

The St. John Standard

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ST. JOHN, N. B., FRIDAY, JULY 25, 1919.

OUR AWFUL STREETS.

The city commissioners have awarded tenders for the excavation and back-filling on certain streets in connection with the replacement of water mains. It is intimated that the King street job will be postponed until after the big celebration in August. An indefinite postponement would be much better, for the expenditure on this particular section is almost wholly unnecessary. All that is required on King street is the replacement of the thirty odd feet of small pipe stuck in the middle of that line, for the rest of the main is in excellent condition and only requires to be cleaned.

The Douglas Avenue line might also be indefinitely postponed, for the eight inch pipe now in existence there is entirely sufficient for the requirements of that section of the city. However, if the commissioners, aroused to desperation by widespread criticism, are determined to spend money, even foolishly, perhaps they might just as well go ahead, for it will only hasten the end.

So far as this particular branch of work is concerned, the only man directly interested is Commissioner Jones, in charge of the Water and Sewerage Department, who presented the estimates and secured consent of his colleagues to a bond issue of \$100,000, covering these various contracts. What about Commissioner Fisher, who is supposed to be looking after the street work? So far as can be observed, his activities during the present season will be confined to one block of roadway on Germain street and to anticipation of the busy times he will have next year if he should happen to be re-elected to office. Mr. Fisher is seriously planning, as he has been doing for several years, work for the coming season, which present programme includes the construction of durable paving on the streets now to be occupied by Mr. Jones' contractors. But what will happen to these streets if Mr. Fisher fails to hold his present position when next season comes around? Would it not be much better for him to make himself really useful during what remains of the present summer? Certainly one block of Germain street is not a very heavy order for the City Commissioner, and the Standard feels sure that he could utilize his time to better advantage than by merely supervising that little portion. Why not go ahead on streets which at present require water-main renewals?

THE HARBOR DEAL.

The statement has been made that at least a million dollars must be expended at once in order to put St. John Harbor into proper condition. This amount added to the purchase price to be paid by the Federal Government will bring the immediate investment to a total of \$3,000,000, upon which amount it will be necessary that the Harbor Commissioners, when appointed, shall pay to the government interest at the rate of 5 per cent. This charge in itself means \$150,000 per year as a fixed overhead. At present there is no such burden. It is idle to anticipate that ordinary maintenance and repairs, apart altogether from extensions of equipment, may be made as required and charged to capital. Such a policy would inevitably lead to early disaster and it may be accepted as a principle of operation that such ordinary repairs and maintenance charges must be provided out of revenue. This is also true of salaries paid to commissioners, of clerical work, office maintenance, insurance, and all other incidental charges which, in themselves, will amount to not less than \$50,000 per year. Additional equipment, formerly provided through the co-operation of the Department of Public Works, will hereafter be created through money borrowed by the Commissioners and charged to St. John Harbor Capital Account, upon which investment 5 per cent. interest must be paid out of harbor revenue. In short every cent hereafter spent by the commissioners, and including the purchase price paid by the government, must produce its interest return, and the harbor must be so managed as to enable St. John to satisfactorily compete for business with other Atlantic ports. Can this be done? Those who have interested themselves in civic affairs and realize the stiff proposition now confronting this small community in its endeavor to provide a national port, brush aside the problem as one with which they are not concerned, preferring to leave the solution with the prospective commissioners and the Federal government. Their argument is that we should get rid of this load no matter what the future may bring. But their very will be very different when in years to come St. John will be compelled to impose almost prohibitive gates on traffic in order to make ends meet. It is questionable whether, in the endeavor to shift the burden which now seems too heavy for us, we are not likely to take on an even greater load in the shape of a handicap against which we must struggle in vain. Why, for instance, should Halifax enjoy the expenditure of \$2,000,000 for the creation of a modern harbor from which outlay no return is demanded by the government, while St. John, which has already bled itself white to provide a port for all Canada, should have to produce an interest return on a paltry purchase price of \$2,000,000, and even at this submit to a forced reduction in that price of a quarter million dollars.

