

# The St. John Standard

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ST. JOHN, N. B., MONDAY, MARCH 18, 1918.

"We are fighting for a worthy purpose, and we shall not lay down our arms until that purpose has been fully achieved."—H. M. The King.  
TO THE PEOPLE OF THE EMPIRE—Every fighting unit we can send to the front means one step nearer peace.

## BELEATED CREDIT.

That the administration given to the Province of New Brunswick by the Government headed by Hon. J. A. Murray was immeasurably better than the followers of Mr. Foster would admit during the last provincial election campaign, and that the Foster government, now in power can find nothing to improve in the methods in which the business of the province was looked after by their predecessors, was made strikingly apparent in the Legislature last week.

The first admission to this effect came from Hon. P. J. Veniot, Minister of Public Works. In introducing his Highway Bill Mr. Veniot announced, as one of its features, a patrol system, by which the roads of the province would be the subject of attention from officials who would go over them and report cases of damage while that damage was small and could be easily repaired. This policy was adopted by Hon. B. Frank Smith, while Minister of Public Works in the Murray Government, and had that Government been returned to power in the last election the patrol system would have been in effect long before this.

In the election campaign Mr. Veniot and others declared against this plan from every platform from which they spoke; it was too expensive, conditions did not warrant it, it could not be satisfactorily worked out and other arguments were advanced with all the force the spellbinders could bring to bear. Yet, after the Foster government had been a year in office and Mr. Smith's successor has had opportunity to study the needs of the roads, we find the patrol system, identical with Mr. Smith's proposal, as the principal feature of the policy Mr. Veniot put forward as built upon the results of a season's observation. Is further evidence required to show that Mr. Smith was right in his advocacy of the road patrol, or that when Mr. Veniot and others condemned that system they did so for political effect alone and had no regard for the best interests of the province?

The administration and official actions of the late Government received further endorsement at the hands of Hon. J. P. Byrne, and Hon. Dr. Smith on Friday last. Introducing the bill to amend the Workmen's Compensation Act, which amending measure is based on the report of the commission appointed by the Murray Government, Hon. Mr. Byrne stated that the late Government had done wisely in appointing the commission and paid tribute to the men who had the work in hand.

Hon. Dr. Smith, introducing a measure for forest protection and for the appointment of a provincial advisory board to take much of the administration of the forests and the protection of fish and game out of the hands of the department of lands and mines, also stated that the former Government deserved credit for the establishment of a forestry department and for the work already done in that service.

Thus we find three members of Mr. Foster's government, including Mr. Veniot, the real ruler of the administration, paying tribute to the good work of their predecessors. As these ministers represent three separate departments of government, and the action for which they commended their predecessors concerned public activities which had no relation to each other, it is a safe assumption that those of Mr. Foster's colleagues who have not yet spoken will find that in their departments, too, it is difficult to improve upon the administration of those associated with Mr. Murray.

It is indeed gratifying that the members of the Murray Government are at last to receive credit for their work and that this credit comes from the very men who criticized and condemned them when they thought it was to their political advantage to do so. True, the credit is belated, but it serves to demonstrate that after obtaining office the Fosterites found they would do no better than the men against whose Government they were indulged in such torrents of what their own actions now show to be misrepresentation and unwarranted criticism. The public is daily learning that the Government the province enjoyed under Hon. Mr. Murray was far superior to anything likely to be produced by Mr. Veniot and the gentlemen associated with him.

## BOMBING GERMANY.

An interesting item of last week concerning the activities of the aerial fleet of the Allies was to the effect that a ton of high explosive bombs were dropped on Coblenz, a Rhine city, according to estimates of its

population, is about the size of St. John. It is not stated what amount of damage was done and it is probably impossible for the airmen to make such an estimate as the damage would depend upon where the bombs struck. It may be stated as certain, however, that the noise of the exploding bombs sufficed to throw the people into a panic, and to bring home to them a very real knowledge of war and of the things the people of Allied cities, subject to German bombardment, have had to endure.

