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ST. JOHN, N. B., FRIDAY, JANUARY 9, 1914.

THE DEPRESSION PASSING.

Another indication of the return of easier money is found in the news of yesterday that the Bank of England, to a great extent the barometer of the financial world, had decided to reduce its discount rate. The Bank of England, by reason of its close and confidential relations with the greatest of the world's financiers has an exceptional opportunity to acurately forecast the financial weather, and the fact that it sees easy money in sight to a degree where its directors believe themselves justified in reducing the rate charged for discounting its loans is indeed an encouraging sign.

In connection with the action of the "Old Lady of Threadneedle Street," it is interesting at this time to recall the remarks made by the Canadian Minister of Finance, Hon. W. T. White, who, speaking at the annual banquet of the Commercial Travellers' Association in Montreal several weeks ago, sounded the note of easier money. Hon. Mr. White said the reorganization of China and the awakening of Japan had made heavy demands upon Western capital, while Egypt, India, and South Africa had also had to draw upon Canadian and American capital. Mr. White expressed the belief that the crisis, as far as Canada was concerned, had now passed, and, in spite of the general tightness of the money market, there remained the certainty that the revenue for the past year would exceed that of 1912. Mr. White said that Canada's trade last year was a billion dollars, and that this year it would be even more.

While the action of the Bank of England yesterday was forecasted in financial circles, it goes to bear out the prediction of Han. Mr. White and others versed in finance, who have expressed the opinion that the period of money stringency was about at an end. With easier money in the markets of the world it should be a great year for Canada, where the opportunities plentiful now than at any time in our history.

PRISON GRAFT EXPOSED.

Judging from the evidence given before the governmental commission, appointed to investigate conditions in the penitentiaries in Canada, a position on the staff of Kingston penitentiary affords a sure and speedy road to affluence. Inspector W. S. Hughes, formerly accountant at Kingston, was one of the witnesses examined at a recent session, and he told a sensational story of large and petty graft. Guards, some of whom were among the oldest in the service were trafficking in tobacco, whiskey, drugs and other contraband articles, which they disposed of to the prisoners at huge profits. As a result some guards on salaries of $600 per year were "able to support large and extravagant families and live on a scale they could not live on if they were receiving at least $2,000 per year."

The Montreal Gazette in its report of the session of the hearing held at Kingston, prints the following from Inspector Hughes' evidence:—"The inspector gave evidence showing the ingenuity of convicts and the manner in which contraband articles were brought in. Some time ago when convicts were allowed Christmas baskets a roasted chicken was seized and on examination it was found to contain $52, besides this there were walnuts which were thought to be too heavy. When opened they were found to contain opium, brandy, whiskey and money. The shells had been split and after having been filled were glued together. Tobacco had been discovered in turnips. A piece had been cut from the turnip, the centre hollowed and filled with tobacco and the piece put back in place.

The inspector admitted that the officials knew that this had been going on for some time, but nothing could be done to get at the source.

In connection with the investigation in Kingston penitentiary fourteen guards are under suspicion, and it is said there is sufficient evidence against all of them to warrant their dismissal. After concluding with Kingston the commission will, it is said, look into the administration of the other penitentiaries in Canada, the government being determined to cleanse the service in every particular.

A NEWSPAPER CAMPAIGN.

Britain's latest punitive expedition against the Mad Mullah has been undertaken partly as the result of a campaign of criticism in the British press. By some of the papers not unfriendly to the Government it was alleged that friendly tribes in British territory in Somaliland were being pillaged and tortured by the Mad Mullah, that this bandit was receiving his arms from a Government factory in Abyssinia, and that the British authorities instead of undertaking the paramount duty of protecting the Somalis had resorted to a campaign of denying the truth of the charges.

In order to prove that the reports that had slowly made their way to the world and were the basis of the charges were true, one paper despatched a correspondent named Alan Ostler to Abyssinia. At the risk of his life and after almost incredible difficulties he reached the scene of the depredations of the Mad Mullah, and after another interval of months he succeeded in communicating with his paper, declaring that the worst of the charges were true. Later his letters began to appear and they are partly responsible for the determination of the Government to proceed against the Mullah. It appears, moreover, that the Abyssinians have been following the example of the Mullah, and Mr. Ostler tells of at least one instance in which a band of Abyssinians had robbed a village and maltreated its inhabitants. He happened to reach the village when it was still in the hands of the marauders, and though he was unarmed, he made such a fine display of indignation and authority that the Abyssinians with many apologies took themselves off. They had acted, Mr. Olster says, upon the direct instructions of the Governor of Harrar, and were indeed led by one of his captains.

This incident, says the Toronto Mail and Empire, points to the possibility of Britain becoming involved with Abyssinia, but it is to be hoped that the Abyssinian marauders will be found to be outlaws with no authority from the Abyssinian Government for their acts of aggression. The task of fighting Abyssia is not one that any civilized nation covets, since the disastrous campaign of Italy against Menelik some years ago and the humiliation of the Italian army in its hopeless attempt.

