

The St. John Standard

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ST. JOHN, N. B., FRIDAY, MARCH 3, 1922.

THE SPEECH FROM THE THRONE.

Very few people we imagine expected to gather information of any value from the speech of the Governor at the opening of the House and that being the case, they experienced no disappointment on reading it. A document more barren in anything else but empty words, it would be difficult to find. It opened as usual with the stereotyped expressions of gratitude to Providence, and proceeded to refer to the Washington Conference, with which the Province has no immediate concern. Congratulations to the new Governor-General follow, and then we come to a partial review of conditions affecting agriculture and the lumber industry. Farmers are told are suffering because prices obtainable for their produce have decreased in a much greater degree than have the prices of those commodities farmers have to buy, so by way of helping them to do better a bill is to be introduced to assist in co-operative selling and marketing of farm produce. We gather that the farmers' troubles will therefore shortly come to an end. Lumbermen too are not now able to export their high prices for their product as they were a couple of years or so ago, so that a reduction is to be made in the stumpage on certain lumber to enable the operators to make ends meet.

The improvement in the highways of the Province has, it is announced, "been carried on energetically during the past year." It would perhaps have been more correct to say that the expenditure of money for road purposes has been carried on energetically. Such improvement in the condition of the roads as is obtained by this expenditure, must be very evanescent, for, as we have said before, the more money that is spent for that purpose, the more seems to be needed to be spent.

The Government proposes to increase the scale of pensions to retired teachers, the money to be provided by contributions to the fund by teachers who are still pursuing their calling. By this means the Government will go down in history as benefactors to the teaching profession.

Little is said concerning the hydro-electric activities of the Government, beyond the fact that the work in hand is now nearing completion. More information is promised later on.

The most important matter of all that the Government is called upon to deal with, that of finance, is passed over in the lightest and most casual manner possible. In view of the fact that there was a deficit of over half a million dollars at the end of the last fiscal year, and that the Province is facing the prospect of a smaller revenue this year, His Honor's speech might have reasonably been expected to say something of value upon the situation. As matters stand, the House is simply told that the Government received more and spent more than was estimated, and its consideration is asked for such proposals as may be brought forward with a view to improving the financial situation. It is very enlightening.

The world-famous public health act comes in, as usual, for its regular medium of praise, but we have our doubts as to whether the various County Councils of the Province will concur in the statement that it justifies its existence. They will more likely than not feel with regard to the proposed amendments to it, that the only satisfactory way to amend it will be to end it altogether.

A feature that usually figures in the speech from the Throne, namely with regard to raising funds for capital expenditures on public works, seems to be absent this year, unless one is left to infer from the somewhat cautious statement that the upkeep of the highways must receive serious consideration, that the annual aid from the Provincial credit is again to be staged. There is little fear we imagine of the public being disappointed in this respect. "Work on the roads and bridges is going on as usual and the money to pay for it has not yet been found," says Mr. Veniot, in view of the fact that he is master of the situation, he'll get his own way. Mr. Veniot is the greatest menace this Province has to contend with, and the trouble is that his titular leader, Mr. Foster, can't control him. He'll spend, and spend, and spend, without the slightest regard for the consequences, and the Premier dare not deny him because he knows he couldn't carry on without the support of the Addicks members who would follow Mr. Veniot if he resigned from the Government. Well may the Government be looking for some source of revenue; but had they all the wealth of the Indies they would spend it all.

What business is to come before the House will depend to some extent upon the success of the bill which

lation that has to be put through; but if His Honor's speech is anything to go by, Government legislation promises to be light, and a short session should result. Perhaps a good deal will depend upon the character of such proposals as may be submitted with a view to improving the financial situation in the Province.

EGYPT'S NEW STATUS.

Although Premier Lloyd George told Parliament that the protectorate that Britain has maintained over Egypt for the last quarter of a century or so, had now been terminated, it is not likely that any immediate change in methods of administration will take place. Until an agreement has been reached with an Egyptian Government, things will remain as they are except that the British Government renounces the special rights which it claimed in declaring the protectorate and sets Egypt free to work out its own salvation within the limits set by the four points deemed essential to the security of the British Empire.

Great Britain is very far from setting Egypt adrift; the Prime Minister was emphatic upon that point. Foreign powers, he said, were not concerned, and this would be explained in unmistakable terms when the termination of the protectorate was announced. The Government could not permit its special relations with Egypt to be questioned by any other power and would regard as an unfriendly act any attempt at interference by any other country; any aggression against the territory of Egypt would be repelled by all means at the Government's disposal.

