

WILL CONSIDER ABOLITION OF STATUTE LABOR TAX

NEW COUNCILLORS WILL RECONSIDER ABOLITION OF TAX

Assessment Commissioner Foresees Debate on Question Early in the Year.

SOLDIERS EXEMPT

Here is a real live tip from Assessment Commissioner Harry Bennett for those gentlemen who may wish to dodge their statute labor tax of \$5 per annum—join the militia.

Full-fledged members of any branch of the militia are the only persons who are exempted from the payment of the statute labor tax—and women. And no change can be effected by the municipality without legislation from the provincial government.

But members of the militia who desire to escape the tax must bring an order from their commanding officer that they are "efficient" members of his unit.

Commissioner Bennett foresees that the 1924 city councillors will again consider the proposed abolition of the tax. They must consider the famous British report, and one of his recommendations was that this tax should be abolished as the time and energy did not warrant the financial returns, roughly \$6,000, according to the city treasurer.

Commissioner Bennett discounts, however, the theory advanced that many men have left the city rather than pay the \$5 head tax. It means very little spread over a period of 12 months, he says, acknowledging, however, that there is one evident unfairness—many women, while entitled to vote, pay no statute labor tax.

MRS. N. TOWNSEND PASSES IN BROOKLYN

Former Resident of Dutton Succumbs to Short Illness.

Word has been received here that Mrs. Nancy Townsend, a former resident of Canada, died at St. Barnabas Hospital, Newark, N. J., on Dec. 18, after a brief illness.

Mrs. Townsend, formerly Miss Nancy MacIntyre, was born in Dutton, Ont., but for a number of years prior to her marriage she resided in New York City, where she held a responsible position as private secretary in a large business house.

On her marriage to the late Forbes Townsend, who predeceased her several years ago, she moved to South Brooklyn, where the old Townsend homestead is situated.

Mrs. Townsend was a frequent visitor to Canada, and she leaves on both sides of the border many to mourn her sudden passing.

The surviving members of her immediate family are, Mrs. T. C. Lipsey, and the Misses Sarah, Bessie and Mary MacIntyre, all of St. Thomas, and her brother, J. H. MacIntyre, of this city.

The latter visited her during her illness and was also present at the last rites in the body was laid to rest in Greenwood Cemetery, South Brooklyn, N. Y.

WRIT IS ISSUED.

W. C. Fitzgerald issued a county court writ today on behalf of T. H. Griffith against Edwin and A. H. Marshall Hawkins for \$10.75 due on four promissory notes.

The Doll Lady Says:

I want every little girl in London or anywhere in the Western counties who would like to have one of my wonder "Ma-Ma" Dolls to have enough time to get her orders in, so I am going to stay with The London Advertiser for a short while so that every little girl may get her heart's desire—a "Wonder Character Doll." Scores of girls have written asking for a little time after Christmas to complete their work. Go ahead, girls—finish up and send in your orders as quickly as possible. You will find Christmas Day a good time to see your friends and complete your orders. Get your Wonder Character "Ma-Ma" Doll by New Year's Day—so hurry.

THE DOLL LADY,
London Advertiser.



SCENE AT MCCORMICK'S FIRE.

Three firemen were overcome by smoke before the flames were subdued. Owing to the building being of fireproof construction throughout, the fire was kept from spreading, and the damage resulted chiefly from smoke and water.

RAZE HISTORIC HOSTEL THAT SHELTERED GRANT

Old British Empire Hotel Is Being Demolished After Eighty Years.

SAW COLORFUL DAYS

King Edward, as Lord Renfrew, Was a Guest in the Building.

The Old British Empire Hotel, one of the ancient landmarks of London, is being demolished and old times are recalling events of other days. The hotel was situated at the intersection of Bathurst and Burwell streets and the Hamilton road, and it was there before a train entered London. When the first locomotive pulled into London December 25, 1825, the British Empire Hotel got a black eye, for the stages found their business taken away from them, and passenger business centered around what was then the handsome new depot of the Great Western Railway, then as now at Richmond street.

But in 1856, the G. T. R. also came to London, and the company erected a depot just across the street from the hotel, on Bathurst street, between Burwell and Maitland. Thus for 27 years, the British Empire Hotel and a new lease of life, and it did a land office business with travellers. But in 1883, the Grand Trunk purchased the Great Western Railway, and the depot business of both roads was transferred to the station at Richmond street.

