

THE EVENING TIMES AND STAR, ST. JOHN N. B., THURSDAY, MARCH 26, 1914

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A CRISIS PASSED.

The Asquith government has weathered another storm. What seemed yesterday to have been an unexpected evidence of weakness on its part turned out to have been a mistake by one of its members, who committed a serious blunder without having consulted his colleagues. It hardly seemed credible that the government would give any such written assurance to the officers of the army as was said to have been given in connection with service in Ulster, and it turns out that this assurance was given by Col. Bedy without having laid the matter before Premier Asquith and his colleagues. The premier only learned the facts yesterday, and then he and Sir Edward Grey most emphatically declared to parliament and the country that the civil power must be supreme, and that no body of men in the service of the crown had any right to demand "assurances of a hypothetical character as to what should be done in circumstances which had not arisen."

Sir Edward Grey went further. He said:—"The government is prepared at any moment to use force to whatever extent is required to make the will of the country prevail."

These statements were received by the Liberals in parliament, as might be expected, with the utmost enthusiasm. The estimate of the London Chronicle is probably correct when it says that the government is now in a stronger position than ever. A notable feature of the debate yesterday was the defence of King George by members of the government who denied that he had interfered in any way in the controversy, and declared that "His Majesty had preserved every rule which comported with his dignity and position as a constitutional sovereign."

SMALL FACTORIES.

The following paragraph from the American Lumberman on the subject of small factories is worthy of consideration by the business men of provincial towns:—"Many leading economists and publicists lately have declared that within the next decade one of the most striking developments in commercial affairs will be the establishing of moderate sized factories in the smaller towns of the country. In fact, this has been a very prominent feature during the last ten years. There are doubtless throughout the United States hundreds, perhaps thousands, of small communities that have the resources, the markets and other facilities for supporting small factories. It should be one of the aims of the local development clubs to investigate and survey local resources with a view of establishing factories or other industries that in their opinion could be profitably operated in the communities. Some political economists have gone so far as to say that the best means of checking the current of population now setting in toward the city is to establish factories in the smaller communities. The claim is made that a factory that would give employment to a part of the population during periods when other sources of employment fail is a necessity in every community."

A city probably gains as much or more by having many and varied factories of small capacity than by having a small number of very large ones. There is a wider opportunity to provide the young people as they grow up with a choice of occupations, and to ensure employment for different members of the family in their home town.

Even those who are opposed to any truck and trade with the Yankees are glad to know that American haddock are on the market in this Lenten season.

It is quite evident from the report of Engineer A. D. Swan and the practical navigators who joined in the investigation that Oak Point, on the St. Croix, will be developed as a port in advance of L'Etang.

The results of the efforts of the Borden government to increase Canada's trade with the West Indies are not such as to suggest a halo for the Hon. Mr. Foster. The return for the first six months under the new agreement, as compared with the corresponding six months of the previous year, showed a decrease, although there were some increases in exports to the islands.

In his address on the Gutellus report in parliament yesterday Hon. Mr. Graham pointed out that the ports of Quebec, St. John and Halifax, and the whole of Eastern Canada, had been seriously injured by the policy pursued by the Borden government in degrading the National Transcontinental Railway, which had originally been designed to

be such a railway as would carry freight at the lowest possible cost from the great west to the sea-board.

Although every vigorous effort has been made in congress to prevent the repeal of the Panama Canal tolls exemption there is every reason to believe that President Wilson will be sustained and the credit of the country saved.

Some of the civic candidates have declared themselves for the open door at city hall. More of them should do so. The open door was featured as one of the strong points of the commission plan of government.

The grave gentlemen of the Canadian senate, led by the gallant Senator Dennis of Halifax, have been considering such subjects as imminent spectacles on the stage, posters of the same class, and that portion of women's costume styled the slit skirt. Who says the senate should be reformed?

The statement by the city engineer that No. 1 wharf at West St. John is in danger of sliding into the harbor is a very serious one, and prompt action should be taken to prevent such an unfortunate occurrence. Whatever is needed to make this wharf perfectly secure should be done before next winter. The city engineer has given ample warning.

While five counties in Ulster show a Protestant majority, six counties show a Catholic majority. Only five therefore out of eleven counties could be expected to reject the provisions of the Home Rule Bill. At present the majority of the members of the House of Commons are Home Rulers. There are many Ulster Protestants who are in favor of Home Rule.

Frederick correspondence in this morning's Telegraph submits a number of interesting questions. Is it right, it is asked, for a departmental official to have an interest in a company that gets large contracts from the department with which he is connected? Is it right for a member of parliament, who desires to sell a farm, to transfer it to a close friend, by whom it is sold to the Farm Settlement Board? Is it right for a member of a government to act as solicitor for a company doing business with the government? Is it right for members of a government to receive from big contractors political campaign funds? Is it right for a son of a member of a government to occupy an important position in the employ of a corporation getting government assistance? Is it right for a son of a member of a government to take a sub-contract from a company doing business with his father's department? Undoubtedly these are questions which are worthy of consideration, not only in Frederick but throughout the country.

His friends are awaiting with keen interest what the Hon. H. F. McLeod may have to say concerning the St. John Valley Railway. Mr. McLeod's burst of frankness in regard to the Southampton Railway has encouraged his friends to hope that he will be equally frank with regard to the Gould project. Mr. McLeod, it will be remembered, told parliament and the country that he knew of padded items and other irregularities in connection with the Southampton Railway. If he will now tell what he knows about the St. John Valley Railway, the information should be of much value. A singular fact is that Mr. Fleming and his colleagues display an unusual reticence in relation to Mr. McLeod's statement about padded items and other irregularities. If Mr. Carvell had not been supported by Mr. McLeod, Mr. Carvell would have been denounced as a partisan and falsifier. Mr. McLeod can now do a great service by seconding the endeavors of the people of St. John and the St. John Valley to get full information about the Valley Railway.

