

# The Standard

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ST. JOHN, N. B., TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24, 1912.

## CONSISTENCY.

Liberal organs are still calling attention to the speech made by Mr. Foster in 1909, in which he objected to a fixed annual contribution in money as the Canadian policy in Naval Defence and, by suppressing part of Mr. Foster's speech which answers their argument, are attempting to show that he is inconsistent in supporting Mr. Borden's proposals. Mr. Foster made it clear in 1909 that he was opposed to a permanent policy of money contributions, but that he was fully prepared to support any emergency contribution Sir Wilfrid Laurier might recommend. Speaking at a time when the Empire was first aroused to danger of the aggressive naval policy of Germany, Mr. Foster concluded his speech as follows:

"Let me say to my Right hon. friend that if, after careful consideration, he proposes to this Parliament a means for meeting that emergency adequately, by the gift of Dreadnoughts or the gift of money, this side of the House will stand beside him in thus vindicating Canada's honor and strengthening the Empire's defence."

Neither Mr. Foster nor the Borden Government have deviated from the position which was unanimously taken by the House of Commons on that occasion. Sir Wilfrid Laurier moved a resolution which opposed "the payment of any stated contribution to the Imperial treasury for naval and military purposes." Mr. Borden, for the Conservative Opposition, refused to accept the resolution in those terms, and by agreement it was finally amended to read as follows:

"The House is of opinion that under the present constitutional relations between the Mother Country and the self-governing Dominions the payment of regular and periodical contributions to the Imperial treasury for naval and military purposes would not, so far as Canada is concerned, be the most satisfactory solution of the question of Defence."

In the final clause the resolution went further and declared that should the need arise Canada would not be found wanting:

"The House expresses its firm conviction that whenever the need arises the Canadian people will be found ready and willing to make any sacrifice that is required to give to the Imperial authorities the most loyal and hearty co-operation in every movement for the maintenance of the integrity and honor of the Empire."

It will be observed that the course Mr. Borden has taken as outlined in his speech introducing the Naval Aid Bill is consistent with the terms of the resolution. In fulfillment of the pre-election pledge he made to the Canadian people, he consulted the British Government at the earliest opportunity. He found that the need had arisen for the Dominion to give loyal and hearty co-operation for the maintenance of the integrity and honor of the Empire, and he gave to Parliament and the country his reasons for the course he would recommend. No argument the Opposition can advance will confuse the issue. Mr. Borden made his position abundantly clear. "In presenting our proposals," he said, "it will be borne in mind that we are not undertaking or beginning a system of regular and periodical contributions. I agree with the resolution of this House in 1909, that the payment of such contributions would not be the most satisfactory solution of the question of defence."

## THE INTERCOLONIAL RAILWAY.

The report is revived of another agitation to transfer the management of the Intercolonial Railway to a company. At the same time comes still another report from Ottawa that there will be no change made in the management of the Intercolonial at the present session. For many years past, ever since it was apparent that with even reasonably good management the Intercolonial would earn a small dividend on its capital expenditures there have been numerous self-sacrificing citizens quite willing to take what they declared was an unprofitable investment for the country off the hands of the Government and operate the railway without expense to the country. None of the schemes ever reached a point where the amount the company was to pay for the railroad or what arrangement would be made concerning rates was settled. These important factors in the transfer were not mentioned. As a matter of fact no serious proposal for a transfer of the Intercolonial from governmental to private control has ever been considered by any Canadian Government. The proposal has been aired in the newspapers of different shades of political belief from time to time for the purpose of testing public opinion on the subject. That was all. So far as the Maritime Provinces as a whole are concerned, there is but one opinion, which is that the Intercolonial will better serve the interests of the Provinces by the sea as a permanent owned and Government operated railway than if owned and operated by a company.

There is no doubt now in the public mind that both freight and passenger rates adopted at the inauguration of the railway were too low and were responsible in a greater or lesser degree for the many deficits of the railway. This has been remedied. But these were not the only cause of the railway not paying. Instead of following a commercial route it was built over a political and military route and in order to shorten the distance between its terminal points the railroad for long stretches passed through wilderness land where there was no local traffic. Then again the Intercolonial has water competition over its entire route and thus materially interfered with its earnings.