This may seem very like a protectorate, but in practice that has come to mean the assumption of a large measure of authority in internal as well as external affairs. Sometimes this is defended on the ground of the alleged necessity of keeping order or the need of the service rendered in defending a weak country from foreign foes gives special rights as a reward. But in this case the service rendered is primarily for the defence of the Suez Canal, which is a British interest, and calls for no special gratitude. Nor is it maintained that the Egyptians are incapable of self-government; on the contrary much better order might reasonably be expected under home rule than with the country in a state of chaotic revolt against British aggression.

The step just taken is said to have been strongly recommended by the High Commissioner in Egypt, Lord Allenby, who was recently recalled to London for consultation with the Cabinet, and was said at the time to differ decidedly upon this point with the Colonial Secretary, Winston Churchill, who was for retaining the protectorate until order had been restored and an amicable government set up. The effect of that policy would have been to postpone action indefinitely; by a unilateral renunciation of its claims the British Government has decided to strengthen the moderate elements in Egypt and make possible the formation of a responsible government through which the necessary guarantees can be secured. Till that is done martial law will stand, and the position of Great Britain will be much what it was before it declared the protectorate after Turkey's entrance into the war.

RECIPROCITY NOT WANTED.

It did not take very long for Mr. Fielding to find out just what the powers that be across the border think of his reciprocity proposals. Congressional leaders gave him clearly to understand that they wanted no truck or trade with him; Canada had the opportunity once to enter into such a pact, and it turned it down, and America will not further consider any such arrangements. The people of the Republic are not going to have their markets glutted with foreign produce; their own farmers have got to live, and they are already producing more than their own people can consume, which leaves them with an exportable surplus. We don't want that surplus in Canada either. We too want our home markets for our own farmers. It is not in the best interests of the community in general that there should be a free interchange of produce—or manufactured goods either.

Although reciprocity was included as a plank in the Liberal party's programme at their Ottawa Convention in 1919, this plank was repudiated by the Liberal party at the time of the

general election, and Mr. Fielding and his colleagues knew better than to advance any plan that would permit of foreign competition with our own farmers. Only the Progressive party favored such a course, and it was probably with the sole purpose of deluding this party into the idea that the Government was sympathetic that Mr. Fielding went to Washington to talk reciprocity so that the result might be to draw the Progressives closer to the Government. The latter can get along without the Progressives' support; but it cannot get along if the Progressives offer active opposition. Had there been the slightest possibility of Mr. Fielding being able to make any reciprocal trade arrangement with the United States, he would never have been allowed to go to Washington at all on such an errand; but the shrewd politicians of Quebec, with every reason convinced that opinion across the border was decidedly adverse to any such an agreement, Mr. Fielding's little jaunt might amuse him, and it could not hurt anybody else.

WHAT OTHERS SAY

Germany's Stable Government.
(Cleveland Plain Dealer.)
It is true that the present German Government is strong at home because, with all its troubles, it is strong abroad. There is no doubt that the policy of the Chancellor and his associates are regarded in France and England as men who can be trusted if anybody in Germany can be trusted. The policy of Germany is a supremely important consideration in German affairs. There is a sense in which German policy may be said to be all foreign. Foreign policy is the life and soul of Germany. If anybody can win tolerable conditions for the German Republic it must be somebody who commands confidence in Paris and London, and that fact gives the present Ministry its chief element of stability.

Spare the Rod.
(London Daily Chronicle.)
If caning has any merit at all—it must be done very severely and in the coldest of the winter. Punishment which becomes vengeance is the ruin of discipline.

The Old Liberals and the New.
(Indianapolis News.)
True Liberals all over the world are drawing ever more closely together, and are beginning to take a more optimistic view of the future. The old Liberals are diametrically opposed to socialism, for it always taught that a man should be left as much as possible to the mercy of the market. The new Liberals are more concerned with the welfare of the people rather than with the rights of the individual. There could be no more cheering sign, no more encouraging prospect, than the fact that the old Liberals are beginning to see the error of their ways.

Limitations of Sovereignty.
(Hong Kong Press.)
When good government is provided for the Chinese people there will be no objection on the part of the Powers to the removal of those "limitations of sovereignty" which may offend the susceptibilities of the Chinese politician, but are at the present time obviously necessary for the safety and protection of the foreigners who dwell in China. The limitations of China's sovereignty have been found to afford thousands of Chinese, including the present Prime Minister himself, a safe and peaceful harbor of refuge in times of trouble.

