

THE SEMI-WEEKLY TELEGRAPH

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Semi-Weekly Telegraph

ST. JOHN, N. B., JULY 15, 1905.

STRANGE VALUATIONS

If Mr. W. M. Jarvis' peculiar attitude has been made upon the peculiar assessment system in Lancashire he may be expected to uncover some highly interesting conditions. If Mr. Jarvis could be persuaded to take up and carry through a similar line of investigation on this side of the river he would uncover similar conditions, although he might not find the Honorable Association of Tax Dodgers so successful or so systematic in their activities as they are believed to be in Lancashire.

Mr. Jarvis, it is hoped, will proceed without regard for the fact that he is likely to much disturb arrangements which have lasted for some time and which have been found very convenient to a circle of business men who have protected themselves against the sometime fierce and voracious gathering of titles by putting blinders upon that functionary and bidding him go to.

It is scandalously hinted—and we feel sure that the investigation now begun will lay this spirit of detraction—that in the parish in question some property owners are much more influential in politics than others. The connection between this fact and the appointment of assessors or the size of certain tax bills may or may not be more apparent after the deliberations of next Monday.

Mr. Jarvis will perform a public service of merit if he follows with single purpose and catholic spirit the thread of connection here indicated.

TWO WARNINGS

Lord Roberts and Lord Kitchener are soldiers, and if in peace civilians are sometimes apt to look upon these military men as altruists and men with spendthrift ideas of expenditure, in war time they have been willing to accept as gospel their every word upon the subject of the nation's safety. Lord Kitchener, who more than any other man in the Empire today is respected as what the Japanese call an "organizer of victory," has been thundering warnings about the unsatisfactory condition of the army in India, and the Russian approach to Afghanistan. Lord Roberts, who has frequently spoken with bluntness of British neglect to maintain an effective army system, now goes a step farther. He charges the people with "lack of national feeling toward the military" when the country is in no danger.

It is a fact that in Central India hundreds of Afghans are leading a nomadic life in couples. This is considered to be an ominous sign, for the Afghans do not wander far south with any peaceful purpose in mind. If a holy war were to be preached, the Mohammedans would be as much the object of native fury nowadays as the Christians. The attention has an ugly look and there is a prayer on everyone's lips that the cloud will not entangle a storm.

No doubt this is an exaggerated account of the unrest in India. But suppose it were true, or suppose the Empire were suddenly found to be on the brink of war in another quarter, how suddenly would the people demand that Roberts and Kitchener have their way. It might then be too late. The requisite preparation which they so earnestly advise would be infinitely cheaper than a great war. Besides, it would be likely to prevent any such war. But the lethargy is likely to last until the country has had another costly lesson.

BUT YESTERDAY

Today the meeting place for the peace conference is fixed, the commissioners are on their way to America, and while Japan pushes the war in order to secure further hostages for Russia's sensible behavior, the Russian resistance in Manchuria is at an end. For the purposes of this war Russia has collapsed. But yesterday Kurapatin was bound for Tokyo; the coast cities of Japan were to be bombarded; the Japanese in Manchuria were to be driven into the sea; the czar was going to the front; Stoesel would never surrender Port Arthur; the Japanese were to be lured into the north and destroyed—and Rojstevsky was to repair all the damage done by regaining control of the sea and cutting Oyama off from supplies and reinforcements.

And here is the London Daily Telegraph asking if the czar will dare bring his troops home from Harbin:

"If now to internal inspection is added mutiny in the army and navy, the whole fabric of government seems tottering to its fall. Meanwhile, it is melancholy to reflect how all the aspirations based on the approach of peace have been ruthlessly dashed to the ground. We had hoped, as every well-wisher of Russia must hope, that amicable relations restored between St. Petersburg and Tokyo would give Russia once more an opportunity of setting her house in order and essaying, under better auspices, her proper career in Europe and the Near East. If there still be some truth in the old international doctrine of a balance of power, it can be nothing else than disastrous that so potent an influence for good or evil as the Northern Empire should be eliminated from the congeries of European States. Russia have given back to Pussia her proper authority and place. But what now has become of all the fair chances of tranquility? Can even peace with Japan enable the Russians to develop their immense resources on legitimate lines? Will the authorities dare to bring back to their own country their soldiers at Harbin? The most formidable fact in history is that revolt and rebellion fly through a disintegrating land like a contagious disease."

