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ST. JOHN, N. B., TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 1912.

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT AND TEMPERANCE.

Temperance agitators like many other good people sometimes forget themselves. This seems to have been the case with Rev. Mr. Thomas at Moncton on Sunday when he attacked the Flemming Government for its lack of interest in temperance legislation. If Mr. Thomas had been perfectly straightforward he would have said that what he desires is not temperance at all but complete prohibition. There is a great difference between these two; temperance is a moral question and in these days prohibition has become almost, if not wholly, political. The excessive use of liquor is admitted to be an evil by all classes of the community. This much admitted, the question of mitigating the evil is the important issue. Apparently no two people think exactly alike on how this is to be accomplished; but, generally speaking, there are in a broad sense two opinions. One party contends that the evil is lessened better by regulation, while the other that legal enactment prohibiting the sale of liquor altogether is the only remedy.

The question which the government of New Brunswick was asked to consider was the introduction of a measure similar to that in operation in Prince Edward Island. This request was made to the Robinson Government and a commission was appointed to investigate the conditions on the island and also in the counties of New Brunswick in which the Scott Act was in operation. The commission reported, but no action was taken on the report by the Robinson Government. Later, when Mr. Hazen was Premier, the matter was brought to his attention. As a result the License Act was made much more stringent and it was also made easier to hold local option elections under its provisions than formerly.

As the result of these elections prohibition now prevails in Campbellton which was formerly under license. Dukes and Lorne Wards in this city were added to the dry list, and subsequently the Parish of Lancaster voted in favor of no license, notwithstanding the fact that the largest brewery in this Province is in the district. One Parish in Kent County also went dry and as St. Martins and West St. John had no licenses under the Act it can scarcely be said that the action of the Provincial Government under Mr. Hazen did not favor temperance. The same amendment introduced by Mr. Hazen closed the bars in licensed districts on all public holidays and prohibited the use of screens. Where formerly the bars opened at six o'clock and closed at seven o'clock and the closing hour on Saturdays was fixed at five o'clock instead of seven. As all the counties in New Brunswick with the exception of St. John, Victoria, Madawaska, Restigouche, Gloucester, and Kent were already under the Scott Act, the licensed area was rather restricted. The action of the Hazen-Flemming Government was heartily endorsed by the people. The only cut-and-out prohibitionist who appeared in the campaign lost his deposit as did those who were his colleagues, with a single exception.

So much has been said by those who desire to misrepresent the attitude of the Provincial Government on the temperance question that this plain statement of the case which is substantiated by the official records and the statutes of the Province seems to be necessary. While no one wishes to doubt Mr. Thomas' sincerity the reiteration of the statement that the Government is unfriendly to the cause of temperance is disproved by their every act. That Mr. Flemming resisted the discreditable attempt of a few alleged temperance workers to compel him to make appointments that were not in the public interest is quite true, but under all the circumstances the course taken by the Premier was the only one open to him. Those who remember this attempt to hold up Mr. Flemming have not forgotten that other most discreditable and dishonest attempt to influence the voters of Kings County in favor of the Opposition candidates. This was undoubtedly the meanest and most contemptible trick of the campaign and had for its sponsor a temperance organization the heads of which have not yet had the manliness to explain why they failed to treat the candidates in Kings alike but aided in a conspiracy to stampede the temperance vote into the Opposition camp. The Provincial Government is quite content to rest its case on the temperance question with the electors. In fact this has already been done and the people have given their answer without evasion or equivocation.

THE NEW SENATE LEADER.

The selection of Sir George Ross as Liberal leader in the Senate is one of the amazing things that sometimes happen in politics and which is not easy of explanation. First and foremost the new leader would hardly have been chosen because of his innocence of political corruption. The record of the Government of Ontario while he was Premier was about as bad as it could be. It may not have been because Sir George Ross was Premier that Ontario was under the absolute control of the worst gang of political corruptionists that ever disgraced Canadian politics, but the fact remains that the conditions disclosed before and after his defeat by Sir James Whitney were not such that would entitle him to leadership of the Liberal majority in such an august body as the Canadian Senate.