Coblenz is about one hundred miles from the Allied lines and there are scores of German cities of equal importance within equally easy reach. Consequently the success with the raid on Coblenz was carried out might well impress the Germans with the danger of future possibilities of similar class but in different directions. The raid, we may believe, was undertaken for purposes of retaliation and if it is followed by others will probably attain its object. The interior of Germany, by such means will be brought to experience something of the horrors the German general staff have been imposing on other countries. It is to be expected that there will be many more such raids for the Allies seem to have undertaken to teach the enemy some wholesome and much needed lessons and aerial air superiority seems certain to increase rapidly as the season progresses. The Germans will now get a taste of their own medicine.

## CAPTAIN BAILEY'S SENTENCE.

There is a lesson for the loose-tongued in the case of Captain Bailey, the returned officer who took advantage of a meeting of the Dominion Alliance in Toronto to libel the Canadian soldiers and who was promptly arrested for the offence. He was tried last week, found guilty and sentenced to a three months term in the Toronto Prison Farm.

Captain Bailey said the Canadian soldiers were drunk in their trenches on Christmas Eve and investigation of his story developed that the nearest he got to British trenches in France was a hospital camp in England and consequently made his statement without the evidence to back it up. His three months sentence will probably give him time to reflect over the advisability of keeping his tongue between his teeth when he feels impelled to slander a better man. It is to be hoped that the case will prove a lesson to the scores of loose-tongued scandal-mongers to be found in every community in Canada. St. John is not without its representatives in this class, men who delight to criticize and vilify where no warrant for such conduct exists. Within the past few weeks there have been instances of this sort of thing in this city and The Standard has in mind a recent public meeting at which a citizen made statements seriously reflecting upon the character and probity of every member of the Provincial Legislature. That gentleman had no warrant for the views he so freely expressed and while his remarks elicited some jocular approval from his hearers he might find if called upon to make good his allegations that his careless speech had placed him in serious trouble. There is a regrettable tendency to criticize men in public life who have done nothing to warrant the criticism and whose public and private character would compare very favorably with that of their critics. The people have become accustomed to that sort of thing and little attention is paid to it. The case of Captain Bailey should however cause some of those free talkers to think before speaking.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### THE PROPOSED CHANGE IN THE RULE OF THE ROAD.

To the Editor of The Standard:  
Sir—In recent issues of provincial papers references have been made to proposed changes in the traffic laws respecting the rules of the road. This proposition to change our existing British custom to harmonize with the American laws is now incorporated in the provisions of the new highway act recently presented to our provincial legislature. This means that if it finds favor in Nova Scotia it will likely become the law in New Brunswick.

This, Mr. Editor, in the estimation of many people in this and other Maritime Provinces, is both an unnecessary and an anti-British move. Justification for this most radical action is claimed on the ground of uniformity of custom with the idea of avoiding confusion and possible accident. This sounds plausible. But it is well to remember that on this, as on most other questions, there is room for both

difference of opinion and discussion. This, the Minister of Public Works is fair enough to expect and even to invite. No doubt when the bill is up for debate attention will be given to its various features, but I am asking the privilege of saying a few words through the columns of your paper.

Some of the many objections to this proposed change are as follows:  
First, there is a strong suspicion prevailing that it is in some way being fostered by automobile manufacturers who wish to avoid the bother and expense of making cars with special steering gear for these eastern provinces. This suspicion may be wholly unfounded but it nevertheless exists.

Second, it is dangerous, notwithstanding the fact that the change is proposed in the alleged interest of safety to the public its effect would be the opposite. This would be the result of two causes, one transient and one permanent. The transient danger is of course the confusion created by changing established customs when an element of danger always exists. This, of course, would in time pass away.

There is, however, permanent danger in this proposed change which no amount of practice can eliminate. This is because passing to the right is always attended with more danger and inconvenience than passing to the left. Our present traffic laws did not originate in these provinces but in England long ago and were adopted not hastily but after careful consideration and in the interest of the safety and convenience of the public. Passing to the left was the more convenient and safe way. With two sitting on the driver's seat the driver's whip would be on the right and the person sitting beside him and the driver of passing teams would be next to each other with their right hands, next the point of danger. This is an important factor in both avoiding collisions and giving protection and aid to those who may be in danger. This is as true of the auto as of the carriage. So the change, if made, would greatly increase rather than diminish danger and confusion.