Distance Lends Enchantment to the Sea.
(New York Morning Post.)
Whoever plays the piano has noticed that while the company is always keen about forcing him to perform, it loses interest once he starts for the instrument. It is the same with singers, elocutionists, orators, roomkeepers. We know them to be masters of an art, we are determined that they shall exhibit it, and guests will coax furiously for an anecdote or a song. But as soon as he is alone, in privacy, he is to be gratified, nobody any longer pays much attention. Such is the effect of proximity.

Enigmas of Nature.
(Montreal Gazette.)
Nothing is sacred to a scholar. Professor Gilchrist, of McGill University, that giant star lived only for a short period of some one hundred thousand years in his lifetime, and he has become quite the fashion with such giants as the sun and other celestial bodies. Frank C. Bessing, an officer aboard one of the big transatlantic steamers, reported on arrival at New York recently that a strange sight occurred to him, when what resembled a ball of fire crossed the heavens travelling at great speed, and which lighted up the sea in all directions. In other words, he saw a comet.

Two thousand rubles, pound foolish.
Two thousand rubles moved in a penny earned.
Take care of your thousand-ruble notes; the dollars will take care of themselves. Johnny shall have but 2,000 rubles a day because he can't work any faster.
The Pisan said to Simple Simon, "Show me first your 1,000 rubles." Said Simple Simon to the Pisan, "Alas, I haven't any."

Winston Homer's "Right Bet" recently brought \$50,000 at a private sale. Previous-minded old-timers will wonder how much "Right Bet" by the Brothers Byrne would bring.

Benny's Note Book

BY LEE PAPE

I was up in my room reading Across the Sahara on a Canall and I was just up to the most exciting part were the robbers jump out from behind the pyramids and the giant bell rang for supper, me thinking, Aw heck, I'm going to finish this chapter.

And I started to read that as anything and after a while me called up, Benny, did you hear that bell?

Well, yes, me, I'm coming, I called down. After I started to read even faster, and after a while pop called up, Ben, how many invitations do you need for one meal?

Yes sir, hear I come, I called down. Only having 3 more pages to go to finish the chapter and the robbers were still firing, so I quit finished the chapter and the robbers turned around and ran at the last line, and then I jumped up and started to move my furniture around a little thinking, G, I better have a good excuse for being so long.

And I went down and walked in the dining-room with a very impression, pop saying, O, you have finally condescended to honor us with your company, have you?

I was fixing up my room, I said, and pop said, O miracle of miracles, he was fixing up his room, and me, did it did it was the first time in his life, did you put your shoes in your closet instead of leaving them decorating various parts of the floor the way they were this morning?

No, me, I didn't have time for that, I said, and pop said, Well, while you were fixing up did you dispose of that quaint pile of shavings that I noticed in one corner the last time I passed your door?

Sir, no sir, I was just going to but at the last minute I didn't have time, I said, and me, did you clean the rubbish off your desk as I have bin suggesting to you for the past few weeks?

I will, I said. Meaning I didn't, and pop said, in other words you fixed up your room just the way you found it, sit down and eat your supper.

When I did, feeling lucky nothing worse happened.

thousand years ago, but only in recent times have we had research and investigations to discover their cause or origin. Hooks and others have put forward views respecting the connection between geological phenomena and earthquakes. Since then the present theories have been advanced, and these have aroused general attention. The last half century has been exceedingly productive. The blessing may have been such that if they had had their epicenters elsewhere, the loss of life and property would have been extensive. Our little earth, which seems so small and insignificant, as compared with Jupiter and Saturn, is not only alive, but lively. "This said that California is moving slowly toward the North Pole, or perhaps, as Californians would prefer it, the North Pole seems to have joined in the movement towards California. On January the 26th, in the year 17, earthquakes were heard from the Black Sea to the Red Sea and the earth was convulsed with little intermissions for the space of six months. There is no getting away from the fact that we live in a highly dynamic universe, and it will not be at all surprising no matter what happens.

To Be Frank About It.
When a chorus girl attempts to be a Society plays the chorus maid. So finished is her footlight art she never fails to look the part.

Pledges on the Pans.
A Star in the window—"We're quite less of house."
A Circle—"We never brew beer."
A Square is a sign—"No smoking for ladies."
An Oval—"No card-playing here."

TUNNELLED INTO BANK'S CONFINES
Shureka, Kansas, March 3.—Working in a blinding snowstorm, and with the thermometer near zero, robbers early Tuesday tunneled into the vault of the Piedmont State Bank at Piedmont, Kansas, 20 miles southwest of here, and stole Liberty bonds believed to total \$50,000 in value.

