The News.

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GOOD ADVICE TO LIBERAL PARTY

Should Organize for Federal Campaign

Premier Robinson and His Colleagues Speak at Moncton Meeting

MONCTON, March 4.—Five hundred or more enthusiastice Liberals gathered tonight at the Liberal Club rooms to celebrate the victory of Hon. C. W. Robinson and his three colleagues in Westmorland, and the meeting resolved itself into one of the most enthusiastic and vigorous of the campaign. Fighting speeches by the four members from this county and predictions that five years would see the end of power for the Hazen government after it had failed to carry out its extravagant pre-election promises were received with great acclaim by the crowd.

Hon. C. W. Robinson made a vigorous and forceful speech. He expressed his gratitude to the Moncton city electors for the magnificent manner in which they had stood by him, and said the landslide which has overthrown the government is almost unaccountable, but we know that the farther the pendulum swing in one direction the farther it will swing when it comes back again. (Cheers). Our opponents, he said, will be unable to carry out their promises. They have almost promised that if they were put back into power the millennium would be brought about in the province of New Brunswick, and "I do not think that they are magicians enough to accomplish this, and when the people of this province find that the promises made before election were all humbug they will hurl them from power by a much greater majority than was rolled up against the government. (Loud cheers).

"We want also to look a little into the future. I believe that our success is wrapped up in the success of the Liberal party. There must come soon a general election, and we want to see to it that we do everything we can to hold up the hands of the Liberal party and send to Ottawa a representative from Westmorland with the greatest majority in the history of Canada". (Loud cheers).

Hon. F. J. Sweeney, A. B. Copp and C. M. Leger spoke along the same lines in fighting speeches that were loudly applauded.

John T. Hawke occupied the chair and said it had been shown quite conclusively that corrupt methods had been employed by the Conservatives in this county accounting for change of Botsford vote, where he said it is claimed Conservative ballots had been distributed in envelopes to houses with dollar bills in the envelops, and the matter had been put up to the purity committee.

DEPUTY MINISTER ASKED TO RESIGN

OTTAWA, Mar. 4.—There has for a long time been criticism of the marine department and every minister has had trouble in justifying in the house acts of officials. As the first step in reorganization an intimation was conveyed to Deputy Minister Gourdeau that it would be convenient if he should resign. M. Owen, accountant of the department, has recently been suspended and this is expected to be made permanent. There will probably be other steps taken when a new deputy is appointed.

HUNDRED AND SEVENTY CHILDREN BURNED TO DEATH, PRISONED LIKE RATS IN BURNING SCHOOL BUILDING

Panic Jammed the Only Exit--There Were No Fire Escapes--Front Doors Were Locked

Fearful Holocaust in Ohio Village--Two Teachers Lost Their Lives in Heroic Effort to Save Their Pupils--Fear-Stricken Children Packed in the Halls Died Within Sight of Rescuers

CLEVELAND, Ohio, March 4.—Death in one of its most terrible forms claimed between one hundred and sixty and one hundred and seventy school children of the North Collinwood school, in the village of Collinwood, an eastern suburb, today, when the school building, catching fire from a defective furnace, was wrecked in the space of half an hour.

The building being inadequately provded with fire escapes, the children were unable to make their way to the lower floors in time to escape the flames as they hot up from the basement and cut off egress.

Starting about 9.30 o'clock in the basement from the over-heated furnace, the fire gained tremendous headway before its presence was noted. The fire drill was inaugurated at once, and those in the rooms on the lower floor quickly moved out of the building. But when the panic-tricken little ones in the upper rooms attempted to make their way to the stairway the jam of uncontrollable fear-stricken children grew until but few were able to extricate themselves, and they perished almost within reach of safety.

Say Doors Were Locked

Various unconfirmed statements are made as to the cause of the fire, and it is stated also that the doors of the building had been locked at the front entrance, while but one door of the rear entry was unfastened. The janitor, Fritz Herter, himself bereaved of three children, says the doors were open according to custom. At any rate, the congestion of fleeing children in the hallway below effectually blocked the way and the little ones went to their death totally unable to evade the flames.

Within three hours after the start of the fire it had burned itself out and the work of recovering the bodies proceeded. The village fire department had only two engines, and neither was at all effective in stemming the flames.