BIDDING FOR NEW INDUSTRIES

Although the weather is unfavorable to exertion and the heat is not the most exciting of inducements, a group of business men of Halifax got together at Tuesday's meeting of the Board of Trade to discuss ways and means for securing new industries. The matter was the subject of earnest and sensible speeches, and a committee was appointed to act upon some of the suggestions put forward and acquire additional information. The spirit displayed was excellent. The meeting itself was an inspiration in itself. Much attention was devoted to the discussion of small factories, and one member submitted a list of articles—dozen or more—which he said could be manufactured to advantage in Halifax. The price of coal—which is held to be excessive—taxation and other questions bearing upon Halifax as a manufacturing center were discussed in detail. A suggestion which will be followed was made by Mr. Johnson, who said industries should be offered to one of the great locomotive building companies to establish a plant in Halifax. The proposed steel shipbuilding plant was referred to as likely to be started soon. The expansion of trade with Mexico and the West Indies was another subject.

AN ULTIMATUM

The aldermen of Charlottetown have sent an ultimatum to the lighting company. Formerly the company told the people what they must pay for gas and electric light. Now the council names the prices which it will permit the company to charge—a salutary change. The company is required to reply by tomorrow. If it does not agree to the reduction specified, the city will proceed with its preparations for the establishment of a municipal lighting plant.

The aldermen of St. John, who have repeatedly talked about protecting the public from the excessive charges for bad gas, who have made one attempt to prevent the St. John Street Railway from extending its electric light business to Carleton to the exclusion of other producers of light, may find in the Charlottetown proceedings cause to discuss the local lighting situation. We were told some time ago that there was water power enough on the Mipec and at Silver Falls to light the city. Suggestions have been made from time to time as to the advisability of securing an estimate of the cost of a civic gas plant. But no action has been taken. The aldermen are too busy. They spend too much time talking about minor matters, such as the discharge of an inspector by the engineer in charge of Loch Lomond.

The aldermen, if they would but set about it, could render the people of St. John a most important service.

A NATIONAL DUTY

Comparatively, this is a tender hearted country. A case of unusual suffering or helplessness appeals strongly to the public. The people are quick to feel horror over death or injury to any human being. The people, as a rule, are kind to animals. Yet 8,000 people die annually in Canada from tuberculosis—a disease which can be prevented, cured in most stages, and stamped out entirely by sustained precautions.

The parliamentary committee, in its report concerning this disease, says that 40,000 persons in the Dominion are now suffering from it, of which number one in every five will die within a year. In Ontario and Quebec tuberculosis kills twenty-five per cent. more people than diphtheria, scarlet fever, typhoid, measles, and whooping cough combined. This lamentable condition—now known to be a disgraceful condition—also causes an annual financial loss of more than \$8,000,000. The committee points out that since the disease is both curable and preventable, it is imperative that the Dominion and the provinces set about its control and elimination. Paragraphs of the committee's report explain that the federal government has a recognized responsibility in this matter.

"The principle involving the interference of the Dominion Government for the suppression of diseases of this kind was recognized immediately after Confederation and is embodied in a statute of 1868, 31 Vic, chap. 63. In this it is provided, among other things, that whenever Canada or any part thereof appears to be threatened with any epidemic, endemic, contagious or infectious disease, the governor may, by proclamation, make such regulations as he thinks proper and necessary to prevent the introduction of such diseases from beyond the limit, or to prevent its spread within the limits of Canada, and otherwise protect the public health."

The committee recommends action by the Dominion alone or in conjunction with the provinces, the erection of dispensaries and sanatoria, and the maintenance of a system of inspection. Failing immediate action by the government, a conference of the provinces should be held to discuss the introduction of such diseases from beyond the limit, or to prevent its spread within the limits of Canada, and otherwise protect the public health."

A country which spends \$8,000,000 a year for military purposes, and which loses \$8,000,000 through the ravages of tuberculosis, need not hesitate to adopt progressive measures to deal with the white plague. Failure to act, considering all that is known, shames our civilization.

