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Correspondence must be addressed to the Editor of The Telegraph, St. John.

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ST. JOHN, N. B., APRIL 19, 1916.

WAR COMMENT.

This is the end of the eighth week of fighting at Verdun, and there is no decision yet. The Germans have not yet had "enough," but British and French military opinion is that as the Germans expected to take the position in a week or ten days and have failed to take it after two months of terrible sacrifice, the advantage has been one of the greatest reverse the enemy has encountered.

The French Army Bulletin says the British Army in France now numbers 2,800,000. This is a much greater force than Britain was thought to have sent across the Channel, but the Bulletin is a semi-official French Army journal and the fact that its estimate passed the censor is significant.

It is still in the power of either set of belligerents to vary in detail the plans of the other set. It is not unlikely that the Allies had intended to strike on the western front in March and that now they will not be in condition to take the offensive until May owing to the readjustments made necessary by the developments at Verdun.

The reviewers continue their attempts to forecast the future, unmindful of the vast amount of prophecy that went wrong this time last year. One bold observer expects the curtain to rise on the big scene about the middle of May. He says:

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"At the same time we Allies must take no chances. The German output of guns and munitions is still as large as that of any two of us, and when the phalanx gets to work in the East it must be met by corresponding strength. Neither the Russians nor any of us can afford to waste ammunition on secondary operations, and the more we save the more furious and successful will be our participation in the critical engagements.

"The London Times' military writer expresses the view that the main offensive this year, but he adds significantly: 'At the same time we Allies must take no chances. The German output of guns and munitions is still as large as that of any two of us, and when the phalanx gets to work in the East it must be met by corresponding strength.'

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ter he was found guilty by the Royal Commission which investigated the Dugal charges. The machine to which every member of the present local government belongs, not only assisted in the passage of that resolution, but subsequently made Mr. Flemming the official Conservative candidate for Ottawa in Carleton-Victoria. There never was in this province a greater example of contempt for public sentiment and political morality.

Party organs of the administration are now attempting to take credit for the government's action in dismissing an official who has been condemned by a Royal Commission. From the case of Mr. Flemming down to that of Mr. Harry Blair investigations were only undertaken when wrong-doing had become so notorious as to compel action by the government.

The Standard speaks of "the determination of the government that there shall not be the slightest suspicion of wrongdoing on the part of any member of the House and to department officials as well. Let that statement be read in the light of what has happened during the last five years of the present party's rule in provincial affairs. It is sheer impudence.

In the case of Mr. Robichaud the government attempts to brush aside the words of Commissioner Chandler, but those words speak clearly enough for themselves. When he recognized them, Mr. Chandler had done his share.

There is some talk now in the government press about the necessity and the wisdom of reforming the provincial government-party "from within." Where is the reforming going to start? Are the men who whitewashed Mr. Flemming expected to reform themselves with the assistance of the government newspapers? What has happened in Manitoba, and what is about to happen in British Columbia, must happen in New Brunswick. The people must have an opportunity to get rid of a set of discredited politicians. The people can be depended upon, for their bitter experience, to select their representatives with greater care in the future. They know the evidence and they know the men who have played them false. They know the value of the local government "reformers" who are now at work, and they know that this talk about reform springs from revelations which are pushing the local government party upon the rocks.

By an almost unanimous vote Friday evening the public meeting called to hear the local government's engineer on the Valley railway question rejected the government's proposal to build to Westfield. The meeting, by an overwhelming majority called for construction by the eastern route, crossing the St. John river at or near The Mistake and arriving at the Courtenay Bay terminals via Rothsay. Only twelve citizens in the large meeting of business men from St. John and vicinity voted in favor of the Gutelius-local government-west side route.

A surprising feature of the meeting was the emphatic way in which the reports of both engineers, Messrs. Maxwell and Montsarrat, proved that the St. John river crossing is practicable. The Board of Trade delegates who recently interviewed the local government were told that a bridge at or near The Mistake was not practicable, and that this was the reason for changing the route and coming in via Westfield. This same reason was given in the House of Commons. It appeared also in the correspondence of Mr. Gutelius. But the report of Mr. Maxwell, which The Telegraph printed yesterday and which he read to the meeting last evening, showed that a bridge near Gorham's Bluff was quite safe and feasible, at a cost of approximately \$1,800,000, and Mr. Montsarrat's report, which also was read, while it condemned two other proposed sites, said a bridge at Dunham's Wharf could be built for about \$2,000,000.