The depot closed. The G. T. R. depot across from the hotel was closed, and closed it was remained for 40 years. It was a sturdy brick building, many stories high, with slate roof and stone foundation, and during the four decades it has bravely done its best to weather the inclement elements. But now it has crumbled into decay.

During these four decades the old hotel across the way has seen many vicissitudes, but finally it has been torn down to make room for a modern building.

Each structure could boast of having sheltered famous people. In 1878, General U. S. Grant, former president of the United States, and commander-in-chief of the North American army, came to London over the Grand Trunk and went west to Windsor over the Western Railway. While awaiting his arrival, the nabobs of London and district made the British Empire Hotel, then kept by T. J. Webb, their headquarters, and the roof was covered with cheering crowds when the royal train pulled in.

Grand Visited Hotel. In 1878, General U. S. Grant, former president of the United States, and commander-in-chief of the North American army, came to London over the Grand Trunk and went west to Windsor over the Western Railway. While awaiting his arrival, the nabobs of London and district made the British Empire Hotel, then kept by T. J. Webb, their headquarters, and the roof was covered with cheering crowds when the royal train pulled in.

Then in 1880, Princess Louise, and her husband, the Marquis of Lorne, came to London over the Grand Trunk, and took carriages to see the city from the old depot.

In 1881, the place became known as Collett's Tavern, and after it lost its license to sell liquor it earned the title of Dynamite Hall, from the fact that dynamite was stored in the building. It was a poor night that the police were not called to the hall for some reason or other. Finally, in the last throes of dissolution, part of the hotel was changed into a black and white shop, but just as it was about to be demolished, the British Empire Hotel building, alone and unoccupied, became a resort for bats and owls, and other things of the night, human and otherwise. After a life of more than 80 years, it is now levelled to the ground.

"LOVELIEST CHILD" GUEST OF HONOR

Ella Mae Scoyne Makes Speech to Sunday School Friends.

Canadian Press Despatch.

Winnipeg, Dec. 24.—Western Canada is to have a mild Christmas, unless there are extraordinary and unexpected developments in the weather situation within the next few hours. The temperature everywhere from the head of the lakes to the Rockies is far above zero, and there is little snow anywhere.

Little Ella Mae Scoyne, the Advertiser's "Loveliest Child," was the guest of honor at the Christmas entertainment held last Friday evening in the Kensall Park Baptist Church, Springfield Drive. This is Ella Mae's Sunday School, and a speech was demanded from her which she accomplished most effectively, concluding it with a kiss thrown to her audience, where upon one was demanded by the chairman, Rev. Dr. Bowley Green, to whom it was pleasantly granted by the little lady.

Several features contributed to the splendid success of the entertainment. The Sunday School rooms were prettily decorated, and a well-rendered program was given consisting of recitations, dialogues, tableaux, drills, choruses, duets and solos. The building was filled to capacity and the laden Christmas tree revealed a present for each child in the school. The young men class received a banner which was an award for their splendid progress during the year.

Further evidence is forthcoming that London's reputation for "doing things right" has gone far afield.

City Assessment Commissioner H. Bennett received no less than three communications from other municipalities, seeking information as to the manner in which the assessment is levied by his staff.

From Venice, Cal., came the first letter. A member of the city council of Niagara Falls came the second appeal for data, while the third was received from the Ratepayers' Association of Prince Albert, Sask.

These are but three samples of what publicity for good work has been doing for the Forest City.

GOES TO REFORMATORY TO PRACTICE SNORING

James Williamson Will Hibernates to Guelph Institution For Winter.

James Williamson, "the man who won't work," was given a four months' stretch in the Ontario Reformatory, by Magistrate Graydon today. Williamson has been in the habit of snoring away the evening hours in a police station cell for some time, and the chief deemed it time to call a halt.

"You don't want to work," decided the court, taking a look at the husky prisoner in the box. "He won't work," declared Chief Birrell. "He has been spending his nights in the police station. You're either got to go to work or to the reformatory."

Williamson maintained a discreet silence. The court sentenced the prisoner to six months, but on second thought made it four.

"The weather ought to be decent by that time," explained Mr. Graydon. "You're just a nuisance to the city."