HIGHWAY PROMISES.

We are told by means of scarce headings and fully a count of words that the St. John-St. Stephen road is to be transformed into a wonderful highway. One might almost be led to believe from the glowing accounts given in Mr. Veniot's newspapers that this roadway has already been created and is now an ideally smooth pavement between this city and the Charlotte County gateway into Maine. Unfortunately this highly colored description does not compare in fact with the reports of persons who, to their own misfortune, have been compelled to travel over that road within the last week or two, nor in vividness of color with the descriptions which they give of their experiences. It is held that between St. John and St. George the roadway is good. It is admitted that for a short distance on the other side of St. George some little improvement is required, but that at the St. Stephen end no finer highway could be desired. As a matter of fact there is not one mile of this roadway now that is fit for comfortable travel. One gentleman who reached St. John this week, who has travelled many thousands of miles through Europe, South America and the United States, told the Standard only yesterday that never in all his experiences had he dreamed of a civilized province could possess such abominable roads as he had encountered between the Maine border and this city. His is not an exceptional case, and his experience as reported to friends has had the direct result of cancelling the intended trips of a number of parties who had planned to spend the vacation season in New Brunswick.

SOME BACKBONE.

Well done, Westmorland County! It is gratifying to note that there is one municipality in this province which does not propose to be held up by the Foster government or any other government in an illegal and unjust attempt to collect revenues by false pretences. The action of the Westmorland County Council in utterly ignoring the demand for \$7,000 or \$8,000, its apportionment of the so-called Patriotic and War Purposes Tax, is an action which should be commended by the entire province. Unfortunately St. John and many others were weak enough to unhesitatingly comply with the outrageous demand from Frederickton for a contribution toward this fund and by so doing simply put into the provincial treasury thousands of dollars to be thrown about on county roads, for political favorites, and for campaign purposes, by those who are today pretending honest administration of the country's affairs. Westmorland County has shown a little backbone. Its attitude is a rebuke to other municipalities which permitted themselves to be lured by the Foster government. Mr. Foster has announced that his government will take steps to enforce payment from such counties as have not handed over their portion of that infamous \$118,000 assessment. Let us see what he and his government will do to Westmorland County. A very interesting situation will be created if this government attempts to collect by legal process the amount which Westmorland has refused to pay. No court in the land will uphold that demand, but a victory for Westmorland may, and no doubt will, induce other counties to request from the government a return of the funds illegally taken from them.

The Government of France has decided to issue a victory medal for distribution among all soldiers and sailors of the allied nations who have seen at least three months' fighting service. The medal will be of bronze an inch and a half in diameter, showing on one side the winged figure of Victory, without any inscription, and on the reverse, "The Great War for Civiliza-

tion," with the name and in the language of the allied state to which the bearer belongs. The ribbon will be the same for all nationalities, a double rainbow on a red ground with white edges.

WHAT THEY SAY

Up To Canadians.
 Galt Reporter: Unless Canadians get down to business, investigate the conditions of the market, appoint business men to help in the campaign, this country will get very little of the huge trade that Germany controlled in the British Empire before the war.

The Irish Agitation.
 Wall Street Journal: If there were not something highly unreal in this Irish agitation in a country at least burdened and the most prosperous of any in Europe, it would be unnecessary to point out that had the inhabitants of Ireland been Englishmen they would have seized their independence centuries ago and nothing could have stopped them. Murdering occasional policemen is not the way to secure independence, nor does it convince the world of a united desire.

Let the People Decide.
 Woodstock Sentinel Review: Provincial Prohibition, according to Mr. Dewar, leader of the Liberal party in Ontario, is a question for the people and should be kept out of party politics. He is right. It is an important question, and it should be dealt with on its merits. The issue should not be complicated by party considerations. It is seldom that the people of this country have the opportunity of dealing with a public question exclusively on its merits.