Mr. Maxwell reported upon the engineering facts as he found them, and Mr. Montsarrat found them, and then turned the speech-making over to Mr. Ross Thompson, chief engineer of the St. John and Quebec Railway Company, who attempted to explain why the government is trying to abandon the eastern route. Mr. Thompson said the I. C. R. wanted the west side route because it is cheaper, but when he went into figures as to costs and distances his arguments were sharply questioned. He was equally unhappy when he sought to show that the hope for Transcontinental traffic was as bright by the west side as by the east. He said the Dominion government had promised to complete the line from Westfield to Courtenay Bay, but he was most indefinite as to the time within which this will be done and equally so when comparing cost and mileage by one route with cost and mileage by the other. He professed to find the west side line, exclusive of the bridges, cheaper by \$700,000 than the east side line. Mr. Hatheway quoted Mr. Montsarrat against him on this point. Mr. Thompson said Mr. Montsarrat didn't know, but while that may be, it was clear that there was yet to be done such complete survey as would disclose the real cost of the line to Westfield, much less that of the line from Westfield to East St. John.

Mr. Murray and Mr. Hatheway confronted Mr. Thompson with the heavy grades on the C. P. R. between St. John and Westfield as an obstacle against Transcontinental traffic, and they might have cited as even more serious the grades on the Canada Eastern. So far as one could follow Mr. Thompson's reasoning, he maintains that construction by the western route will bring the Valley railway to St. John sooner than it can come by the eastern route, and that there will be a saving of some \$2,000,000 or more by eliminating the St. John and Kennebecis bridges. But by that reasoning the only saving would be on the part of the Dominion, and the saving would be only interest on the cost of the bridges for a short time, for if the Dominion government is really going to build an independent line from Westfield to East St. John, as Mr. Thompson asserts, the cost of that line, including right of way through Westfield, Fairville and St. John, and the expense of a new bridge at the Falls or across the harbor, will equal or exceed the cost of the bridges on the eastern route. Moreover, the eastern route is shorter and will give a much better entrance to Courtenay Bay. As for time of construction, Mr. Maxwell said the biggest bridge on the eastern route could be built in two years. The meeting was very strongly convinced that Mr. Maxwell and Mr. Thompson had failed to justify the proposed change of route. It was clear as the discussion proceeded that the citizens present were most anxious that the Valley railway shall have such grades and such conditions as will give it the largest possible traffic, and facilitate the handling of Transcontinental traffic through this port. The reports prove that the plan for which bonds were guaranteed can be followed, and no convincing argument for abandoning it is in sight. The Vancouver connection was not featured last evening. Nor was the Canada Eastern. The meeting was probably merciful in avoiding those subjects. It was impossible last night to overlook the fact that St. John and the province at large have been deceived for a long time by the local government in connection with this enterprise. The decision to abandon the east side route was concealed long after it was arrived at. The real reasons behind that decision are still concealed. St. John is now fully awake to the danger confronting it by any plan which will hand over the Valley railway and this port in the matter of through trade to the hands of a set of discredited politicians. The people are beginning to realize that the fact that the government is spending the people's money on Valley railway construction.

LETTING THE PUBLIC KNOW. In an editorial dealing somewhat roughly with Friday night's public meeting in connection with the route of the Valley railway, the Standard says: "The railway will be built as the Canadian Railway Department desires it to be built and the government of New Brunswick will build it. In that the government will act in the best interest of the city of St. John and the province of New Brunswick and its course will be commended by all irrespective of what the members of the Board of Trade and those interested in the east side route may think or do about it. In view of all the facts it may well be asked of what value was last evening's meeting or the two preceding it?"

If the "Canadian Railway Department" is the dictator in these matters and there is no appeal, it would, indeed, seem that the citizens who have conferred with respect to the route of the railway had exerted themselves in vain. But there is another view of the matter, and it is important. The people who pay for railroads are the people who therefore dictate to "railway departments." The Standard stoutly professes to believe that the tail can wag the dog, and that the dog will wag the tail with it. Now that notice to this effect has been served upon the dog by the organ of two governments we shall see whether the dog will submit without protest.