SPENCE DECLARES ACTION WILL START NEXT WEEK

W. Spence, C. P. R. trainman, who has complained to the police commission that he was falsely arrested last October by Police Constable Alex Towle, when he was on his way to work, states his case will again be taken up by the commission at a meeting next week.

"I'm not through with the matter at all," stated Spence today. "Since that time another C. P. R. man was falsely arrested, and his case will also be brought before the commission."

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TORONTO PLANS EXTENSION COURSE IN EXPORT TRADE

London Businessmen Invited To Take Advantage of Instructions.

CAREFULLY ARRANGED

That export trade by Canadian manufacturers is important enough to draw the attention of the faculty at least, is shown by the Dominion is shown by the fact that in the University of Toronto, the second annual extension course in export trade is being started early in the year. The course, which begins on Jan. 21 and lasts until Feb. 2, has been very carefully arranged to cover the whole question, and is so economical of time that even the busiest man who is interested in the problem can attend.

Subjects included in the course and their lecturers are as follows: "Principles of International Trade," by Professor R. MacIvor; "The British Mercantile Marine and Co-operative Export Marketing," by Professor C. R. Fay; "Transportation," by Professor W. T. Jackson; "Trade Currents and Cycles," by Professor Gilbert E. Jackson; "Economic Geography," by Dr. H. A. Innis; "Exporting of Canadian Goods in Opening Up Foreign Markets," by Wallace Harris Company; "Packing," by Y. Lamontagne; "Trade Problems in Japan," and "Trade Problems in the West Indies," by G. R. Stevens.

The fee for the whole course is \$5 and the lectures have been specially arranged for export sales managers, who are particularly requested by the university authorities to attend the course.

H. R. Pousette, director of the Commercial Intelligence Service, writing to the secretary of the London Chamber of Commerce, says that he hopes every manufacturer in this district will see his way clear to sending one of his staff down to Toronto, believing that the course constitutes an excellent and efficient service in all export matters to Canadian manufacturers whether they are at present exporting or are thinking of entering the export field in the future. Mr. Pousette himself declares that this field of expansion is unlimited.

By his side was mama dreaming the Christmas dinner dishes jumped from the table to wash themselves, and Mary went crazy and swept the floor for once.

In the next room Mary was dreaming Santa Claus was a sheik in disguise and his reindeer were camels (animals, he decides), and he swung her around his hand three times so she landed before a movie camera on a pile of million-dollar contracts. Then he kissed her, but his chin grew an immense white beard just as the wrong moment and Mary experienced the sensation of eating hay.

And Henry was dreaming Santa Claus brought him a cannon and he was shooting polecats at the North Pole, sky terriers out of the sky, ant-eaters at his aunt's house, and he had one shell left so he couldn't decide whether to shoot a policeman or a teacher.

Gray fingers of dawn reached through the curtained windows and up jumped the sun out of the east.

Up jumped Mary. Up jumped Henry. Up jumped mama. Up jumped papa. It was Christmas morning and everybody wanted to get downstairs first to grab an extra share of the raisins. Henry stepped on Mary's toes, Mary tweaked Henry's nose, mother called pa down for not being fully dressed, and a good time was had by all.

But what we started out to say was "A Merry Christmas!"—REX.

EMPRESS AVE. TENDERS CONSIDERED TOO HIGH

No. 2 Committee Holds Special Meeting Today To Talk Problem.

What action will be taken in the matter of the proposed Empress avenue school, will be discussed at a special meeting of No. 2 committee of the board of education this afternoon.

The meeting has been called by Chairman Bryden N. Campbell, following the refusal of the committee at its regular meeting, to let the tender for the construction of the school owing to the fact that all the estimates received exceeded by several thousands the estimated cost of \$180,000.

Architect Carrothers was authorized to meet several of the contractors, and go over the plans with them in an effort to reduce the enormous bill reported at the meeting today.

KIWANIAN AID TISER'S PARTY FOR CHILDREN

Club Members Bring Children From Homes For Christmas Frolic.

Several prominent Kiwanians headed "The Advertiser's" children's Christmas party by bringing children from the Thomas Allway Home and the Ronald Gray Home in their cars and taking them back with the entertainment was over. These kind-hearted members of the club who looked after the kiddies in the Ronald Gray Home, brought them to the party this month, but looks exceedingly frail.

Other members of the royal family are in residence in the vicinity of Sandringham.

