

# The Standard

Published by The Standard Limited, 82 Prince William Street, St. John, N. B., Canada.

**SUBSCRIPTION.**  
Daily Edition, by Carrier, per year.....\$5.00  
Daily Edition, by Mail, per year.....3.00  
Semi-Weekly Edition, by Mail, per year.....1.00  
Single Copies Two Cents.

**TELEPHONE CALLS:**  
Business Office.....Main 1723  
Editorial and News.....Main 1746

ST. JOHN, N. B., TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 1911.

## THE ST. JOHN VALLEY RAILWAY.

The Times says that the announcement made yesterday that the Federal and Provincial Governments had reached an agreement for the construction of the St. John Valley Railway would be pleasing information to Dr. Pugsley and Mr. Carvell, whose plan of construction has been adopted by the two Governments. This is hardly in line with the facts, but is about as near the truth as the Times ever gets when discussing political questions. No two men ever worked more zealously to prevent the construction of this important railway than Messrs. Pugsley and Carvell. For two solid years, under one pretext or another, they succeeded in keeping the question in the air and had it not been for Premier Fleming, who really wanted the railroad built at an early date, no headway whatever would have been made.

It will be remembered that in 1909, a large and influential delegation of residents of the St. John valley went to Fredericton and laid the case of the Valley Railway before the Hazen Government. Mr. Hazen was prompt in his reply. He told the delegation that the Government was willing to guarantee the bonds of a company constructing the railroad to the extent of \$25,000 a mile; the railroad after its construction to be operated as a part of the Intercolonial system, the Government of Canada paying as rental, 40 per cent. of the gross income of the railroad, this to be used to meet the interest on the guaranteed bonds. Mr. Hazen also suggested to the delegation that they proceed at once to Ottawa and submit their case to the Government there. The suggestion was put into effect and on their arrival at Ottawa the delegation was met by Sir Wilfrid Laurier and Mr. Pugsley, who promised consideration and an early reply. No reply was received from the Government at Ottawa until a day or two before the prorogation of the House of Assembly, and then it was not from the Government at all, but from Mr. P. B. Carvell. When the Government was heard from through Dr. Pugsley it was to propose an impossible specification for the construction of the railroad—a specification that would materially have changed the route over which it was proposed to construct the road.

While matters were in this position the Legislature of the Province met and during the session of 1910 a bill was passed authorizing the Government to make a survey of the route and to enter into a contract for the construction of the railroad under the specification laid down by Dr. Pugsley and Mr. Carvell. The Hazen Government recognizing the impossibility of getting any one to enter into a contract under Mr. Pugsley's specification added another part to the bill under which authority was given to construct a railroad of the same standard as the Intercolonial in New Brunswick. This section was added to the act for the purpose of securing a railroad for the St. John valley which everybody recognized to be an impossibility under the specifications submitted by Mr. Pugsley, and which he said was the only one the Government of Canada would accept.

While Dr. Pugsley and Mr. Carvell were doing their utmost to prevent the Hazen Government from building the Valley Railway, the survey of the line was made by various routes. The survey in 1911, during the month of June the Government was able to inform the public that a strong company were willing to undertake construction under part three of the act passed in 1910, provided the Dominion subsidy was assured; and if the railway were to follow the route from Hampton to St. John by either Perry's Point or Gondola Point additional assistance was provided for the construction of the bridges necessary. When the matter was submitted to the authorities at Ottawa, Dr. Pugsley's answer was that the Dominion subsidy of \$6,400 a mile would only be forthcoming for a railroad to be operated as a part of the Intercolonial system and constructed under the specifications submitted by himself. From this it was clearly intended to postpone construction of the railway for another year at least. Mr. Hazen was absent in England and Mr. Fleming was acting Premier when this decision on the part of the Minister of Public Works was handed down. Instead of surrendering, Mr. Fleming wrote to Dr. Pugsley suggesting a conference between the two Governments for the purpose of reaching some agreement that would secure the construction of the railway. This conference was held in St. John a few days later and the result announced that an agreement had been reached satisfactory to all parties. Dr. Pugsley abandoned his specification for that section of the line between Woodstock and Grand Falls, where it was practically impossible, and accepted Intercolonial grades. The Local Government in turn accepted Intercolonial operation. An agreement was also reached regarding the bridges, but on the latter question Dr. Pugsley frankly stated that he would have to obtain the consent of his colleagues before he could give the necessary guarantee of assistance. Whether this consent was ever secured or not is not a matter of record, as the elections were called on and took precedence over all other matters.