The school was a two story and attic brick building, constructed about six years ago. It was over-crowded with pupils and it was found necessary to utilize the attic for those of the ages between six and eight. Nearly all the children were killed in the mass at the first floor door, which finally was opened by men from the Lake Shore R. R. shops, who hurried to the scene. A wall of flame had formed across it, however, and most of the children already were dead by the time the doors were swung.

Approximately three hundred children attended the school, which had nine rooms. Janitor Herter could remember little of what happened after the fire started.

The Janitor's Story

"I was sweeping in the basement," he said, "when I looked up and saw a wisp of smoke curling out from beneath the front stairway. I ran to the fire alarm and pulled the gong that sounded throughout the building. Then I ran first to the front and then to the rear doors. I can't remember what happened next, except that I saw the flames shooting all about and the little children running through them screaming. Some fell at the rear entrance and others stumbled over them. I saw my little Helen among them. I tried to pull her out, but the flames drove me back. I had to leave my little child to die."

Herter was badly burned about the head.

Teacher Lost Life

Miss Catherine Weller, one of the nine teachers in the school, lost her life in a vain effort to marshal the pupils of her class and lead them to safety. She died in the crush at the rear door. Her room was on the second floor, and when the fire alarm sounded she marched her pupils out into the hall, thinking it was only a fire drill. There the truth dawned upon both teacher and pupils, and control was lost. The children in their frenzy plunged into the struggling mass ahead of them. Miss Weller attempted to stem the rush, but went down under it and her body was found an hour later piled high with those of her pupils.

Miss Fisk, another teacher, was taken out alive, but she cannot live.

Burning through the cross-supports of the first floor, the flames passed upward until all three floors crashed into a smouldering pile into the basement. After the fire had practically burned itself out, the work of rescuing the bodies was begun by firemen and railroad employes from the Lake Shore shops. The railroad company turned over one of its buildings nearby to be used as a temporary morgue, and thither the charred and broken little bodies were removed as fast as they could be dug from the ruins. Within five hours practically all had been recovered. They were placed in rows in the Lake Shore shop. Identifications were made only by means of clothing or trinkets. The fire had swept away nearly all resemblance to human features in the majority of instances. Distracted parents soon began to gather, and the work of identifying the blackened and mangled corpses was commenced.

The gruesome task of taking out the blackened torsos and bits of human remains was one of horror. A line of rescuers was formed, backed by half a dozen ambulances. As the bodies were untangled from the debris, they were passed along to the stretchers and thence loaded in the ambulance. Mercifully covered with blankets, the pitiful sights were veiled from the crowd of curious that stretched about the entrance of the structure. As fast as a load was obtained it was driven away to the improvised morgue, to be succeeded by another within a short time.

The sights of the human charnel house caused the men delving into the mass of burned flesh to hesitate, but the work had to be done and done quickly, so their feelings had to be smothered for the time being as they tenderly handled all that was mortal of the little tots.

At the temporary morgue, the scenes became four-fold in their intensity of human suffering as fathers, mothers, brothers and sisters passed up and down the lines formed of one hundred and sixty corpses. To facilitate identification, the bodies were numbered as they were received at the morgue. The first identification was made by the mother of Nels and Tommy Thompson, aged six and nine years respectively. The heads and arms had been burned from both bodies, but the mother recognized the shoes on her children's feet. And so the disheartening work went on, accentuated now and then by a piercing shriek or plaintive moan as a loved one was recognized by clothing or token, such as a ring or necklace.

About the burned school house there are but few residences. In one of these, Mrs. Clarke Sprung lived. Her little boy, aged seven, was a pupil in the second grade. When the fire started, the mother ran over to the school and arrived when the first floor was a mass of flames. At a window on that floor she saw the face of her boy. He recognized her and pleaded for help.

Rushing across the street, Mrs. Sprung secured a step-ladder and placed it against the window. Climbing she reached for her boy. She caught him by the hair. It burned off in her hands and the lad fell back into the flames.

Three little girls met instant death in attempting to jump from the third story. They were Mary Ridgeway, Anna Roth and Gertrude Davis.

Pulled Arms From Body

A man named Dorn, who arrived upon the scene early, when the children were crowded in the front door, discovered his little girl among the mass of injured and crushed. He caught the girl by the hands and in his frantic efforts to save her, pulled her arms from her body.