Their Majesties invariably dedicate Christmas Day as one of quiet enjoyment. No guests outside of the family circle are invited, the few days of the Christmas holiday being perhaps the only time of the year when the King is entirely free from state responsibilities.

Other members of the royal family are in residence in the vicinity of Sandringham.

Two youths, charged with stealing goods from a Canadian National express car on Saturday night, valued at \$50, were bailed to appear in court on Jan. 3, when they appeared in police court today.

Howard Cluff, who appeared for one of the young men, who are employees of the express company, asked for bail, and after consultation with Crown Attorney J.G. Gilliland, was fixed at \$400 in each case.

The youths were apprehended by C. N. R. Constables Hughes and Gow. Among the goods alleged to have been stolen were some boxes of patent medicine and a photograph motor.

"Twas Christmas Evening And All Over the House—

Father and Mother and Sister and Brother Were Prepared, and, of Course, All Was Merry!

'Twas the night before Christmas, and all through the house not a thing was stirring, not even a spoon, not even a robber—there wasn't even a bootlegger stirring.

The cake in the kitchen was all stirred, the fire on the hearth had been stirred, and the family upstairs asleep now had been stirred.

Outside the wind whistled; it had a right to whistle—it was going to a warm country.

Inside, beautifully set in the very center of the parlor's exquisite fireplace, sparkled a costly lump of coal. It was a Christmas gift from one of London's most prominent coal merchants. He had brought it over himself wrapped in silver paper and tied with a pink ribbon. Could Uncle Bim have done more?

The whistling wind looked down the chimney, and the costly lump of coal burst into a tiny \$2 flame.

"Whistle, whistle," whistled the wind as it jumped back. This was the Christmas of '23, and coal burning was as strange a sight as it was in Christmas '22.

But the damage was done, and by the tiny \$2 flicker one could see four stockings hanging from the mantel.

There was Mary's stocking. Mary was sophisticated, sixteen, and had never missed being kissed. Her stocking held an eyebrow pencil for Mary to make her mark in the world; and to guide her feet through the important steps of life there was a new dance record on the mantel.

Henry's stocking was there. Henry was eleven, and had never voluntarily washed his ears. His stocking held a pocket knife, so he could cut his initials on the piano, and an airgun for him to shoot at cats, birds, dogs, windows, policemen and people.

There was mama's stocking. It was clothespins, hairpins, hatpins, safety-pins, pins, a butterknife, a flatiron and an unexpurgated edition of "Married Men and How to Honk Them."

Next came the old man's sock. It had sixteen holes in it as the old man was too busy making his \$5 per to bother darning a sock.

This sock held tobacco, smoking and eating, while nearby stood a new easy chair. This easy chair came hard, because he had been charged with it.

As the old man was sleeping he was dreaming Santa Claus drove a coal wagon.

By his side was mama dreaming the Christmas dinner dishes jumped from the table to wash themselves, and Mary went crazy and swept the floor for once.

In the next room Mary was dreaming Santa Claus was a sheik in disguise and his reindeer were camels (animals, he decides), and he swung her around his hand three times so she landed before a movie camera on a pile of million-dollar contracts. Then he kissed her, but his chin grew an immense white beard just as the wrong moment and Mary experienced the sensation of eating hay.

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KING AND QUEEN WILL SPEND QUIET YULETIDE

Christmas Day Will Be Dedicated to Gathering of Royal Family.

Associated Press Despatch.

London, Dec. 24.—Christmas Day in England and Wales is an unsettled weather, although the conditions today are fine and bright. Last week's frost has entirely disappeared, and while the indications at present seem favorable, who knows what may happen within a few hours in the English climate.

The King and Queen are at York Cottage, Sandringham, and with Their Majesties are the Prince of Wales, the Duke and Duchess of York, Prince Henry and the Princess Royal. Queen Alexandra is at Sandringham House. She is in good health, though she celebrated her 70th birthday this month, but looks exceedingly frail.

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HUNDREDS LEAVE CITY FOR HOLIDAY PERIOD

Fall of Snow Not Heavy Enough To Warrant Snowplows' Use.

Both C. N. R. and C. P. R. traffic officials reported today that Christmas travel commenced in earnest on Saturday. Hundreds of Londoners left the city over the week-end for nearby points to spend the Christmas holiday. Special trains have been placed on all lines of both railways with an additional number of coaches and equipment. This morning city ticket agents reported that not many people will likely leave London today. Up until noon trains leaving the city had comparatively few passengers on board.