From this it will be seen that the activities of Dr. Pugsley and his colleague, Mr. Carvell, were more largely in the direction of delaying the construction of the railway than of forwarding it. Throughout the whole business every action of Dr. Pugsley was either to prevent or delay the construction of the railway by the Hazen Government. He first delayed the answer to the delegation until it was too late for the Legislature of New Brunswick to act on the matter at the session of 1910. He then proposed an impossible specification and declined either to amend it or to meet the Government of New Brunswick in conference to discuss the various features of the project. Then when the Government of New Brunswick was prepared to enter into a contract for the construction of the railway under Part III of the act of 1910, he refused point blank to recommend the Dominion subsidy for the railway unless operated by the Intercolonial. This does not look very much like the action of a man who was sincere in his motive to have the St. John Valley Railway built. It is, however, just what is to be expected from a political partisan fighting for his individual and party interests and not for the credit that may be due for bringing the St. John Valley Railway project to its present position, belongs to the Hazen Administration and to Premier Fleming, who from the outset have made a sturdy fight to get the railway built.

The project is a most important one to the whole Province. The railway itself will open up one of the oldest and best agricultural districts, the growth of which is seriously hampered by lack of transportation facilities. It will also give an outlet at St. John for the Grand Trunk Pacific as well as the Canadian Northern. The new Government at Ottawa may be due for bringing the New Brunswick necessary pledges of substantial aid to the Province—such aid that makes it possible for the Govern-

ment of the Province to secure the construction of the Valley Railway on terms that will not render it a burden to the provincial treasury and which secures its operation as a part of the Intercolonial system, as originally suggested by Mr. Hazen. To Premier Fleming is due much praise for the persistence he has displayed to get a railway that will really open up such an important part of the Province of New Brunswick.

## LAURIER IN OPPOSITION.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier does not appreciate the cold shades of Opposition. His somewhat petulant remarks on the Speakership of the House of Commons will, be a surprise to many who thought him a great statesman far removed from the party politician. In the course of a somewhat brief speech Sir Wilfrid disclosed his hatred of the Quebec Nationalists who successfully curbed his power in that Province. Why Sir Wilfrid should find it necessary to reflect on these gentlemen is puzzling. Whatever they are he was. It was, perhaps, his lack of success in his last appeal to the French element in Quebec that has embittered him.

Why should Sir Wilfrid object to the selection of Dr. Sproule for the Speakership? He was compelled to admit that by experience and knowledge Dr. Sproule was in every way fitted for the office. Why then should he oppose the Conservative party to follow the British precedent and continue Mr. Maclellan in office when he himself, when in office had refused to be governed by that precedent? Mr. Maclellan had not displayed any unusual talent in the administration of his office. Indeed he had done things in his official capacity which he had no right to do and which were resented by a majority of Canada's population irrespective of politics. There were many good reasons why Mr. Maclellan should not again be Speaker of the House of Commons and that the office should be filled by someone who had a higher ideal of its responsibilities; but it was Dr. Sproule and not Mr. Maclellan that Sir Wilfrid dealt with.

It was scarcely good politics for the leader of the Government to have laid himself open to a charge of insincerity so early in his career as leader of the Opposition. It was bad citizenship also to attempt to arouse on the opening day of the House of Commons the race cry. It was a retreat in disorder when challenged by Hon. Mr. Borden to take a vote on the question to refuse to toe the mark. Defeat has evidently not increased the wisdom of Sir Wilfrid Laurier.

## A DISORGANIZED PARTY.

The Liberal party, which its leaders thought a few short months ago was firmly entrenched in the hearts of the people of Canada, is now so thoroughly disorganized as to be almost an object of pity. While this demoralization is to some extent due to the fact that in more recent years the Liberal party has been the home of the grafter and the spendthrift, the action of Sir Wilfrid Laurier in attempting to hand over the commerce of Canada to the United States is the real cause of the disorganization. No statesman was ever before guilty of so disloyal an act as that which Sir Wilfrid Laurier attempted to foist on the people of this free country. It has been said that the Reciprocity pact was not a secret agreement. This is idle talk. There was no mandate from the people asking for Reciprocity with the United States and the result of the elections showed most conclusively that such an agreement was not wanted by a majority of the Canadian people.

The defeat of the Liberal Government was a great surprise to the men at the head of affairs. They had confidently calculated on their return to power by a larger majority than before. They had gauged the opinion of the country from a wrong standpoint. The people of Canada showed their resentment to the Czarlike methods of Sir Wilfrid by defeating him, and they are still resenting the methods of the Liberal party whenever opportunity offers.

Within the last few days the Conservatives have won two by-elections for the Nova Scotia Legislature and now occupy one-third of the seats in that body. The same story of Liberal losses is reported from points as widely divergent as Prince Edward Island and Alberta. The Liberal leaders, who expected an immediate revision of public opinion will have to wait. Before they have another chance to rule in this country every Liberal Provincial Government from the Atlantic to the Pacific will have been swept from power.