Apart from his record as a Provincial leader Sir George can hardly be acceptable to Sir Wilfrid Laurier as Senate leader, as he opposed about everything Sir Wilfrid favored. He disliked Sir Wilfrid's Reciprocity Pact and said so. This was enough in itself to have made him offensive to all the members of the late Administration who were defeated on the Reciprocity question and not well liked by those who escaped the general slaughter. While not in his place during a portion of the last session, he criticised very severely the action of the Senate in holding up the Dominion grant to the Ontario Government railway and the Good Roads Bill passed through the House of Commons by Mr. Borden. Yet he has been chosen Liberal leader in the Senate although his record and his public performances are at complete variance with those of Sir Wilfrid Laurier.

It is said, apparently with good authority, that Senator Bostock was the choice of Sir Wilfrid for the Senate leadership and that the Liberals in that body refused to be dictated to and made their own selection. The meaning of this revolt is not yet clear, but its effect will be to greatly reduce the prestige of Sir Wilfrid who when in power ruled with a rod of iron. Those who have kept in touch with the trend of events have realized for some time that Sir Wilfrid's hold on his following has been weakening. His numerous blunders during the past session, now that his supporters have had time and opportunity to see their effect, have not improved his standing.

and now that the Senate has administered such a strong right-hand he will find it harder to hold his following in leash and compel them to do his bidding.

There may, however, be another reason for the selection of Sir George Ross as Senate leader. The Liberal party have never been above sectionalism—it has always been one of the charges made against their leaders that they had a policy for each Province. Sir George represents Ontario, and there the sentiment against Reciprocity is stronger now than ever before. The Liberal leaders say that Reciprocity is still the policy of the Liberal party. As a convincing argument that this is not so the Ontario Liberals can point to Sir George Ross. In the Western Provinces some one else can be trotted out—Sir Wilfrid himself for example—to prove that the Liberal party still favors Reciprocity. But, whatever the reason, Sir George Ross has been chosen as leader of the Opposition in the Upper Chamber, while Sir Wilfrid leads in the House. The two leaders are very far apart in all their ideals and there is no likelihood of any one bridging the chasm. The situation is an interesting one and certain to lead to complications before the end of the session.

THE NEW MARINE DEPOT.

Hon. Mr. Hazen has done well in securing a site on the West Side of the city for a marine depot and general repair shop. During the past few years the equipment of the marine department has been greatly increased in this section of the country. St. John had the honor of having the first steam fog alarm in the world. It was the invention of Robert Poulin, a mechanic and engineer of great ability—a man who was well informed and highly practical in everything but money making. An effort was made to deprive him of the honor of his invention which is now used all over the world. A complete record of the proceedings by which Mr. Poulin proved himself the inventor of the steam fog whistle is to be found in the official journals of the Legislature of New Brunswick. It is well that this official recognition of Mr. Poulin's gift to the world has been preserved, for although it is not so many years since he died, there are but few people today who know that he ever lived.

Prior to the invention of the fog whistle, bells and gongs were the only protection of the mariner in thick weather, and they were hardly dependable, as they could be heard only a short distance from shore. In navigating these days the coastwise mariner is scarcely ever out of the sound of a fog alarm in thick weather, and when the atmosphere is clear there is always more than one light in sight, and, as they all differ in material respects he is able at all times to know the exact locality he is sailing in.

