeding mayors of St. Kilda.

It does not often happen in this history of a municipality that such a unique occasion arises, by the lapse of years, when a council has the opportunity to honor itself by honoring a revered and invaluable councillor, as a notable City Father, who has served the city faithfully, and well, for forty years, but such an occasion did arise in the year 1928. It was at the meeting of the St. Kilda Council, held on October 22, that the Council presented to the esteemed veteran councillor, Councillor Edward O'Donnell, an illuminated address, as a memento of the completion of his 40 years' unbroken service as a councillor of the City of St. Kilda.

The Mayor, Councillor Unsworth, said he regarded it as a unique honor to make such a presentation. He read the text of the address which embodied the following record of service:—

Elected councillor for the West Ward August, 1888.

Occupied the mayoral chair for six years in all viz., 1889-90, 1900-02, 1912-14, 1917-18.

Chairman of the Finance Committee since August, 1914. Member of the St. Kilda Shore Committee since its inception in 1906, and chairman since 1918.

Member of the Albert Park Committee of Management since December, 1888.

Representative on the Melbourne & Metropolitan Board of Works since August, 1918.

Trustee of the St. Kilda General Cemetery since March, 1893.

Member of the Committee of Management of the Alfred Hospital since 1892 and treasurer since 1903.

Returning Officer for the Melbourne South Province and for the Electoral District of St. Kilda since November 1, 1916.

Appointed a Justice of the Peace August, 1904.

In the year 1888, when Councillor O'Donnell first entered the Council, the population of St. Kilda was 16,036; it was in the year 1928, 41,013. The number of buildings in the year 1888 was 3,300; in 1928, 9,873. Valuation 1888, £224,375; 1928, £1,044,404. Revenue 1888, £24,578; 1928, £118,497. The address concluded by expressing the earnest hope that Councillor O'Donnell would long be blessed with health and vigour for the continuance of his good work.

In the course of his eulogy, His Worship the Mayor, included the Council's recognition of the services rendered by Mrs. O'Donnell as mayoress during her various terms of office.

The Mayor's remarks were sincerely endorsed by every councillor, and the executive officers.

Councillor O'Donnell, in expressing his thanks to the Mayor, councillors and executive officers for their cordial sentiments towards him, said he felt deeply grateful for the kindly references to Mrs. O'Donnell.

Some of the municipal elections that took place in St. Kilda are not without interest from a local historical point of view.

We recall an early one held on Monday, March 8, 1858. The polling place was a temporary booth erected on the Government Reserve, at the junction of Grey and Barkly Streets. The hours of polling were from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., the candidates being Joshua Mooney, Frederick Spicer and Samuel Marshall. In another instance, the ingenuousness of the notice of election makes the advertisement worthy of reproduction. The advertisement referred to a special municipal election to fill an extraordinary vacancy that occurred in 1867. The election advertisement reads :—

"SPECIAL ELECTION: EXTRAORDINARY VACANCY.  
"MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS ACT 1863.

"Thursday, June 6, 1867. Polling places at the Town Hall, Grey Street; George Hotel, near the Railway Terminus, Fitzroy Street; Alma Hotel, Chapel Street.  
"8 forenoon to 4 afternoon.

"William Ford, Mayor."

Evidently it was considered that the ballot paper was sufficient advertisement to the ratepayers as to who the candidates were. We learn that the election was carried out "with some energy, and a little acrimony." Lord polled 346, Levitt 174. The voting at the polling places was Alma Hotel, 82 votes ; George Hotel, 274 votes; Town Hall, 164. The successful candidate, S. P. Lord, was a merchant. The number of votes polled at the election was 520.

