

The St. John Standard

Published by The Standard Limited, 82 Prince William Street, St. John, N. B., Canada. H. V. MACKINNON, Manager and Editor.
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ST. JOHN, N. B., WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 28, 1920.

BECOMING A TRADITION.

The Liberal Party in England is hopelessly dead, according to Fighting Joe Martin, who tells the truth as he sees it. If true, it is a pity, but when Hon. W. L. Mackenzie King has revived the Liberal Party in Canada, perhaps he will be able to take a jaunt overseas and resurrect Liberalism in the Mother Land. Mr. King has discovered that the great secret of success in politics is attitude, and he may be able to show something to the great standstill politician who is trying to wake up the Liberal Party in England.

However, the Mother Country managed to get on for some years without a Liberal Party, and may be able to do it again. The Liberal Party in England appears to have been ninety years old when the great war broke out, and it is not surprising that it emerged from the struggle with no great vitality. According to some historians, the Liberal Party was founded in 1815, or at any rate the word Liberal first began to have a definite political significance in that year when Lord Byron and his friends launched a periodical called The Liberal to give expression to their political views, but the word did not come into general use till 1831, when the Reform Bill gave it new prominence. One British statesman who did not think much of the word or the inspiration of Liberalism was Disraeli; in a speech in 1872 he said: "Influenced in a great degree by the philosophy and politics of the continent Whigs endeavored to substitute cosmopolitan for rational principles, and they baptized the new scheme with the plausible name of Liberalism."

While England was the workshop of the world, the leading industrial nation by virtue of her coal mines and her shipping, the great cosmopolitan principle of Liberalism free trade was capable of plausible defence, though it produced conditions in agriculture and industry which were not at all favorable to large sections of the population. But now that most other nations are developing their own industrial possibilities through protective tariff Liberalism does not seem able to offer a message with any strong appeal to a nation, which has as a result of the war decided that loyalty to an outworn fetish is not worth the price of a large C. 3 population.

TEACHING UNCLE SAM.

Union Government has dealt with some of the problems arising out of the war with a vigor and wisdom that has attracted the admiring attention of statesmen of other countries, though it may not have done anything worthy of the distinguished attention of Hon. Mr. King. One of the Government's undoubted successes has been its handling of the problem of retraining disabled soldiers for civil life, and it is interesting to note that in his annual report James P. Munroe, Vice-Chairman of the United States Federal Board for Vocational Education, pays a tribute to the work of the Canadian Government in this connection. Mr. Munroe says: "When the Federal Board set about its great task of providing for the vocational rehabilitation of disabled soldiers, sailors and marines, there was no one in this country who had any experience in this field of work. In European countries and in Canada, however, the work of rehabilitation of the disabled had been developed under pressure of the war emergency, and the Federal Board made a thorough investigation of the policies and methods developed in foreign countries, utilizing every available source of information."

Mr. Munroe declares that the United States profited greatly from the experience of Canada, and that one of the first acts of the U. S. Federal Board was to provide for a personal investigation of the methods which had been developed in Canada, where conditions were in general similar to those obtaining in the United States. And he adds that "in many ways, which cannot be recounted in detail, the Federal Board is under obligation to the Canadian authorities for their helpful co-operation during the past year."

TAFFY AND SOFT SOAP.

The Huntington Gleaner, a Liberal organ, has not been impressed by the speeches made by Mr. King during his recent tour. It intimates that Mr. King is a man of hesitation, not sure where he wants to go or how to get there, and warns him that he cannot, with all his genius for compromise, learned in the great war be all things to all men. It advises him that the sooner he cuts loose and stands on his own feet the sooner he will be respected—which is candid if unkind. The Gleaner adds: "So far the speeches of Hon. Mackenzie King do not admit of much backbone and touch only on issues to which no one can take exception. They seem to

be the words of a man who would cater to any set of organized forces which would land him in power at Ottawa. Surely he realizes that there is a set of great issues, to be decided upon an election, and that, on some subjects, such as the tariff, Dominion prohibition, the substitution of direct for indirect taxation, public ownership of monopoly services, etc., he must take a definite stand. Taffy, soft soap, and flattery will not flunk the eastern Liberals with the western farmers, unless a leader suitable for both is chosen or a platform of like nature adopted."

TAXES.