Third, it is hardly correct to say, as has been stated, that in this particular the Maritime Provinces are alone and singular in their custom of passing to the left. This is not true even in Canada and much less in British North America. Including Newfoundland the British provinces are equally divided on this question, five holding to the British and five to the American customs. Thus the argument of going with the majority largely falls to the ground.

Fourth, so far as New Brunswick is concerned it would be exceedingly expensive for those who could least afford it. Over a large part of the province the custom prevails of setting the shafts of sleds and sleighs over to suit the prevailing track and to facilitate passing on snowy roads. The proposed change would necessitate setting the shafts to the opposite side. This would impose an expense of at least \$5.00 to every one affected, amounting in the aggregate to a vast expenditure. This would largely come out of the farmers and be in interests of the auto manufacturers!

The fifth and last objection to which I shall refer is the greatest of all, namely it is anti-British. We have no objection to depart from British laws and customs if there is any sufficient reason for so doing, but in this case there seems to be none, but many substantial reasons for continuing as we are. Have those who advocate this change considered the reasons which led to an American rule of the road as distinguished from the British? It is easily stated. While our smart American consuls gained what they are pleased to call their independence their forthright set about to eliminate as far as possible everything that savored of English ways. They could not very easily change the language of their ships, was talked of. Many customs were however changed and among them the rule of the road. It was said in this matter the French custom was adopted, but of this I cannot speak with certainty. The late American States adopted the pass to the right to spite the English, and now we are asked to give up the British way the world over to please the Americans!

It may be asked if this be true, how is it that the central Canadian provinces follow the American custom? The explanation is easy. Being wedged in between Quebec and the United States Ontario adopted the Franco-American custom because at that time she had no communication with any other peoples. Later, as the prairie provinces were settled chiefly by Ontarians and Americans these new provinces adopted the customs to which the people were already accustomed. The custom, however, never got across the Rockies and British Columbia stands with the Maritime Provinces and Newfoundland for the British rule, and I fancy they expect to continue to remain so. It would be desirable, of course, to have one rule of the road for all the Canadian provinces though there is no imperative need for this. In any case the present proposed change is professionally more to bring us in harmony with our friends across the border rather than other Canadians. If Canadian uniformity is so greatly desirable why not ask the central provinces to return to the original British rule? Why should we be asked to give up every Canadian distinctive custom to copy a poorer American one? It is still true, Mr. Editor, that "Travelling the roads is a paradox quite."

If you turn to the left you are sure to be right.  
If you turn to the right you are wrong.  
Yours, etc.,  
BRITISH CANADIAN.

## CONCERNING WILD CAT BOUNTIES

To the Editor of The Standard:  
Dear Sir—As the speech from the throne forecast amendments to the "Game Act" it might be well to call the attention of hon. members of the Legislature to one of its most glaring injustices.

Some years ago the bounty on wild cat was £100. This was reduced to \$1.00. Between this dollar and the trapper is erected a system of intricate red tape, which renders the bounty unobtainable in most cases. To use the words of one trapper, "After I kill a cat it is up to me to travel twenty miles to a game war-

## Little Benny's Note Book

BY LEE PAPE.

Us fellows played we was wild animal hunters yesterday, me and Skinny Martin being the hunters and Sam Cross and Pudda Simkins being the hunting dogs running ahead of us barking like anything and getting down on their hands and knees every once in a while and smelling the pavement out loud to see if they was on the rite track, wick jest as we was starting to run past the back alley we saw Miss Winkels yellow cat setting on the fents of the corner house, and Sam and Pudda started to jump up at it yelling, Bow, wow, wow, and the cat ran along the fentess like lightning with the 2 dogs after it and the 2 hunters after the 2 dogs going Bang bang, panther, panther. And wen the panther got to Miss Winkels yard it jumped down and the hunters and the dogs all climbed over the fents after it, wick by that time the panther was out of site.