The coroner's jury in the affair of the Grand Union Hotel fire recommends that all such buildings be equipped with fire escapes solidly placed and easily and quickly reached, and that all fire escapes be of a standard design and inspected at least once a year. Useful recommendations concerning the safety of buildings are frequently made and too frequently forgotten. Coroner Roberts, in the course of his address, very properly protested against a system under which a man's official head is unsafe if he insists upon the enforcement of the law. He would have matters relating to public safety taken out of politics and the laws rigidly enforced. There was force in his suggestion that if the government can provide enormous sums for railways, canals, wharves, etc., it should also be able to make appropriations in connection with medical inspection, better housing, better hospitals, better provisions for safety in time of fire, fire inspection and public safety generally. It may be hoped that as a result of this inquiry, which so strongly emphasizes recommendations similar to those made on former occasions, better provision will be made to safeguard human life.

BIRTHDAYS OF NOTABILITIES

THURSDAY, MARCH 26

The career of the Hon. Nathaniel Curry, dominion senator, whose sixty-third birthday falls today, is one of the most interesting of those of Canadian captains of industry. Born at Port William, N. S., he went as a youth to Boston, where he obtained employment in a wood-working establishment. Here he fell in with a competitor, the late Nelson A. Rhodes, and after some time the pair decided to return to Canada and start a small business of their own. This they did in Amherst. For a long time they had to struggle hard to make ends meet, but eventually they won. They bought out the Harris car works in St. John and started to make rolling stock for railways, the business out of which has grown the Canadian Car and Foundry Co. Mr. Curry is now a millionaire, and ex-president of the Canadian Manufacturers' Association and a big figure in Canadian industry.

Good Proof.

"Of course, Jack, I'm very fond of you. Why haven't I just danced six times with you?"

"I don't see any proof in that."

"You would, if you only realized how you dance."

Tea and the Weather.

First Lady—"Too bad! Mrs. S. always has such abominable weather for her afternoon tea."

Second Lady—"Yes, she never pours but it rains."

Climbing.

"You folks are being taken up by society, aren't you?"

"Well, we believe in bragging but we know three ladies who smoke cigarettes."

Not the Right Kind.

She—John, I found mice in the pantry this afternoon.

He—Why do you want me to do about it?

She—Couldn't you bring home that kitty from your club tonight?

"O Will," she said, moving a trifle closer to him, "I am so glad you are not rich! They say that some of those millionaires receive threatening letters saying that some dreadful will happen to them if they don't pay the writers sums of money."

"O, is that all?" replied Will. "Why I get plenty of such letters."

Whistler and Oscar Wilde did not love each other overmuch, and as they constantly met in London drawing-rooms their sparring was pretty deadly. On one occasion Whistler made a remark so brilliant as to provoke applause even from Wilde.

"By jove, Whistler," he exclaimed, "I wish I had said that."

"Never mind," replied Whistler, "you will."

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(Continued from page 1)

Mr. Wilson instantly changed from the English language to the French and proceeded.

Hon. Mr. Pelletier protested that this was not fair in that Mr. Speaker was at a disadvantage in that he could not understand what the member was saying.

Mr. Speaker persisted that the member had the right only to make his statement and that questions would be asked.

Mr. Wilson then reverted to the English language and read the questions he had submitted and which he sought to have answered. He had received a communication from the clerk of the house stating that Mr. Speaker had ruled them out because he deemed them "irrelevant."

That was a matter to be dealt with when the question came before the house. For himself, he was sincere and he desired to know whether his questions would be given a place on the order paper as was the right of the House of Commons.

Speaker Syme said that under the rule quoted he had ruled the questions out. He said that the British precedent showed that questions based on mere statements in the press should be discouraged. Members should be in a position to vouch for the accuracy of the matter upon which questions were based.

"In my opinion," said he, "the questions were irrelevant, and the last part of the question too frivolous to engage the attention of the house."

"With all due respect I appeal from your decision," exclaimed Mr. Wilson, amid cheers and counter cheers.

Borden Breaks In

"The member for Laval is making a fuss about a very trivial matter," put in Premier Borden. "The Speaker thinks it is not proper."

"There is no discussion on an appeal from the chair," put in Mr. Wilson. "Why does the prime minister try to make a speech?"

"Because the prime minister has a right to speak on any question of this kind," retorted Premier Borden, amid some uproar.

Hon. Dr. Pugsley rose to call attention to the fact that the rules laid down specifically that an appeal was not desirable.

Mr. Wilson rose, but the speaker called him to order. There could be no doubt.

"No," exclaimed the Laval member, "I suppose not. The prime minister has the right to speak, but I have not the right to answer."

The chamber echoed with mingled cheers and hoots and a storm seemed imminent.

The prime minister is allowed to read his speeches in this house, but I am stopped," proceeded Mr. Wilson, amid further uproar.

Premier Borden said that, although the Speaker had deemed the questions improper ones, he was prepared to answer them by assuring Mr. Wilson that the government knew nothing of the matter alluded to.

A vote was then taken upon Mr. Wilson's appeal from the ruling of the Speaker, and the latter was sustained on division by a vote of 89 to 55, a government majority of 84. Messrs. Lamarche, Boudry and Guilbault on the government benches voted against the Speaker's ruling. Otherwise it was a party division.

"Why has not the postmaster general voted on this question?" asked Mr. Wilson after the vote had been taken.

There were cries of "order" but Hon. William Pugsley rose to say that Mr. Wilson had a perfect right to ask his question.

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