The last four who were children of the janitor of the building lost their lives together.

The statement that the back door of the building was locked was made by Walter C. Kelley, the editor of the sporting department of the Cleveland Leader, two of whose children were killed.

As soon as the alarm was given, Mrs. Kelley ran from her home, which is not far from the school house, to the burning building. The front portion of the structure was a mass of flames and frenzied by the screams of the fighting and dying children, which reached her from the death trap at the front of the first flight of stairs, and behind that closed door, Mrs. Kelley ran to the rear, hoping to effect an entrance there and save her children. She was joined by a man whose name is not known, and the two tugged and pulled frantically at the door.

They were unable to move it in the slightest, and there was nothing at hand by which they could hope to break it down. In utter despair of saving any of the children, they turned their attention to the windows and, by smashing some of these, they managed to save a few of the pupils.

"They could have saved many more," said Mr. Kelley tonight, "if the door had not been locked. Nobody knows how many of the children might have made their way out before my wife reached there, if the door had not been locked. If half a dozen men had been there when my wife and her companion arrived at the school house," he said, "perhaps they might have broken down the door, but the two could do nothing and the flames spread so rapidly that it was all over in a few minutes."

The suburb of Collinwood contains about 8,000 inhabitants, and within a half hour after the outbreak of the fire nearly every one of them was gathered around the blazing ruins of the school house, hundreds of parents fighting frantically with the policemen and firemen, who were busily engaged in saving the lives of the children caught in the building and doing their best to extinguish the fire.

The police were utterly unable through lack of numbers to keep away the crowd that pressed upon them, and the situation soon became so serious that a number of the more cool-headed men in the throng took it upon themselves to aid in fighting back the crowd, while others worked to help the firemen and the police.

A Father's Efforts

Among these latter men was Wallace Upton, who reached the building shortly after the front door had caved in and disclosed to the horror-stricken crowd the awful scenes that had been enacted there. Just in front of Upton's eyes was his own ten year old daughter, helpless in the crush, badly burned and trampled upon, but still alive. The fire was close upon her and if she could not be saved at once she could not be saved at all. Upton sprang to help her and with all his strength sought to tear her from the weight that was pressing her down and from the flames which were creeping close. Although he worked with a desperation of despair his strength was unequal to the task. He fought on until his clothing was partly burned from him and the skin on his hands and face was scorched black. Other men attempted to induce him to move, but he refused until he saw that his girl was dead and that he could not save her life by sacrificing his own. He then withdrew from the school house and, although so seriously injured that he may die, lingered about the place for several hours, refusing to go to a hospital or to seek medical attention.

The flames spread with such terrific rapidity that within thirty minutes from the time the fire was discovered the school-house was nothing but a few blackened walls surrounding a cellar filled with corpses and debris.

The firemen dashed into the blazing wreckage and with rakes, forks, shovels and their bare hands, worked in the most frantic manner with the hope of saving a few more lives. They were unsuccessful, for none was taken alive from the ruins after the floors collapsed. Fragments of incinerated limbs, skulls and bones were found almost at every turn, and these were piled together in a little heap at one side of the building.

The great majority of the little bodies that were taken from the ruins were burned beyond all possible recognition. And it is no small part of the sorrow which is bearing down the people of North Collinwood, that positive identification of many of the children will never be made.

Besides the children who were killed inside the building, three little girls—Mary Ridgeway, Anna Roth, and Gertrude Davis—were instantly killed by leaping from the attic to the ground.

Miss Ethel Rose, a teacher on the first floor of the building, whose pupils were the youngest in the school, managed to get all but three of her charges out of the building in safety. Two of the smaller ones she carried in her arms.

Miss Anna Moran, the principal of the school, and two of the teachers, Miss Gollman and Miss Rowley, escaped by one of the windows in the rear. They remained with the panic-stricken children until they could do no more for them and then sought their own safety.

Miss Laura Bodey, the only teacher on the third floor, formed her pupils in line and marched them down to the second floor, where, finding the flames rushing up the stairway, she turned them around and hurried them back again to the third floor. She here broke a window with a chair and, getting onto the platform of the fire escape, lifted out her pupils one by one and sent them down.

Four or five children who broke from the line she had formed and ran down the stairway were killed.