Only two trains on the C. N. R. were reported to be late as a result of the heavy snowstorm. All lines are clear, the railwaymen say, and the fall of snow was not heavy enough to warrant the use of snowplows.

WASHINGTON'S ELITE WORRIED OVER LIST

Names of Alleged Patrons of Bootlegger Held by Prosecuting Attorney.

Associated Press Despatch.

Washington, Dec. 24.—Washington's 2,500 residents listed as purchasers on the books of an alleged rum-running syndicate, members of which were arrested here Friday and Saturday, breathed a little easier today. The whereabouts of the list has become involved in mystery.

Upon the arrest of eleven persons charged with being connected with the bootlegger ring, police said, the list of 2,500 purchasers had been seized, and Assistant District Attorney Freeman announced he would turn the names over to the grand jury for possible prosecution.

Today the present location of the list could not be determined. Elmore Key, chief of special intelligence unit of the internal revenue bureau, said some of those arrested had told him there was such a list of customers, but that he did not have it, nor did his men who participated in the raid.

MRS. F. L. JONES IMPROVING.

The condition of Mrs. F. L. Jones, who has been in Victoria Hospital for a week suffering from injuries incurred in an automobile accident on Richmond street north, was reported this morning by hospital officials to be greatly improved. It is expected she will be able to leave the hospital in a few days.

HOME DEPOSITORS HERE ARE GIVEN \$26,000 SATURDAY

Bank of Montreal Staff Works Overtime To Turn Over Cash.

380 GET DIVIDEND

On Saturday the market branch of the Bank of Montreal remained open until after 6 o'clock to pay \$80 Home Bank depositors their first dividend since the suspension of the Home Bank was announced in the summer. An augmented staff worked from 9 in the morning until long after darkness turning over the cash to anxious waiting holders, for the most part expressed real pleasure at getting the dividend before Christmas. Exactly \$26,000 was advanced. This is only one-fourth of the total due London depositors, but the remainder will doubtless be paid out before the end of next week. Today the sum of money handed out is expected to reach \$50,000.

The bank opened this morning at the regular time, and will remain open until 6 o'clock this evening.

"Everything is being handled in ship-shape form," Gerald Pearson, manager, said. "The money will be paid every banking day for a week or more until all who want their dividend have secured it."

Many depositors declined to sign the white slips making over one-half of one per cent of their deposits to the central committee at Toronto. The one-half of one per cent is for the purpose of financing a trip to Ottawa, where the liquidators and inspectors will lay the Home Bank depositors' case before the government.

Over the liabilities in bulk and pay saving holders 100 per cent on the dollar.

Joseph Dambra, president of the London Home Bank Association, appeals to all depositors to sign these white slips. Money is required to swing the proposition, though it is hoped depositors will get out of the Home Bank disaster without a loss.

"Our only hope lies with the government," Mr. Dambra said. "I strongly urge all depositors to pay their share in financing the trip to Ottawa, which is necessary if the government is to give us help. By this means we expect to get a full return on our deposits. The minister of finance will be requested to put the disposal of Home Bank assets under government supervision and pay the depositors 100 per cent. Of course, the government will then have to shoulder the losses which ordinarily would be absorbed by the depositors, but we feel that the failure of the bank can be better than the loss of millions of people than a few hundred thousand."

CANADIAN TRADE BOOMS IN FRANCE

Paris Magazine Plans Special Canadian Issue—Trains Interest.

As evidence of the interest taken in France in Canadian trade and in the furtherance of trade relationship between the two countries, Edmond Buron, a graduate of Montreal University, who is a member of the staff of "La Vie Technique Industrielle" of Paris, France, in a letter to the secretary of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, says that preparations are under way to bring out a special Canadian number of the magazine, interest in affairs of Canada having been aroused and kept alive by the French trade train which toured Canada two years ago and later by the Canadian exhibitors of the 1921 Exposition in Paris.

The information on which the special Dominion number of the magazine is being prepared is being obtained from the Affiliated Boards of Trade in Canada, each district being responsible for data relating to its industries. The London Chamber of Commerce is supplying the facts, and the story of industrial London, for this publication.

FILL UP CHILDREN, IS DOCTOR'S ADVICE