The Medicine Hat Times makes an intersting contribution to the available information on the cost of living when it tells the story of a countryman who drove up to the store of a Medicine Hat dealer with a load of turkeys which he disposed of at sixteen cents per pound. Half an hour later the identical turkeys were on sale by that dealer at 35 cents per pound. Continuing to comment on the moral of the little story the Medicine Hat Times says: "Now the merchant in question is a member of the Liberal party and no doubt if we ask him what makes living so high he would reply that it is the tariff extracted by the ungodly Tories. Yet we fail to see where the tariff came in in connection with the above transaction."

The Pugsley papers suggest that a joint debate should be held on the naval question. Isn't that rather an unfortunate suggestion? Premier Flemming, representing the Conservative party, once chased that doughty Grit welterweight champion Mr. Frank B. Carvell half over the province before finally inducing him to join in debate on the Valley Railway question. And the things that happened to Mr. Carvell on that occasion are still a painful memory with the Pugsley organs. Why seek to repeat the agony

The Times remarks, "What the Liberal party accomplished between 1896 and 1911 is known of all men." The Standard is hardly prepared to go as far as that, but we do believe that when the National Transcontinental Railway graft report is made public, a small portion of light will be thrown upon some of the things the party of Laurier accomplished between those dates. However, it is doubtful if the disclosures will be relished by, or creditable to, the party that the Times now supports.

Dr. Michael Clark, in Halifax, awakened to the fact that his leader had made certain pronouncements on the high cost of living and promptly followed suit. He sees in the tariff the greatest cause of high food prices, and yet it is a safe bet that if the Government should introduce tariff legislation in the form of a downward revision, at the coming session of Parliament, this Red Deer warrior would be on his feet with Mr. Pugsley, Frank Carvell and the rest of them, howling against any change.

The prospect that another automobile company is being formed to establish a plant in St. John is good news. With the return of easier money there is no doubt that 1914 should prove the most successful year in the history of the city.

If the Borden Government does nothing more at the coming session of Parliament than introduce the parcel post system it will have done enough to earn the gratitude of the people.

If the average citizen really wants to find the person who is to blame for the increase in his living expenses, in most cases it is only necessary to secure the assistance of a hand mirror.

Diary of Events

George William Allan, the great Canadian statesman, was born in Toronto ninety-two years ago today. Upper Canada College, in Toronto, was his alma mater. After graduating in 1839 he took up the study of law and was called to the bar in 1846. He spent several years in travel, and on his return speedily became prominent in public affairs. In 1855 the voters of his native city honored him with the office of mayor. Many other honors were showered upon him, including the presidency of the Canadian Institute of Toronto. In 1869 he was appointed government trustee for the municipal bond fund of the Toronto and Nipissing railway. From 1858 until 1867 he sat in the legislative council of Canada, and after confederation he was called to the Senate in 1876 he was chosen chancillor of Trinity College. He died in Toronto in 1901.

January 9 was the birthday, in 1626, of Armand Jean Bouthillier de Rance, the reformer of the Cistercian or Trappist order. It was the Frenchman who instituted the strict observances which have made the Trappist community at Oka, on the Ottawa river in Quebec famous throughout the world. The austerities preached and practiced by de Rance are faithfully observed at the Abbey of Notre Dame du Lac. Absolute silence is the rule at the famous Canadian abbey, except for those who must occasionally speak to visitors. The hours are long, the work hard, the diet very light, and the religious observances very strict, yet the Oka farmer-monks thrive upon their regimen, and most of them succumb only to old age.

FIRST THINGS

FROM PRIVATE TO GENERAL.

The first man to rise from a private to the command of the United States army was Samuel Baldwin Marks Young, who was born in Pittsburgh, Pa., seventy-four years ago today. He was the son of Capt. John Young, Jr. His military career began in 1881, when he enlisted as a private in Company K., of the Twelfth Pennsylvania Infantry. Within a few months he became commanding captain of the Fourth Pennsylvania cavalry, and in the last year of the civil war he was berevetted brigadier-general for his gallant service in the campaign terminating with the surrender of the army under Lee. After he was honorably mustered out of the volunteers, he entered the regular army as a second-lieutenant, and was colonel of the Third cavalry at the outbreak of the war with Spain. He was major-general of volunteers during that conflict. He was made brigadier-general in the regular army in 1900, major-general the following year, and lieutenant-general in command of the United States army in 1903. He retired by operation of the age-limit regulation ten years ago today.

THE PASSING DAY

KING'S EVIL SUPERSTITION

Two hundred years ago today, Jan. 9, 1714, witnessed the last observance of the ancient English superstition that the touch of the monarch was capable of curing scrofula, then king's evil. For many centuries, every ninth of January was marked by a vast procession of sufferers from the affection, who passed in line before the king or queen. The ruled touched each as he passed, and the royal laying on of hands was supposed to bring about an immediate cure.