According to the talk of the city fathers, who seem somewhat worried by the growing needs of the city, or the expectations of the citizens, they apparently believe that the assessment system could be revised again with advantage to somebody. Commissioner Fisher said yesterday that in Toronto charitable projects were given a fitting opportunity to cover the sins of the private citizens, whereas it appears that in St. John charity is largely charged up to the sins of the multitude—not because the city fathers think the multitude should be punished in this way, but because, there being no limit to the tax rate as in the old bad days, they have learned a liberality at the expense of their constituents which has doubtless added to their sense of responsibility and importance. Commission form of government being a simple method of handling civic business has not learned the beauty of imposing checks upon demands of various sorts by instituting special taxes to meet the aforesaid philanthropy. What is worrying the Commissioners now is that the general assessment this year threatens a tax rate of \$3.00 or so, which they are afraid will not induce business men to locate here.

It is possible that by adopting a lot of special taxes the Commissioners could make a better showing than they are doing, and the incidence of taxation is a great question anyway. And they might also, as Commissioner Hullock suggested yesterday, issue bonds for a lot of things they now charge to general revenue or general assessment, and make future generations pay properly for the privilege of being born in St. John. Western critics know more about this device than St. John. Some of the prairie cities no bigger than five or six times the bonded debt of this city, and a bigger tax rate, too. Some also have a good deal more to show for their debts.

St. John, however, is a growing city; its population has been increasing at a greater rate than its civic appearances, including houses to live in. Commission form of government has nothing in particular to be proud of; if it has got value for its increases in expenditures it has not advertised the fact very extensively. At the same time civic parsimony may possibly have been one of St. John's sins in the past. The history of civilization might be written in terms of taxes. If Venice when the trade to the east was developing had taxed herself to build the Suez Canal, instead of falling into decay, she might have become the mistress of a great Empire. If the old City Councils of St. John had not taxed the citizens to build a few wharves the winter traffic of Canada might have found another outlet, and St. John might have still been a provincial port.

The trouble with Commission form of government is that it has increased taxes without any dominating purpose or programme. Most of the problems which stirred up the citizens to overthrow the old aldermanic system still clamor for solution. The city, like everybody else, has to face the high cost of living and also the demand everywhere growing more insistent for a larger, fuller life. All governments have to raise more money; the important thing is that the people should be able to see greater results for increased taxes than they are able to see in St. John. In Halifax they have an excellent system of technical education and vocational training, and the City Council of Halifax last year voted between \$4,000 and \$5,000 to carry on its evening technical and vocational classes. Yesterday the city Commissioners voted \$17,000, apparently to carry on vocational education here for a year. Somebody has been asleep at the switch. Why has the Government of Nova Scotia been more liberal to vocational education in Halifax than the New Brunswick Government has been to the same object in St. John, the commercial metropolis of the Province?

WHAT THEY SAY

One Hope Left.
(Bristol "Va" Herald.)
General John J. Pershing visited Cheyenne, Wyo., a day or two ago, and while there made a speech in which

he declared that if the red radicals who come to this country cannot be converted they can at least be deported. That was about what the General was expected to say if he discussed the subject at all.

Public in Accord.
(Greenville News.)
The public is in accord with the 328 members of the House who voted Vice Berger permanently ineligible to membership thereof.

Something To Do.
(Augusta Chronicle.)
If the people of all the earth could be taught to conserve and produce, produce and not squander, work and not loiter, to be not drones in the human hive, this world would emerge from the shadows that now pall it without any great financial upheaval in the great markets or the destruction of credit among nations, and the dawn which is sure to come will bring no horrors of the night, regardless of what may seem to some as ominous signs just now.

Trick of Fate.
(Boston Transcript.)
A trick of fate brings into being two experiments on the same day—one for the New World, the other for the Old. One has been advertised as a check upon crime—prohibition. The other has been advertised as a preventive against war—the League of Nations. Neither experiment is new.

A BIT OF VERSE

THE TALE OF FRANKLIN'S KITE.
By William Ludlum.

Long years ago Ben Franklin tossed
A kite up to the gale;
It had a leading string to earth,
Ligwite as a guiding fall.
And when the storm clouds split their lead
Of lightning o'er the land,
The rain ran down the dripping string
And tickled Franklin's hand.
Since Franklin dared the lightning's flash
Strange things have come about;
The many comforts he had not—
We cannot do without.
The telegraph, the telephone,
The incandescent light,
The trolley car, the wireless,
All followed Franklin's kite.