One of the heroines of the catastrophe was little Mary Whitman. She ran through the smoke-filled halls and grasped her little brother, whom she managed to drag from the room and take out through a window, both of them being nearly strangled with smoke.

FATHER IN JAIL; SON GOES AWAY

Latter to Wed the Widow Patterson

Prisoner Held in $1,000 Bail on Charge of Shooting His Son-in-Law

BOSTON, Mar. 4.—While his father was locked up in Cambridge jail yesterday charged with shooting his son-in-law, William E. Weddleton of Brighton took out a license in Providence to marry Ellen Francis Patterson, a widow, also of Brighton.

Until midnight last night the four children of Mrs. Patterson, ranging from 6 to 17 years old, sat up waiting for the return of their mother at their home, 36 Lincoln street. Then, when told by a Herald reporter that a marriage license had been taken out in Providence, the two boys and two girls retired. Nothing had been said to the children about going to Providence.

Weddleton, John Patterson said, had boarded with them for about a year. Neither Mrs. Patterson nor Weddleton had ever said that they were to be married, although some friends had hinted at it about two weeks ago when visiting the house. The eldest son said he did not approve of the match, and if it was true declared, he would leave the house.

After taking out the license Weddleton and Mrs. Patterson were referred to the Rev. Alexander Mitchell of Providence, but he said last night that he had not married the couple. No record could be found of their marriage in that city.

Weddleton is 33 years old and Mrs. Patterson 35. He is a paper maker at Watertown. Mrs. Patterson has been a widow for about four years and is a laundress.

A Herald reporter called several times during the evening at 452 Massachusetts avenue, where Weddleton's parents live, but could get no response. Occupants of the same house said that none of the Weddleton family had been seen about the house all day or during the evening.

Alfred C. Weddleton, the father, who was arrested early yesterday morning charged with shooting his son-in-law, John J. Claire, at his home on Massachusetts avenue, pleaded not guilty before Judge Stone in the Cambridge district court yesterday morning. Weddleton said he shot to protect himself; that he was frightened, and heard Claire, who is blind, threaten him.

Judge Stone held Weddleton in $1,000 for a hearing March 10, failing which he was taken to the East Cambridge jail. Claire was reported to be still on the dangerous list last night at the Cambridge Relief Hospital.

GEORGE SKEFFINGTON FINED $20 AND COSTS FOR ASSAULT

MONCTON, N. B., Mar. 4.— George Skeffington was today fined twenty dollars and costs for assault on Nelson Rand, divisional master mechanic of the I. C. R.

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"DISGRACEFUL EXHIBITION"

Commander Sims on American Gunnery

Spaniards Were Worse or They Could Have Escaped Easily

WASHINGTON, March 3.—Commander William H. Sims, naval aide to President Roosevelt, by his own statement, is responsible for the "row" over criticisms of battleship construction. At the outset of his testimony before the senate committee on naval affairs, today, he gave the committee to understand it could expect some sensations. This was done in a preliminary statement outlining what he "had to do with naval criticism."

The plan of Commander Sims to give the committee a sensation was upset immediately by Senator Tillman, who suggested that the witness be instructed to confine his testimony to alleged faulty construction, and to say nothing at this time of criticism made of personnel or incomplete organization, or other matters, which are to be taken up later.

"The armor belt on all our battleships is too low," Commander Sims stated broadly. He charged that the statements made by Rear Admirals Converse and Capps were misleading.

"If any admiral should go out of port without full bunkers, say on a cruise to the Pacific—and should meet an enemy—say in the West Indies—he would be courtmartialed," said the commander.

"There might be a heavy sea running and the fleet not able to use their guns for a week. Then the ships would need full bunkers."

He said that the logs of the ships of the battleship fleet should be secured and these would show the water line of all the ships.

Commander Sims said that the French allow for extra and unanticipated weights, an that the Germans in designing ships figure on a normal line with bunkers of coal. He said that when the American fleet arrived at Rio de Janeiro the water lines of the Connecticut class were fully a foot and a half below normal.

Admiral Capps was then given permission to cross-examine the witness. The admiral did this chiefly by raising direct issue with the witness. He denied that the German naval constructors figure on full bunkers at locating the water line, and that the logs of a ship are accurate evidence, and defied the witness to show that vessels were overdraft a foot and a half upon arrival at Rio de Janeiro.