THE REVOLT

(Boston Transcript). If one overruns the story of the insurgent battalions as it has come to the world's knowledge, evidence of her being under the command of capable and intelligent men abound. She did not take part in the fury of the Odessa revolt, for it is now generally believed that her guns were silent. She was respectful of neutral ships and property. The suspicion is unavoidable that some of her former officers are still on board and cooperating with the insurgents. What became of the ship's officers does not appear to be exactly known. Accounts differ as to their fate. One story is that with a few exceptions they were murdered, and another says they are prisoners. The Roumanian commander, at Kustelji, who went on board the ship while she was at that port, says that the spokesman, and inferentially the leader, was a Cossack officer.

This circumstance corroborates the belief that there are skilled men directing the cruise. Certainly the Potemkin moves like a ship whose activities are in a normal condition, for it is not every day nor in every place that engineers can be picked up capable of taking their place in the engine room of a 12,000-ton battleship. The alternative theory is that some of the ship's officers are insurgents in some way smuggled aboard, either at Odessa, or earlier, in anticipation of the revolt.

But after all, there is nothing particularly startling in the assumption that Russian officers are leading a revolutionary movement. The Russian naval officers, like these of the army, are drawn from one class, and that the most highly educated. They have shown, in times past, sympathy with liberal movements. The great revolt of 1825 was a purely military movement by men who desired to see the government reformed. These were not of education, excellent personal character and progressive ideas, who were sharply differentiated from the earlier military revolutionaries. They were not revolutionaries, but they were very different from the officers who contrived the murder of Czar Peter III, and those who strangled Paul in his bed room, and who have been the leaders of "The League for the Public Good."

But when we realize that in less than a century and a half two czars have been assassinated by those whose duty it was to guard them, and that there has been at least one military mutiny, we can see that the Russian army traditions lead them very readily to revolution when the provocation is extreme. The officers who strangled Paul with their sashes were not obscure men. They were general officers. Their excuse was that in Russia, when the czar was a madman, or unreasonably despot, there was no other way. They lived and died unmolested and were even glorified as heroes.

For eighty years there has been no extensive military revolt in Russia, but not a few officers have been concerned in conspiracies and some even have perished on the scaffold, under the ominous charge of "treason," which has been used to cover up a multitude of secrets. The "feeling of an officer" may be very different in a despotism, in the year 1865, from what it is in a constitutionally governed country.

ENGLAND'S FOREIGN POLICY

Editor of The New York Globe:—Sir,—In reply to the letter signed "Mortimer Thomson," in last night's edition, I should like to know why England should have interfered after the events in the North Sea or the actions of the Simulens and Petersburg. Was not the detection of the fighting power of Russia proceeding satisfactorily? England guarantees that Japan shall not be interfered with in her conduct of the war. This suits Japan, but in the case of Japan's failure surely it would be immediately necessary for England to snatch the fruit of victory from Russia at all costs.

The foundation of England's foreign policy is to keep so strong that no one will begin a war against her and to so moderate that no one will be exasperated. In regard to Morocco it will be time enough for England's interference when any of her direct interests are threatened by Germany.

NOTE AND COMMENT

The Senate is discussing the Autonomy Bill. Few will believe the discussion will be of value to the country.

The Orangemen turned out in force and had a stirring day. The political events of the year have made it a growing one for the order.

Count Marcellini, one of the czar's personal commissioners, resigns. When the Mikado gives one of his men a disagreeable job the man does not resign.

The Mayor of Moncton, having been used by the Transcript, is now asked by that journal to resign. Only modesty prevents the Transcript from naming the Mayor's logical successor, but we can all guess.

An odd story of blackmail of which New York millionaires were the victims is related in our despatches this morning. Prominent men and women who paid hush money will be unable to explain satisfactorily why they consented to be robbed. At length the blackmailers encountered a man with courage—or with a clean record—and the game was up.

Dress Suit in Nome

(Osmopolitain). The bad man with the revolver who used to "shoot up" the old game is a picturesque character that has never appeared in Nome. There were two or three shooting affairs the first summer, but they were of the character that might occur in New York, London or Paris, not the mingling camp variety at all.