The annual report of the St. Kilda Council, September 30, 1869, refers to the division of the borough into wards. When that localisation of representation at the council chamber was made, it became necessary to make allotments of the new wards under the new system. Councillors B. F. Bunny and T. J. Crouch were made the representatives of the North Ward. Councillors W. Paterson, W. Ford and S. P. Lord retired from the Council, and the two former did not stand for re-election. The extraordinary elections to fill the vacancies existing in the North and West Wards were held in December. They resulted in the unopposed return of Councillor F. Gardiner for the North Ward, and in the return of Councillors S. P. Lord and Charles Gray for the West Ward, the candidates being Messrs. Lord, Gray and Dr. Van Hemert.

An extraordinary election caused by the resignation of Councillor John Oldham for the South Ward, was held in March, and the result was the return of Councillor Oldham, who was opposed by H. Selwyn Smith. At the annual election in August, Councillors Bunny, W. C. Biddle and Henry Tullett retired by effluxion of time, and all of them offered themselves to the rate-payers for re-election to the St. Kilda Council. Messrs. D. McNaughton, Welshman and Dobson also offered themselves for the vacancies. The result of the election was the return of Councillors McNaughton for the North Ward, William Welshman for the South Ward and Tullett for the West Ward. Councillor Tullett resigned the office of mayor in August, and Councillor Oldham was elected to fill his place for the balance of the corporate year. The St. Kilda Council that was the outcome of the division of the borough into wards, 1868-69 had for its members Councillors Tullett, Florence Gardiner, B. F. Bunny, all of whom had occupied mayoral office, and Councillors T. J. Crouch, W. G. Murray, W. C. Biddle, John Oldham, S. P. Lord and Charles Gray.

On January 12, 1882, an extraordinary vacancy took place in the West Ward owing to the death of Councillor Tullett, whose life was identified with St. Kilda and its progress. For a period of twenty-four years he was a member of the St. Kilda Council. He was the mayor of St. Kilda on three occasions. Alfred Davis was elected to fill the vacant seat. The discovery was then made that his election was irregular by reason of insufficient notice having been given with regard to his nomination. A fresh election, complying with legal requirements, took place, and Councillor Davis was returned unopposed.

A very unusual string of circumstances arose during the municipal elections held in August, 1873. Two candidates offered themselves for election for the South Ward of St. Kilda. One was Hugh Peck, and the other candidate Ross Watt. The result of the polling was :—Hugh Peck, 120 votes ; Ross Watt, 93; majority for Peck, 27. Someone discovered that Peck had not the necessary qualifications to sit as a councillor of St. Kilda. His name was not on the roll as a ratepayer. Complaints were made because Peck's nomination papers had been accepted, and by the carelessness of the Returning Officer, the borough had been put "to the trouble and expense of a contested election."

Peck made two or three unsatisfactory explanations, such as that he was nominated without his knowledge, and so on. During the election, there was no excitement, and very little interest taken in the contest, but when it became known that a man who was not a ratepayer of St. Kilda, had dared to stand for election to the council, and to win the seat, the burgesses were indignant. They regarded the offence somewhat seriously, and there was no humorous side to it to them. An affront, they said, had been put upon municipal institutions

Hugh Peck found himself a very unpopular member of society, as the St. Kilda burgesses did not like their municipal neighbours to laugh at them, and their officers' want of electoral efficiency. Peck was advised that he would incur liabilities, and be heavily fined, if he took his seat at the Council table. He said he was aware of that, and that he had no intention of doing so. He would prefer the whole episode to be forgotten, which preference suggests Peck was tired of being in the municipal pillory.