Queen Anne was the last to observe this ancient custom. In 1712 she announced in the London Gazette her intention to touch publicly all sufferers from the king's evil who might present themselves. Many thousands responded on Jan. 9, 1713, and again on Jan. 9, 1914. Anne, the last of the Stuarts, died on Aug. 1, 1714, and one of the first acts of her successor, George I., the first of the House of Hanover to sit on the English throne, was to abolish the old custom of touching for king's evil.

Edward the Confessor was resonsible for inaugurating the crude superstitution that the laying on of royal hands could cure the king's evil, which was then one of the great scourges of the English people. The first observance was on Jan. 9, 1058, and that date was kept ever afterward. The custom was continued, with occasional lapses, by the Normans, the Plantagenets,, the Lancasters, Yorks, Tudors and Stuarts. During the quarter of a century of the reign of Charles II. no less than 92,107 persons were touched by that monarch; and, according to Wiseman, the king's physician, nearly all were cured Dr. Wiseman certainly belied his name.

When the house of Hanover began its rule over England two centuries ago this year, medical science has made sufficient progress to dispel the illusion that any constitutional morbid condition such as scrofula could be cured by any such means. Hygienic measures to promote the health and nutrition of the young, together with suitable diet and tonics, have accomplished more toward the eradication of scrofulous taint than all the superstitions since the beginning of time. From one of the most widely prevalent and loathsome of diseases, scrofula has become comparatively mild, and in most cases curable.

Qualified.

Professor—If a person in good health (but who imagined himself sick) should send for you, what would you do?

Medical Student—Give him something to make him sick, and then administer an antidote.

Professor—Don't waste any more time here; hang out your shingle.

Did He?

Nat Goodwin tells an amusing story of how, when travelling in a Western American town, he was asked to take a Sunday school class in the absence of the teacher. Nat agreed, but great was his consternation when he saw that he was to teach a body of beautiful maidens instead of a bunch of small kids, as he had expected. Still, he was game. "Now, then, young ladies," said Nat, becoming more composed as he took a seat and picked up a lesson book, "I want to follow the procedure of your regular teacher to the letter. What does she do first?" "Why, the first thing she does," demurely replied one of the pretty ones, "is to kiss each member of the class!"

IN LIGHTER VEIN

AND HE DID.

Both Glad.

"Were you glad to get back to school and see your dear teacher?"

"Well," replied the very observant boy, "I guess I was just about as glad as dear teacher was to get back and see me."

Poor Judgment.

An American motoring through a small Scotch town was pulled up for excessive speed.

"Didn't you see that notice, 'Dead Slow?" inquired the policeman.

"'Course I did," returned the Yankee, "but I thought it referred to your durned little town."

First-Class.

An old Irish countrywoman, going to Dublin by train, stepped into a first-class carriage with her basket, and made herself comfortable.

Just before the train started the conductor passed along, and, noticing the woman and the basket, said gruffly:

"Are you first-class, my good woman?"

"Begor, I am, and thank you," she replied, with a smile, "and how do you feel yourself?"

Pity the Sheep.

Bishop Moore, at a luncheon, told a story about one of the clergymen of his diocese, a divine noted for the large offertories he could always

Lawd, said the bishop—let us call him Lawd—was addressing last month a Sunday school. In his address Lawd likened himself to a shepherd, and his congregation he likened to the sheep. Then he asked the children:

"And what, dear children, what does the shepherd do for the sheep?"

An urchin piped shrilly:

"Shears 'em!"

Wilsonian Wit.

President Woodrow Wilson has a very quick wit. A man in the course of an animated conversation, noticing that Mr. Wilson's eyeglasses were perched perilously near the tip of his nose, remarked, "Your glasses, Governor, are almost in your mouth." "That's all right," was the quick response, "I want to see what I'm talking about."

George's Excuse.

"Poor, dear woman, she has probably been working hard all day! I must not disturb her," murmured Jones, as he crept upstairs at 3 a. m. on all fours. He was just going into the bedroom when one of those infernal boards gave a squeak. Mrs. Jones turned over. "George!" she whispered. Immediately George dived under the bed. "George!" repeated Mrs. Jones. No reply. "George!" continued Mrs. Jones in sterner tones, "you may as well come out, for I know you are there." There was now no help for it; George crept out, rubbing his eyes. "Bless my heart, Maria," he said, "I was dreaming I was out motoring!"

Perfectly Agreed.

Mrs. O. H. P. Belmont, discussing the impoliteness, the free and easy, over-familiar impoliteness of the customs officers of New York, said at the suffrage lunchrooms:

"These men carry impoliteness to the pink of perfection. They are as perfectly impolite as an old Scot I used to know was perfectly surly.

"Saunders, a Highland keeper, made surliness almost an art. A gentleman said to him one glorious autumn morning:

"'Fine day, Saunders.'

"Saunders grunted.

"'Saunders, I said "Fine day,"' the gentleman persisted.

"'Verra weel, verra weel,' said Saunders. 'I dinna want tae argue.'"

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