Quick to the ambush, I sed. Meening a ash barril over in the corner of the yard, and the 2 hunters and the 2 dogs got down behind it to wait for the panther to come out of its lair. Wick jest then the back setting room window opened and Miss Winkel put her hed out, saying, Boys wat are you doing in heer down there?

Wich us fellows all quick got out frum in back of the ash barril, Sam Cross saying, We lost sumthing.

How absurd, wat did you lose? sed Miss Winkel. Wich us fellows all looked at each other, and I sed, mam?

I sed wat did you lose? sed Miss Winkel.

A mouth organ, sed Skinny Martin.

Well how did you lose it in my yard? sed Miss Winkel.

Not being a easy question to anser under the circumstances, so nobody ansered it, and Miss Winkel sed, Im coming down there to find out for myself, And she shut the window and came down, ony by the time she got there the 2 hunters and the 2 dogs were over the fents and running down the alley a mile a minit.

den, very often he would be out on patrol and my trip is for nothing, wick wick Oh, ony by the time I find out if warden is at home. The skin of the cat has to be exhibited by me to the warden. It is not lawful to leave the skin with him, or to send him the tally. I have to be there at time of claim, myself in person. So, after wasting \$2.50 worth of time I go home without anything accomplished, and make no special effort to destroy wild cats in future. It is more trouble to get the \$1.00 due than to catch the wild cat.

In corroboration of the above—As a dealer, last year I bought and sold about six hundred of these wild cats. Less than two hundred of these had been presented for bounty. What of the others? Either I was paying more than a dollar per skin higher than other local dealers, which is not likely, or Obtaining The Bounty Was More Trouble Than it Was Worth. If there is any object in the Department paying a bounty at present, why not make a paltry sum more easily obtained by the trapper who has earned it?

The solution is simple enough—Allow the trapper to assign his interest to the village storekeeper, the travelling buyer of raw furs, lumber, scaler, boss of logging camp, or any other person. Make it transferable.

The only objection which can be made is this—Uniformed persons might suggest that wildcats might for instance be introduced from outside the Province and a fraud be perpetrated on the dept. of land and mines. From where? Not from Maine for the bounty over there is \$4.00 which will be very probably increased to \$8.00 at next session of the State Legislature. Similarly in N. S. and other Provinces and States, it will be found N. B. pays very little and it is very hard to obtain even that small amount.

It is hardly necessary to remind you of the damage done to our natural resources by wild cats, such as the destruction of doe and young deer, rabbits, woodcock in general, and partridge in particular—the increasing shortage of partridge so much commented upon in more aggravated form in those counties where the wild cats most abound—the enormous destruction of insect killing birds, young and eggs, and consequent destruction of forest trees and field crops by ever increasing worms, bugs flies and wood borers—all this every fairly well informed person knows. It might be well for every interested person to send to their member this letter; asking him to consider the changing of Form 500-12-15, Claimant's Statement to render the bounty negotiable or transferable. Thanking you for space in your valuable paper.

ARTHUR SLIPP.

Woodstock, N. B.

## A BIT OF VERSE

OH, TO BE HOME!

By James T. Fields.  
Oh, to be home again, home again, home again!  
Under the apple boughs, down by the mill;  
Mother is calling me, father is calling me.  
Calling me, calling me, calling me still.  
Oh, how I long to be wandering, wandering, Thru the green meadows and over the hill;  
Sisters are calling me, brothers are calling me.  
Calling me, calling me, calling me still.  
Oh, once more to be home again, home again.  
Dark grows my sight and the evening is chill;  
Do you not hear how the voices are calling me.  
Calling me, calling me, calling me still?

## A BIT OF FUN

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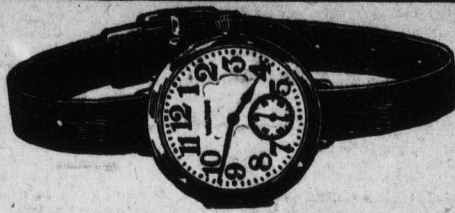
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