One of the important questions being discussed in the Ontario election campaign is that relating to the improvement of the roads. Sir James Whitney states that the Federal and Provincial Governments will work together in an effort to improve the conditions of the highways in both old and new Ontario. Mr. Borden's plan for highway improvement has not yet been made public, but it is probable that it will take the line of granting aid to the Provincial Governments for highway improvements and will be of such a character that New Brunswick as well as Ontario will be in a position to benefit by it. Both Governments working together can accomplish many things that were hitherto impossible.

The election of Mr. Bonar Law to the leadership of the Unionist party of Great Britain is being very favorably commented upon by the press of Canada. Mr. Law has long been an important figure in the British House of Commons and will now have a wider opportunity of displaying his abilities than hitherto. The Maritime Provinces have given to Canada three of the eight Premiers the Dominion has had since Confederation, and have now provided the British House of Commons with an opposition leader. New Brunswickers are naturally proud of the distinction won by one of themselves and will follow the future course of Mr. Law with greater interest than ever before.

## Current Comment

(Vancouver News-Advertiser.)

Thirty-five years ago the Royal Titles Act was passed, under which the King of Great Britain and Ireland became Emperor of India. King George is the third to bear the Imperial title, and will be the first to be crowned in the ancient Mogul capital city. On the first day of January, 1877, Queen Victoria was proclaimed Empress of India with much ceremony and splendor, and in January, 1903, a great Durbar was held for the proclamation of Edward the Seventh as Emperor. King Edward as Prince of Wales had been in India a short time before Victoria was proclaimed Empress. King George, as Duke of Cornwall, made a tour of India in 1901, and again as Prince of Wales in 1905, visiting Delhi on both occasions. He was accompanied both times by the Queen, so that they are quite familiar with the scene. The Duke of Connaught, now Governor General of Canada, attended the Durbar when King Edward was proclaimed. The Durbar of this year will doubtless exceed the others in magnificence and interest on account of the presence of the Emperor and Empress.

(Hamilton Spectator.)

There have been two Conservative gains in Nova Scotia provincial by-elections. It isn't too much to expect, as time progresses, that all the Provinces will be supporting Liberal Conservative principles, from ocean to ocean.

## SIR ANDREW FRASER SPEAKS ON BRITISH RULE

Delivered Interesting Address on Administration of India, Before Canadian Club, Yesterday—Was Lieutenant Governor of Bengal—Describes Official and Private Life in the Eastern Empire.

British administration in India was the theme of an interesting address delivered before a largely attended meeting of the Canadian Club held in the Seamen's Mission last evening by Sir Andrew Fraser, formerly Lieutenant Governor of Bengal. Sir Andrew spent 37 years of his life in India, and his descriptions of life in India were illuminated by many striking stories drawn from his long personal experience. Geo. Henderson, president of the club, occupied the chair, and it was Sir Andrew who brought him into very close touch with the people. One of the things that first impressed him in India was that there was no homogeneous people, but people separated by caste, and it was only now that the people were becoming united. But caste was a reality to this day, and people of different castes could not intermarry or eat together. Until all that was overcome, he said, it would be quite out of the question to have one Indian nation. If British influence was removed the Indians would be at the throats of the British, and there would be the old chaos among the nations. "If we want to do our duty," said Sir Andrew, "we will have to hold India for a long time."

**British Rule.**  
The army, he said, was the symbol of the sympathy and justice of British rule. They did not keep the peace by having soldiers walking the streets, but the army was behind the authorities. Throughout the length and breadth of the land nothing was to be found but peace and contentment.

Sir Andrew explained the system by which the Home Government is brought into close contact with the people. Every district has a collector and magistrate, who is the head of every branch of government. He is the agent of the state, which is the land owner of India. The system was just, reasonable, equitable, and sympathetic. In every case where the government in Britain has had trouble over land settlement, an Indian officer has been sent for in order that the duties of the collector and magistrate could be explained to the people. The men had to be trustworthy, and only such men were chosen.

**Great Agriculturists.**  
Indians were great agriculturists, and the collector was a great power in agriculture. Great principles had to be applied, and the collectors were trained for years before being put in charge of a district. The people looked to the collector, and he was the friend of the people. The men had to be trustworthy, and only such men were chosen.

Proceeding to show how the administrative was carried on by the executive officer, Sir Andrew Fraser described the duties of the district magistrate and civil commissioner over his wide area of jurisdiction, dwelling on the fact that he has control over all the departments of police, revenue, education, forestry and so forth.

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