The great increase in the number of lighthouses, fog alarms, automatic buoys and other appliances of varying design has greatly enlarged the scope of the marine department. All of the plant, if so it might be called, to protect the lives of those who follow the sea is of a most perishable character and requires constant attention. Buoys are frequently torn from their moorings and are in need of repairs. They are cumbersome things and require room for handling. Up to the purchase of the property on the West Side by Mr. Hazen, for the use of the marine department, this valuable plant and reserve stock of buoys, which must necessarily be kept on hand, was stored in different places and was often difficult to get hold of in a hurry. When the new depot is completed, which it will be in a few months, the officials will be able to do their work much easier and quicker than ever before, and the replacement of buoys breaking adrift will be a matter of hours only where it now takes days or even weeks. The replacement of a damaged buoy is of the highest importance, as navigators place all dependence in them and their absence might be the cause of a serious disaster.

The site selected by the Minister for the depot could not be improved upon and the equipment will be of the most modern character. In addition to providing storage for the constantly growing plant of the department, there will be sufficient wharf accommodation for the steamers of the department, particularly those carrying supplies to the lighthouses and fog alarms. The citizens of St. John will not be slow in congratulating Mr. Hazen on his efforts to improve the service of the department of which he is the head. Many reforms have already been instituted since he became Minister and before he has completed his term of office he will have many more to his credit.

LET US HAVE FACTS.

The Times has been sending up a weekly wall, sometimes two a week, over the alleged dismissals of Dominion officials, apparently those holding Liberal political beliefs, to accommodate a horde of hungry Tories. The Times is densely ignorant on many subjects and the dismissal of Liberals to make room for Tory henchmen is one of them. Liberals have not been dismissed in hordes and this the Times very well knows. Civil servants who minded their own business and voted as their consciences dictated have not been interfered with. A few loud-mouthed and interfering officials who had not the good sense to forget that their partisanship ceased with their appointment to a position under the Government are now seeking other employment. They are not numerous, not nearly so numerous as when the last change of Government took place in 1896, when the political headman's axe was wielded as never before in the history of Canadian politics. Perhaps the Times would furnish a list of the officials who have been decapitated during the past year. It would be more convincing than the reiteration weekly of a statement that is absurdly false.

Current Comment

The Uncommon Law.
(Montreal Gazette.)

The Judicial Committee of the Privy Council has decided that there is no justification for the claim for damages against the municipality in the case of a man who was left unwatched and burned to death in the town lock-up at Chilliwack, B. C. The Court of Review has given damages against the municipality in favor of the man who was taken into a Montreal police station in such a state of drunkenness that he fell down a stair, carrying a policeman with him, and killed himself. The law is an uncertain thing.

Progress and High Prices.
(Christian Science Monitor.)

How nearly related are the conditions in all progressive countries is evidenced by the fact that the cost of living and the cost of labor during the last ten years have greatly increased in Japan, while there is a serious car shortage in Germany.

An Educational Result.
(Ottawa Free Press.)

The young ladies at Queen's University refuse to allow the male students to pay \$3.00 for cabs when escorting them to social functions. This does higher education make a practical effort to grapple with the high cost of living.

Wasted Effort.
(Pittsburg Dispatch.)

An Illinois woman who married a man to reform him has given up the job after 45 years of effort, and is now seeking a divorce. It seldom works.

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SAILORS ENTERTAINED

IN SEAMEN'S MISSION

There was a pleasing entertainment in the Seamen's Mission last evening when the Ladies' Auxiliary entertained about 350 sailors. During the first part of the evening there were numerous vocal solos, piano and violin duets, recitations by the sailors, also selections by the band from the Allan line steamer Corcoran. This band is composed of various instruments, and is deserving of praise for its excellent music.

Mr. Kibb, of the government steamer Curlew, rendered vocal solos and had to respond to encores. Mr. Walker was also heard in vocal solos and was accompanied on the piano by Miss Thompson.

R. Morton Smith presided, and Mrs. Archibald in a brief address welcomed the sailors.

After refreshments had been served the sailors gave three rousing cheers and the happy gathering was brought to a close with the singing of the National Anthem.