The most remarkable thing about Nome is the rapacity with which it acquired the luxuries of civilization. The electric lighting system and its telephone service are excellent. Its large greenhouse supplies fresh vegetables and flowers the year round at reasonable prices. There are numerous clubs, the most important of which is a secret society, the Arctic Brotherhood, whose club is in every room where a club house should be. From the bowling alleys to the cafe. The three churches are the largest buildings in Nome.

The first winter of Nome was characterized by what might be called high prices. Truly a commentary on the mental trend of the day. Everybody tried to corner something. To corner things was in every particular legitimate, and to neglect opportunities was to court ruin. The price of coal under artificial stimulus went a \$150 a ton; lumber commanded \$500 a thousand feet before the winter broke. Coal oil should be had in large quantities for 20 cents an ounce; eggs brought 50 cents each. The most successful corner was that of fresh milk. There was only one cow in the city, the owner thereof cleared \$100 on milk and sold the cow in the spring for beef, realizing \$500 more. Beer brought \$100 a barrel. To take advantage of the high prices expected the following winter, poultry yards and dairies were established and a brewery, and thus prices found their natural level.

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BANK INSPECTION

(Halifax Echo). The revelations in connection with the Bank of Yarmouth, afford another of the examples, which have been very frequent of late, showing the urgent necessity for some system of bank inspection in Canada, coupled with independent reports on the condition of every banking institution in the country. At the present time there is a system of monthly reports made by the banks to the Government, but these are prepared by the banks themselves, and are capable of being made very misleading. The reports to the government did not show the rotten condition in which the Bank of Yarmouth was, and had been for some time before the crash came. It has been suggested that government officers should be appointed to make a general inspection of the banks. One objection to this would be the fact that the banks in Canada have very numerous and widely scattered branches, a number of which are outside the Dominion, and a regular inspection would be an expensive and laborious undertaking. Some very prominent banking men have advocated government inspection. However, among others, we believe, Mr. H. C. McLeod, of the Bank of Nova Scotia. In Scotland, where some of the large banks have numerous branches, a good system is in force. Each year the inspection of any bank is allotted by the bank to some certain important firm of chartered accountants, who have a large number of men in their employ. The inspection is conducted by the staff of this firm, and their report is made at the general meeting of the bank's shareholders. The shareholders are the only persons actively concerned, this system of inspection proves very satisfactory.

In Canada we have not this machinery of chartered accountants to draw on in any such degree. There is, however, a suggestion, upon which we should like to hear banking men express their opinions. This is, that the regular inspectors of each bank, should be paid by the government; that they should be the only inspectors and that they should report to the government as well as to the head office of the bank. We think the government should pay such officials. The time has arrived when shareholders and policy holders demand that their interests be guarded. Next session, we understand, legislation regulating insurance companies will be introduced. It will not be long, we trust, before the man who buys the stock of any industrial concern in the open market, will have some assurance that its value will depend upon the juggling of high financiers.

EXPERIENCE

(Chicago Chronicle). I've shot the chutes and bumped the bumps, I've had the measles and the mumps— Experience! And also signed some notes for clumps— Experience! I've hit the pike and topped the loop, And had bronchitis and the cough— Experience! And also foundered in the soup— Experience! To friends I've loaned my hard-earned cash, For breakfast I have eaten hash— Experience! In cable cars I have ridden jars, And dodged a million auto cars— Experience! And through a blizz I've witnessed stars— Experience! I've had the blues, the grip and rash— Experience! I've had a lot of dry dreams, Been up against the gold-bird schemes— Experience! I've heard a cracked soprano scream— Experience! I've heard a lot of vaudeville, And smoked cigars that made me ill— Experience! I've written verse as an art at still— Experience!

A WAR POTENTIALITY

(Rome Messenger). It is quite within the range of possible achievements that, if Togo were so inclined, he might forthwith proceed to the Baltic and successfully bombard any Russian port. It would simply mean a question of coal, and . . . there is a lot of it in Great Britain.

Offered Norwegian Throne

London, July 11.—The Associated Press is in a position to confirm the report that an offer of the Norwegian throne has been made to King Edward's son-in-law, Prince Charles of Denmark. The matter is still under consideration.

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