THE LAUGH LINE

Statistical Proof.
"The rapidly increasing divorce rate," remarked the wit, "indicates that America is indeed becoming the land of the free."
"Yes," replied his prosaic friend, "but the continued marriage rate suggests that it is still the home of the brave."

Police women are now declared a failure in London. We thought of a long time back, but didn't dare quite say it aloud.

Art and the Timberman.
The Professor: "Yes, I saw this picture, 'Big Timber,' six months ago. What do you want for it now?"
The Artist: "Just the same—\$150."
The Professor: "The same! Why, damn it, man, timber's dropped twenty per cent. this month!"

Extreme Cruelty.
"Yes, I had a drink," Uncle G. H. Blas always announces on greeting his wife.
This leaves her nothing to ask.
But it's a shame to treat a woman that way.

Considering the number of advertisements at the moment, "children like better than candy," it is surprising how the candy business manages to keep going.

Penny-Ante Looks Like Big Money.
A thousand-ruble note is worth half an American cent at the present rate of exchange.—Russian Financial Item.

Two thousand rubles wise, pound foolish.
Two thousand rubles moved in a penny earned.
Take care of your thousand-ruble notes; the dollars will take care of themselves. Johnny shall have but 2,000 rubles a day because he can't work any faster.

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PETRA, ANCIENT AR REACHED BY

Abandoned But Picturesque R Rediscovered by Western Accessible Over New R

Petra, Palestine, Mar. 3.—The completion of the Hagan railway has brought within the reach of the ordinary traveller, who is enterprising enough to endure an uncomfortable train journey and a day's ride across the desert, the picturesque ruins of an ancient, romantic, and nearly forgotten city of old Arabia, the rock-hewn city of Petra or Petrea.

At an unknown date in the distant past an Arabian tribe, the Nabataeans—migrated northwards from the inner deserts and settled in the mountainous region. In that comparatively fertile period the Nabataeans farmed well, they grew powerful as agriculturists and merchants, for they found that they were in possession of a region which was a strategic highroad connecting the great and populous centers of the ancient East—Egypt, Mesopotamia, Arabia and Asia Minor. This region, now forsaken by man, and avoided by commerce, was in those days crossed and recrossed by important trade routes. Hence the origin of the foundation of Petra. In the rugged declivities of the escarpment, which forms the eastern ramparts of the great rift valley of the Jordan and Dead Sea, the cunning Nabataeans found a stronghold so peculiarly protected by nature that they took the opportunity of converting it into the treasure city. This is the character of Petra: it is a city carved out of solid rock, secreted among a labyrinth of deep-cut ravines.

Intersection of Caravan Routes.
Petra rose rapidly to fame. Its wealth must have been very much like that of modern Port Said. The great inter-continental trade route was in need of a depot—an emporium. Petra supplied the need. It soon became the commercial metropolis of this corner of Asia. On to it converged the caravan routes from Egypt, Mesopotamia, Syria, Arabia, Asia Minor and Persia. Its rock-hewn storehouses were crammed with merchandise from all points of the compass. For a brief period Petra prospered and enjoyed a career which was as brilliant as it was short lived. It was reputed to have had a population of from 20,000 to 30,000 persons, composed not of poor husbandmen and shepherds, but of wealthy merchants, who filled the capital with luxury and art.

On descending the escarpment signs of man's handiwork soon show themselves. A cliff has been hewn into a caravan-caravanserai, for the use, no doubt, of belated travellers, for it is situated outside the rock-ramparts of the city. Guest chambers, stables and managers are all there, cut out of the heart of the cliff. Beyond this a precipitous sandstone ridge bars approach. Means of access through this barrier is given by a narrow cleft, called the "Siq." No more romantic or original entrance to a city and no more could be conceived. The "Siq" is so narrow in places that one can touch both walls with outstretched arms; it is so deep that the sky above looks like a blue archway, while in many places the overhanging walls completely shut out all view of the heavens. The color of the rock is winered and rust, with here and there yellow and purple in old days it was a paved highway, with aqueducts of running water on either side.

A Splendor of Color and Light.
After wandering through semi-darkness for a mile, a splendor of color and a mass of light greet the eyes. The Nabataeans must have had a love of color and light, for they display much ingenuity in the choice of position for their monuments. Passing on into the city, the traveller winds his way through dim gorge and sunlit valley where are all sorts of carved and carved dwelling houses, banqueting halls, temples, theatres, aqueducts, and even reservoirs. A deep ravine was the sun's altar of the metropolis. The rough cliffs have been dressed into smooth faces, relieved by bold bastions and pylons decorated simply but effectively with a plain string pattern.

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