Admiral Capps asked the witness if he knew whether the double bottoms of the ships were full of water when they arrived at Rio. Commander Sims had no data in this regard, so Admiral Capps declined to continue. He commented that it was "obvious" that the witness had no data on which to base his criticism.

"Well, I should like to have the committee call Rear-Admiral Goodrich and officers of his type to bear me out," said Commander Sims.

"I'll make specific allusion to that officer later," said Admiral Capps. His tone indicated that the "specific allusion" would not be complimentary.

The question of turret construction and the relative merit of direct and uninterrupted ammunition hoists were then taken up. The commander gave a graphic description of the open turret with the direct hoists, which pictured the dangers in such manner that caused Mr. Hale to remark: "The wonder to me is that any men come out of there alive." He thought that there is no broken hoist that would permit of such rapid firing as is averaged by the American ships with the direct hoist, but that the danger now is great.

Gunnery was referred to incidentally by Senator Perkins, and Senator Tillman spoke of the record made at Santiago as "modern glory."

Commander Sims characterized the shooting by the American squadron as the "most disgraceful exhibition of gunnery that ever took place on the face of the globe." He said that only one-half per cent. of hits were averaged and four per cent. was the best average by the big guns. "Our gunnery could not shoot at all," he said. "The Spaniards were in a woeful condition," said the witness, "or they could have escaped easily."

ONTARIO BANK AFFAIRS

TORONTO, Mar. 4.— Ontario Bank shareholders voted this afternoon to appoint a committee of five to decide whether suit against old directors for two million dollars should be proceeded with.

THE FLEET WILL BE MAINTAINED

Radical Supporters Get a Rebuff

Asquith Sees Nothing to Create Alarm in Germany's Naval Programme

LONDON, Mar. 3—The House of Commons yesterday debated the motion of John Murray MacDonald, member of Falkirk, urging that in view of the continued friendly relations between Great Britain and the powers, a further reduction be made in armaments and effect be given to the policy of retrenchment and reform to which the Government is pledged.

HON. H. H. ASQUITH.

Chancellor of the Exchequer Asquith said that the motion, if passed, would be considered a declaration that the Government had failed to redeem its pledges. He maintained that during the last two years the Government had made considerable retrenchment in the army and navy expenses without impairing the fighting efficiency. He added: "Our naval position is one of unassailable supremacy. Such it must remain. The command of the sea is with us a matter of life or death. We must safeguard it, not against imaginary dangers, but against all contingencies that could reasonably enter into the calculations of a statesman. The government therefore believes it to be its duty to maintain our standard of relative naval strength."

This standard requires that the British navy be as strong as those of any two powers it is possible that Great Britain may be opposed to.

Alluding to numerous references regarding the naval activity of Germany, Mr. Asquith recalled that the government did not witness with apprehension a naval expansion which corresponded to the economic and advancing needs of that country. He added that there was the best reason to hope that the two peoples were advancing nearer and nearer to a complete mutual understanding. Mr. Asquith insisted that the naval policy of Great Britain was purely defensive.

Mr. MacDonald's motion was rejected by a vote of 320 to 73. The minority was composed of Nationalists, Laborites and Extreme Radicals.

MAGISTRATE ARRESTED FOR PERJURY AND CONSPIRACY

TORONTO, Ont., Mar. 4—T. J. Woodcock, magistrate for North York, was arrested today on charges of perjury and conspiring to defraud the county in connection with the revelations in regard to the recent investigation. Woodcock went to illegal lengths to make money out of his office and pile up costs against people brought before him.

COMMANDER PEARY HONORED

ST. JOHNS, N. F., March 4.—Governor MacGregor, on behalf of the citizens of St. Johns, tonight presented to Captain Robert Bartlett of Commander Robert E. Peary's steamer Roosevelt a service of silver plate in recognition of the cruise farthest north in 1905-06. The Newfoundland members of the crew were presented with silver watches. About 3,000 persons saw the presentation.

WILL GET A GRANT

TORONTO, Mar. 4.—Canadian Amateur Athletic Union representatives waited on the provincial government today and asked for five thousand dollars towards sending a team to the Olympic meet in London this summer. Some grant will probably be made.