The Coming Trial.
 New York Times: It is lucky for William Holzenzeller that his trial is to take place on English soil—not in all but the English will be more sympathetic with him than any other nation might be, but because there is a traditional fairness and impartiality about English justice which no other country, not even our own, has been able to surpass. The object of the French and Italian courts is to obtain a conviction; the aim of an English court is to administer justice. Our own practice is marred by far too much opportunity for delay, by devices of technicality that cheat justice of her due.

Produce.
 London Free Press: The same economic laws that force up the price of coal to the British consumer, and compel the Premier of Italy to tell his subjects that production is their own safeguard against high prices are laws that prevail here. The world has replenished her stores, has recovered her storehouses for the losses that war has imposed, will living costs must prevent sufficient production, and must encourage production. But it is not given to governments to produce. The solution, Governments are not all-powerful. Now is the time, people. By persistent and intelligent production they can remedy the ills of which they complain.

Foch's Favorites.
 Canadian Military Gazette: The writer has the following story from a gentleman in whose word he has absolute confidence. Shortly before the armistice a private luncheon was given by a lady in Paris to a number of friends, of whom Marshal Foch was one. In the course of conversation the lady said: "Marshal, will you tell us who were your best soldiers?" He replied, "Madam, that is a hard question. To begin with I must not speak of my own 'polish.' But you have asked, and I shall answer—Mes enfants chéris sont les Canadiens." The point to note is that Foch was not speaking for publication but at a private gathering and amongst his fellow-countrymen only.

A BIT OF VERSE

SAFETY FIRST.
 Vancouver World.
 Jenkins has an auto car.
 And even the electric light
 Throws blacker shadows on the walls.
 The pet canary stops its song,
 The Persian cat for Fench's sighs,
 And naught seems right and all seems wrong.
 And mirth folds up its wings and dies.
 When Gustave Gloom sits down to dine
 His little wife sits up to hear
 That she has heard year after year,
 That she has heard year after year,
 For Gustave Gloom is of that class
 Which has for joy no appetite,
 And he would like to shoot the man
 Who said, "Whatever is, is right!"

Oh, if it be that Hades looms
 Beyond this vale of wrath and tears,
 It must be filled with Gustave Gloom,
 Coloured through the weary years,
 We hope there's many a brimstone couch
 Prepared where Mr. Satan fuses,
 For Adam Sourdough, old George
 And all the other Killjoy Kusses!

A Poor Substitute.
 This railroad coach was well filled
 Over two double seats. He
 Feigned sleep until the "newfies"
 Came and announced "cool drinks,"
 Then he sprang up and seized
 A bottle and put it to his lips.
 In his haste to satisfy his thirst

Jenkins lies upon his bed,
 Talking of the moon.
 Auto isn't in the shed,
 Won't be very soon.
 Naggie's where the horses go
 When they leave this sphere.
 Roasting? Freezing? What's his show?
 Didn't learn his habits, so
 Cannot answer "Yes" or "No,"
 Only he's not here.

Johnson's in the hospital,
 Broken all bits.
 Nurses think they got him all—
 Seems like nothing fits.
 Maybe he'll be whole once more,
 Out upon the street.
 Auto might run as before—
 Now it's scattered on the floor
 While mechanics paw it over—
 Won't admit defeat.

Little Benny's Note Book

BY LEE PAPE.