When Franklin's kite went up in air
(He was "Poor Richard" then.)
His bold exploit provided "kites"
For many other men.
We call them "prolifers" today,
Who do not hesitate
To "fly" the price of everything
Up to the highest rate.

Ben Franklin was the only known
"Poor Richard" of his day;
But numberless are those who now
For that same title pay.
Price boosters so manipulate
The markets rise and fall
That they have made by "kiting"
Things,
"Poor Richards" of us all.

BISHOP BRINGS SUIT AGAINST PUBLISHING CO.

Takes Exception to Article Appearing in "Le Droit," Claiming He Was Seriously Libelled.

Ottawa, Jan. 27.—Unstated damages are claimed by Bishop David Joseph Scollard, of North Bay, against Le Syndicat D'Oeuvres-Sociales, Limited, publishers of Le Droit, for alleged libel. The article which Bishop Scollard regarded as libelous appeared in

Benny's Note Book

BY LEE PAPE

Pop stopped shaving himself this morning and came down to breakfast, holding ma's diamond ring, saying, Heer it is agen, mother, it was decorating the window sill in the bath room this time, mark my words, you'll lose it yet, a diamond ring is ment to be worn, not left all over the house like an I dont know wat.

All rite, Wilyum, my goodness, my goodness, Ill ware it, sed ma. And she put it back on her finger, pop saying, The more diamonds go up in price the more I find yours wanderin' eround the house, you mark my words.

O Wilyum, for mersey sake, sed ma. And this afternoon I was feeling for my skate key on the setting room mantel pece wen wat did I feel but ma's diamond ring, thinking, G, heers a good chance to make ma think she lost it. And I put it in my pocket and forgot about it, and jef be fore suppr I came home and ma was looking all eround as if she had lost something. Wich she had, for all she knew, saying, Benny, did you by eny chance see my diamond ring eround enyware?

Your diamond ring, G, wy? dont you know ware it is? I sed, Yes, sertyen, I jef asked you because you have sutch a bewtiffil voice that I love the very sound of it, O deer, O deer, I felt sure I put it on the mantel in the sitting room, if I ever lost that ring your father would never get over it, after all he's sed, O deer, sed ma. And she kepp on looking on everything and under everything, saying, Are you quite positive you didnt see it, Benny?

Me starting to get scared, and thinking, G, Ill get the djkns. And I sed, Are you sure you dont know ware it is ma? If you ask me that agen Ill give you sutch a krack you'll remember it to your dying day, sed ma. Me thinking, Ill be lucky if I dont get it enyways. And I quick pulled the ring out of my pants pocket, saying, Is this it, ma?

Benny Potts, sed ma loud as anything. And she quick grabbed it and was jef going to say some more and proberly do something wen the front door opened, and pop called up, Wats all the excitement? Ma jef looking at me and going, Shh, Meening she wouldnt say anything if I did it.

Wich I didnt, for 2 reasons, one being ma and one being pop.

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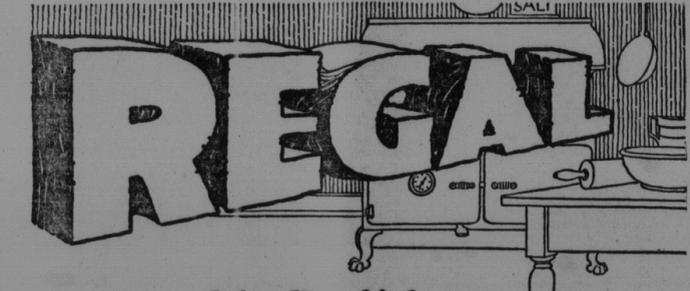
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Grabbing Hungarian Estates and Palaces

Budapest, Jan. 27.—Hungarian palaces and estates, which before the war were valued at from \$100,000 to \$200,000, are being purchased by Englishmen, Frenchmen and Americans for comparatively insignificant sums. In some cases magnificent properties have brought only \$5,000 to \$10,000.

Expected Next Tuesday

The R. M. S. P. liner Chaudiere is expected to arrive at this port from the British West Indies about Tuesday next, with general cargo, passengers and mail.



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