The Valley railroad, according to the legislation under which the bonds were issued, was to run from Grand Falls to St. John, via Rothsay. The Dominion government agreed to operate it, on the explicit understanding that that was to be the route. The people of New Brunswick are not subject to orders from the "Canadian Railway Department," and they hope their representatives are not their slaves.

The engineers sent to Friday's public meeting by the Board of Trade were convinced that the meeting that the east side route is perfectly feasible, and that it will give the province and the port a better hold upon Transcontinental traffic than the western route. If a member of the government had attended the meeting its value could have been much enhanced by direct requests for a statement of government policy as to the Vancouver or St. Stephen connection with the Maine Central, and the government's idea as to a proper connection with the Transcontinental. To join the C. P. R. at Westfield or Welsford is to throw away the advantage of the low grades of the Transcontinental. To use the Canada Eastern is to face the same objection. To hand over the whole project in this manner to the hands of the province, which is interested in having the Valley line handle the greatest possible amount of through traffic. The new scheme has aroused opposition in many districts outside St. John, as members of Parliament and of the Legislature will discover presently.

The local government's impudent attempt to bluff the public into silence or tame acceptance of dictatorship from Fredericton, Moncton, or Ottawa, is going to stir up another hornet's nest. The Legislature has no mandate for a Centre-Westfield line, not to speak of a provincially-financed spur to Vancouver.

THE WRECK AT FREDERICTON. What becomes of Mr. Harry M. Blair, deputy minister of public works, as an individual, by reason of the report of Commissioner M. G. Teed, is less important than the bearing of the report upon the position of the government and the future of the administration itself. Mr. Blair has compromised himself, and possibly by remaining too long in the unfortunate political company he joined some years ago. Being on the inside, he should have known the tendency of affairs when Mr. Flemming and his associates began to play fast and loose some years ago, long before a royal commission plucked Mr. Flemming roughly from his place in the political firmament. As for the Blair incident, Hon. Mr. Morrissey placed himself on record only a few days ago as an out-and-out defender of his deputy. What, then, has he to say about the verdict of Commissioner Teed?

So far as the government is concerned, a majority of the ministry were no doubt parties to the Pinder attack upon Blair, for the purpose of forcing the Minister of Public Works out. These men are enemies of Mr. Morrissey. They stood by Mr. Flemming and assisted in the attempt to whitewash him, and so have been held responsible for failure to check and expose his evil doing. Their whitewash and his Federal nomination linked them up with him. They must share responsibility, likewise, for much that has been done in the Department of Public Works, the largest spending department of their government. As in Flemming's case, they have been warned again and again about the public works department; yet they were silent until a personal quarrel between Mr. Pinder and Hon. Mr. Morrissey blew the roof off. It stands, the party wreckage is extensive, and there is evidently more coming. This far, let us see how the casualty list looks.

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WESTERN BATTALIONS BEAR BRUNT OF GRIM FIGHTING AT ST. ELOI

The 27th and 31st Had Place of Honor in Craters Fight, and Held Ground Almost Without Cover—22nd and 29th Also in Battle—Many Deeds of High Courage and Devotion.

Ottawa, April 18.—Heroic and effective work by the Canadians in resisting the determined attacks by Germans at St. Eloi last week, is detailed at length in the weekly eye-witness accounts received this morning.

Throughout the week of April 1-11, vigorous efforts were made by the Germans to recover the ground lost by them at St. Eloi. The struggle for possession of the mine craters marking the original German line was intense and bitter. The frontage taken by the British from the Germans did not exceed 600 yards. The whole area of this former German salient was pitted by thousands upon thousands of shell, large and small.

The explosion of six British mines had not only affected the German front line trench, but had yet further stirred up and churned the heavy soil, still sodden with the winter rains. Trees had been smashed by the hail of shells and uprooted by their explosion.

All signs of vegetation had disappeared. Of the former landscape, there remained nothing but an ugly gungnir, relieved through the craters of water-filled holes, mud and earth piles, in which at any step, a man might sink over his waist. British troops had contrived to dig a narrow and shallow trench to the south of the craters and Canadian troops had succeeded in linking up the British right with the main line.

On the night of April 3-8, the Sixth Canadian Infantry Brigade relieved the weary British troops in the new line. The honor fell to our 27th City of Winnipeg and 31st Alberta battalions.