NEW CHINA'S ALPHABET

Nothing could be more deeply significant of the progress in the Flowery Kingdom, says the Literary Digest, than the determination of the new leaders to abolish the old system of writing, which required the student to memorize no fewer than 3,000 ideograms, as a preliminary to the pursuit of written knowledge. For many years Chinese students, both men and women, have been admitted to the leading universities of the western world, and it is but natural that they should have contrasted unfavorably the cumbersome and laborious method of preserving and imparting knowledge with the advantages offered by a phonetic alphabet. Consequently steps were taken some time ago to construct such an alphabet and substitute it for the previous mode of writing. These steps are described in La Revue (Paris):

"The task was entrusted to a learned committee, composed of Chow-Hi-Chu the secretary of the Chinese legation at Rome, the adjunct secretaries Wan and Choi, and the professor of Chinese and Japanese at the School of Oriental Languages in Naples. The committee selected the 26 letters of the alphabet and arranged them in the Chinese tongue. The alphabet adopted by them consists of 48 characters, of which 23 are vowels and 19 are consonants.

"Of the vowels four are taken from the Greek, four from Russian, five from Latin, and one from Chinese. Of the nine remaining vowels, two are derived from the greatest polyglots in the world. These gentlemen have studied all known alphabets and combined them to form one which represents every sound in the Chinese tongue. The alphabet adopted by them consists of 48 characters, of which 23 are vowels and 19 are consonants.

"Of the consonants, 14 are from Latin, three from Russian, and two from the Greek. With these it is possible to write all the words used in the vulgar tongue in any part of China. The innovation has been received with enthusiasm, especially in the southern provinces, and it is believed it will be in general official use by the end of the year."

A BRAVE FATHER.

The teacher of a small school was conducting a grammar lesson.

"Now, children," she said, "in the sentence, 'John was struck by James,' there is a person known as the agent. James is the agent, because he is the person that did the act. Now, what is the agent, Mary?"

"The agent is the person or thing that did the act," replied Mary.

The teacher turned her eyes on a little fellow in the corner, who was not giving much attention, and in rather sharp tones asked:

"Tommy, do you know what the agent is?"

"Yes'm; he's de gink dat poe kicked out yesterday."

Curious Christian Names.

British Guiana, which is celebrating the centenary of Georgetown, is a land of quaint Christian names. Rev. L. Crookall quotes from the Episcopal register of the church in which he ministered to a congregation of all the colors.

Elizabeth, Prince Albert, John Pantolon and Frank Locust. One negro whose child he christened was called Walsey Emmanuel. Another black man brought his child, and when the minister asked the name, replied, "Seriatim ad Valorem." Another gave a puzzling answer which sounded like "A. parson," and when requested to explain, said: "Well, parson, my mind 'g'd me to go troo' de New Testament. I have had four boys: one was called Matthew, another Mark, another Luke and another John, and this is Acts, parson."—London Chronicle.

Yes, Quite a Little.

Once when Lord Dufferin delivered an address before the Greek class of McGill University, a reporter wrote: "His lordship spoke to the class in the purest ancient Greek without mispronouncing a word or making the slightest grammatical solecism."

"Good heavens!" remarked Sir Hector Langevin to the late Sir John A. Macdonald, "How did the reporter know that?"

"I told him," was the Conservative statesman's answer.

"But you don't know Greek," said Sir Hector.

"True," said Sir John, "but I know a little about politics."

An Epigram.

"That wasn't a bad epigram on the magistrate's part," said the somewhat educated tramp, who had been convicted for vagrancy, and another John, and this is Acts, parson."—London Chronicle.

"Seven days," came the reply.

"That ain't no epigram, is it?"

"I'm sure it is. I asked a parson once what an epigram was, and he says it's a short sentence that sounds light, but gives you plenty to think about."—London Opinion.

Last Resort.

Lady—"I ventured to call on you for your opinion, professor. Do you think it would do my son good to study the piano?"

Famous Pianist—"Does he show any taste for it?"

Lady—"Not the least. But his hair has been falling out so much lately that I think it would do my son good to study the piano."



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