Ross Watt claimed that since Peck was not qualified to stand for election to the St Kilda Council, that he had been unopposed, and therefore he was returned to the Council as the representative of the South Ward. Ross Watt attended the Council meeting, held after the election, proffered himself as the successful candidate, and offered to make the necessary declaration, to allow him to sit as a councillor. The mayor said he could not receive the declaration, and he advised Watt to seek the advice of a lawyer, to see what legal steps he could take to release himself from the embarrassing position in which he had been cast. It was a mayoral assumption that Watt was embarrassed, but it was doubtful if that was so. Ross Watt was a man of action, and he promptly appealed to the Supreme Court for, and obtained, a mandamus, calling upon the mayor of St. Kilda to show cause why he should not receive Ross Watt's declaration as a councillor of the said borough. Upon the case coming up for judgment, Mr. Justice Barry referred to the case of the Queen v. Anderson, reported, December 8, 1868, where it was held, that, in a proceeding, to oust from office, where the respondent had resigned, on being served with the rule nisi, the applicant was entitled to the costs of moving the rule absolute. The learned judge added, that "Mr. Peck seemed

to have been guilty of officially intermeddling in the election, and he must pay the costs. Rule absolute with costs to oust Mr. Peck from office, September 5, 1873."

To the surprise of the residents of St. Kilda, Ross Watt then declined to have any more to do with municipal affairs, and he formally gave notice of withdrawal from the election, and council arena. This withdrawal necessitated the election proceeding to start once again from the beginning. Dr. Mackay, a well-known barrister, nominated, and he had for an opponent James Dixon, a butcher, of High Street. Dr. Mackay was beaten.

On March 28, 1889, Councillor George Turner, a lawyer, was elected as the first representative in the Legislative Assembly for the new Electoral District of St. Kilda as defined by Act. No. 1008. George Turner started his public career by becoming a member of the St. Kilda Council on a non-contested by-election for the South Ward in December, 1885, and he remained a councillor of the City of St. Kilda until 1900, and a year later he resigned his position as the member for St. Kilda in the Legislative Assembly. He died on August 14, 1916.

Sir George Turner shed the light of his official greatness through a homely genial glass on St. Kilda, and he was never more at home, never more himself, "plain George," than after a council meeting, in the mayoral supper room, at the St. Kilda Town Hall. In the year 1897 Sir George obtained leave of absence from the St. Kilda Council in order to represent the colony of Victoria at the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebration in London. He returned to St. Kilda, and resumed his seat at the council table, on August 23, 1897. At the close of the council business the councillors assembled in the Mayor's parlor, when the Mayor, on behalf of the Council, made presentations to Sir George and Lady Turner, Miss Turner and Miss Grace Turner. On August 30 the Mayor entertained a large company in the Town Hall, in honor of Sir George's and his family's return. On the same day, the Mayor planted an oak tree in the grounds of the Town Hall in honor of the return of the Hon. Councillor Sir George Turner, P.C., K.C.M.G., D.C.L., LL.D., J.P.

When Councillor F. J. Marks in 1922 resigned his position as a councillor for the North Ward an extraordinary election was held to fill the vacancy. Only one candidate was nominated Mr. J. B. Levi, and he duly became a councillor of the City of

St. Kilda on November 27, 1922. Taking a keen interest in municipal affairs he was elected to the position of mayor in 1924. We have referred specially to Councillor Levi because he belongs to a family that is identified with St. Kilda for many years. His uncle was the distinguished Hon. Nathaniel Levi, the first of his ancient race to enter the Parliament of Victoria. He was born at Liverpool, England, in the year 1830, and when 23 years of age left in the ship "Matilda Wattenbach" for Melbourne, where he arrived on April 27, 1854. He started as an auctioneer. In 1859, he stood as a parliamentary candidate for the electorate of Maryborough, but was defeated at the poll by 14 votes. When, in 1869, the barrister, R. D. Ireland, a St. Kilda resident, accepted the office of Attorney-Generalship in the first Heales Government, N. Levi, another St. Kilda resident, contested the return of Ireland for Maryborough. Up to that date, there had not been in Victoria such a riotous political election. A pistol was fired into Levi's committee room when it was known he had defeated Ireland by 166 votes. In many ways, Nathaniel Levi was a public-spirited man, and he was esteemed by Christians and Jews alike, of his generation. He lived in a house in Princes Street, St. Kilda, for many years, which he named "Liverpool" He died there on September 11, 1908.