John Bull has a long purse and endless pluck. When Mr. Lloyd George spoke of the importance of "silver bullets" in this war—silver bullets and sea power—he knew what he was talking about. There is many a lesson to be learned in this country can learn from John Bull. His readiness to "pay, pay, pay" is quite remarkable as his ability to do so.

THE PATRIOTIC FUND. A citizen sends The Telegraph this statement of the income of the Patriotic Fund actually received from the various counties from the beginning to March 1, 1916, estimated per capita and per \$1,000 of valuation:

Table with 3 columns: County, Per capita, Per \$1,000 valuation. Rows include Albert, Charlton, Gloucester, Kings, Madawaska, Northumberland, Restigouche, St. John, Victoria, Westmorland, York and Sunbury.

NOTE AND COMMENT. The stage waits for General the Hon. Sir Sam. The curtain is up. The lights are on. The audience is in place. Comes he in peace or comes he in war? Probably with the war paint on.

Without desiring to vex the soul of the Hon. James A. Murray further we must urge him in justice to himself and to an admiring country to explain some of his explanations concerning the patriotic potes. So far as the existing explanations light up the patriotic efforts of the government and its cohorts in connection with these potatoes expended and about 140,000 bushels of potatoes were shipped, the farmers got, roughly, \$90,000, and some of the farmers were politicians supporting the government. But deducting the first cost of the potatoes from \$120,000 we have still \$60,000 to account for, or \$8,000 more than the price of the potatoes. Does the Minister of Agriculture desire the people of New Brunswick to believe that this \$60,000 was devoured by charges for freight, sorting, packing and commissions? These were "raw" potatoes indeed.

A favorite story among newspaper men—how Richard Harding Davis got his nest job in New York—is retold by the Post in its obituary. Davis, in 1891, was at work as a youngster on a Philadelphia newspaper. Then he conceived the ambition of shifting his fortunes to New York. It is related that he visited the late Amos J. Cummings, then managing editor of the Evening Sun, with a bundle of clippings, and asked for a job. Cummings was not impressed by the raw-looking youth in a peaked cap, and refused his request. Disappointed, but not cast down, Davis left the old red-brick Sun Building for a while, and wandered across Park Row into City Hall Park, where he was besought by a bunco-man with gold-bugs for sale. Cummings was recovering his money. Davis rushed back to the Evening Sun office, with the story. He was engaged at once.

The Difference. (Toronto Star). The Toronto News says that we ought not to forget the Ottawa Citizen as Independent Conservative. All right. We are willing to classify the Citizen as a paper which was once Conservative, and is now Independent, and the News as a paper which was once Independent and is now Conservative.

What if another bit beneath the shade of the broad tree planted by the way? What if another heed the beacon light I set upon the rock that wrecked my feet? Have I not done my task and served my kind? Nay, rather act thy part, unnamed, unknown. And let France blow her trumpet through the world.

With noisy world to swell a fool's renown. Joined with some truth he stumbled dead. Or coupled with some single shining deed. That in the great account of all his days will stand alone upon the bankrupt sheet.

His pitying angel shows the clerk of heaven. The noblest service comes from nameless hands, and the best servant does his work unseen.

Who forged in roaring flames the ponderous stone. And shaped the molded metal to his need? Who gave the dragging car its rolling wheels. And tamed the steel that whirrs its circling round?

All these have left their work and not their names. Who forged in roaring flames the ponderous stone. And shaped the molded metal to his need? Who gave the dragging car its rolling wheels. And tamed the steel that whirrs its circling round?

Why should I murmur at a fate like theirs? The first obstacle lay in the fact that

Business Value

Vote Almost Two Gov—The W Down

By an overwhelming majority in favor of the board and at three public meetings for and against have been adopted by the city, the adoption of the eastern meeting which was held more largely attended than ever.

The chairman, J. J. had been unable to have arrangements to bring the matter to a meeting of the board and at three public meetings for and against have been adopted by the city, the adoption of the eastern meeting which was held more largely attended than ever.

The reports were in explanation and in thorough examination the results were illuminating. Despite the fact that proposed change in the to find practical crossing night showed how far mended a crossing at location at which a bridge was to be prepared at East

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