Yesterday afternoon I was sitting on Mary Watkins' front steps talking to her and listening to her talking to me, and she had a blue ribbon in her hair and her curls were all hanging down like everything, me thinking, G. I wish I had a lock of her hair.
 And we kept on talking, and I said, How big is a lock?
 Wait? said Mary Watkins, and I said, How big is a lock and she said, Do you mean like a lock on a gate?
 No, like a lock on a head, didn't you ever hear of a lock of hair, I said.
 Yes, but I don't know how big they are, I guess they're all different sizes, just depending, said Mary Watkins.
 And we kept on talking, and pretty soon I said, Does your hair pull out easy or does it hurt?
 It hurts, said Mary Watkins.
 Match? I said.
 Terrible, said Mary Watkins. And we kept on talking, and I said, Do you want me to pull a little lock out just so you can see if it hurts as much as it used to?
 No I don't, seriously not, the very idea, said Mary Watkins, and I said, All right, I just wanted to know, I don't care.
 And we kept on talking, and after a while I said, I tell you what, let's have a contest, you take a hold of 6 of my hairs and I'll take a hold of 6 of yours and we'll both pull, and whose ever hairs come out the first loses.
 Benny Potts, I'm going into the house, your perfectly dreadful, said Mary Watkins. With she started to do, and I quick said, I won't talk about hair any more if you stay out.
 Which she did and I did.

THE EDITOR'S MAIL

July 24, 1919.
 To the Editor of The Standard:
 Sir,—I notice that you have again referred to the harbor in this morning's issue.

The citizens at large would like to see a plan of the harbor, showing the different wharves, land under water, slips, and wharfage properties turned into purchasing lots, with the revenue derived from said wharves, slips and lots under lease; also a sketch of what the Dominion Government contemplates taking under the bill as passed in the House a few weeks ago.

Let us look at this matter from a business standpoint. How many men it will sell for \$1.50 worth for \$50? Further, I would like you to tell us, as you have the facts at hand, how much has been spent at Halifax, Montreal, Vancouver and other ports. As National Ports I do not think that the people in the Dominion, outside of the City of St. John, feel that we should make a gift to the Dominion of Canada. Is this not what they want?
 Yours very truly,
 CITIZEN.

A BIT OF FUN

Just So.
 The peace crank was going strong. His umbrella waved frantically, and his side whiskers bristled with the strains that prevailed.
 "Gentlemen, unity is strength. We keepers of the door of peace must all hang together."
 "Let us look at the better," came a sweet voice from the crowd.

Truth Will Out.
 Father (severely): "Tommy, did you ask mother if you could have that apple?"
 Tommy (six years old): "Yes-yes, father."
 Father: "Be careful now. I shall ask mother, and if she says you didn't ask her, I shall punish you for telling an untruth. Now, did you ask her?"
 Tommy: "Yes, father, I did truly." A pause then. "And she said I couldn't have it."

Thought it Was a Dodge.
 Sandy McLartian was not mean, only thrifty. When a concert in his town was advertised "admission free" he made up his mind to go. It was raining when the great night came, but Sandy arrived in due course, umbrella in hand. An attendant stepped to the front as the "thrifty man" entered and remarked, "I'll take charge of your umbrella, sir."
 Instantly he was on his guard.
 "Tak ma umbrella, will ye?" he cried; "not if I ken anything about it, ma man. I might have guessed there was some fraud in this free concert business."

Gustave Gloom.
 When Gustave Gloom comes home at night,
 A comb, brooding silence falls,
 And even the electric light
 Throws blacker shadows on the walls.
 The pet canary stops its song,
 The Persian cat for Fench's sighs,
 And naught seems right and all seems wrong.
 And mirth folds up its wings and dies.

When Gustave Gloom sits down to dine
 His little wife sits up to hear
 That she has heard year after year,
 That she has heard year after year,
 For Gustave Gloom is of that class
 Which has for joy no appetite,
 And he would like to shoot the man
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Oh, if it be that Hades looms
 Beyond this vale of wrath and tears,
 It must be filled with Gustave Gloom,
 Coloured through the weary years,
 We hope there's many a brimstone couch
 Prepared where Mr. Satan fuses,
 For Adam Sourdough, old George
 And all the other Killjoy Kusses!

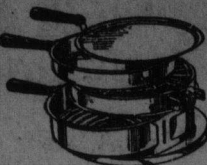
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