A great change has taken place during the 36 years the railroad has been in operation. First, its Western terminal which in 1876 was at River du Loup, has been moved to Montreal, and its Eastern terminal to Sydney. Two great mistakes were made in the management of the Intercolonial; first, when the Government neglected to purchase the Windsor and Annapolis Railway, which would have given absolute control of the transportation of Nova Scotia which is indisputably Intercolonial territory. The other blunder was the failure of the Government to acquire the Canada Atlantic. By the acquisition of this railway and by building from Montreal to Croteau the Intercolonial would not be compelled to share its earnings with the Grand Trunk, which was wise enough to purchase the Canada Atlantic. In addition to the Western traffic which would have been controlled by this purchase the Government could have always controlled the freight side between Eastern Canada and the West.

The Intercolonial is the fourth railroad system of

Canada in point of mileage, and has cost the country for construction and equipment near \$100,000,000. It is not surprising, therefore, that persons looking for easy money should cast longing eyes at the Intercolonial, particularly as it forms the only connecting link between the extreme East and the West; and up to the present time no Government has regarded the construction of a competitive line with favor, and in this all Governments have been backed by a practically undivided public opinion in the Maritime Provinces and Eastern Quebec. No one who knows anything about Intercolonial management, past or present, will assert that it is now or ever was ideal, but many—the large majority of the abuses complained of ten, twenty or thirty years ago have been swept away and the business of the railway is now practically free of political control, a fact that was plainly in evidence the other day by an advertisement for machinists for the railway in a number of newspapers, not all of them supporting the Government.

Time has worked great changes in the railroad situation of the East, and the fact that the Canadian Pacific, and the Grand Trunk Pacific have already brought their lines to the tracks of the Intercolonial, and the added fact that the Canadian Northern will soon be similarly placed, makes it clear that these great transcontinental railways must necessarily have running rights over the Intercolonial, but these rights do not mean that either one or all three will control the Government railroad. They will be required to pay full value for what they receive and no special privileges will be granted one over the other. The result will be that the Intercolonial will be more fully used than heretofore and the earnings will be further advanced. The Government has a splendid asset in the Intercolonial. It has passed through its worst stages. Its traffic has doubled in both passenger and freight within a few years and is still increasing. The ratio of increased earnings is greater than that of working expenses. It has been an important factor in the development of Canadian trade and its usefulness in this direction is increasing.

In discussing the future of the Intercolonial Railway it must always be borne in mind that its construction was demanded as a part of the Confederation bargain and had the demand of the Lower Provinces been acceded to there would have been no Confederation. The Intercolonial is as necessary to the integrity of Canada today as it was in 1867, and this fact has been recognized by every Government Canada has had. It is a mistake to suppose that the Intercolonial has benefitted only Eastern Canada. It was the Intercolonial that enabled the manufacturers of the West to market their wares in the East—a market they still enjoy. The aim should be to improve the management of the Intercolonial under Government control and that this is the object of the present Government is abundantly clear. It is stated that the Intercolonial will have a surplus of three-quarters of million dollars over working expenses.

## Current Comment

The Senate's Position.  
(Hamilton Spectator.)

Some of the members of the defeated Laurier Cabinet who are not now in Parliament, and therefore have nothing to lose, are said to be trying to induce the Liberal Senators to kill the Borden Navy Bill. We are inclined to think those Senators will refuse to do anything of the kind. They are mostly men of years and experience, and they must know that any such step on their part would mean such an agitation for Senate reform as Canada has never seen. The Liberals who were successful in getting seats in the House of Commons in September, 1911, are likely to have something to say on the matter. They cannot be in any haste to bring about a dissolution of Parliament, knowing as they do that Borden was never stronger, and Laurier never weaker, before the country, than they are this moment on the navy issue.

Playing Politics.  
(Victoria Colonist.)

It is more than regrettable that a question so vital as that of Imperial Defence should be made the shuttlecock of political convenience. It was not upon any such basis that Britain's supremacy of the seas was built up and fostered. If the navy is to become a question of embittered party strife, tactics of this character are certain in the long run to impair its efficiency. If we believe in the Power which has sheltered us for so long, without ever asking any requital, then it is our duty at a time such as the present to accept, with the utmost good faith, the advice for which we have asked, and to follow it out wholeheartedly, strong in the belief that it is the best that can be offered and the most likely to lead to immediate and effective results.

In Grim Earnest.  
(Montreal Star.)

The debate was closed by a brilliant address from Mr. Foster which goes as the last word to the people of Canada during the long Christmas recess. That ringing appeal to Canadians to rally to the flag, and do something worthy of themselves and valuable to the Empire, will echo through the country until Parliament meets again; and we may hope that, by that time, the members of the Opposition will have discovered that our people are in grim earnest in their determination to take up a long-neglected duty as swiftly as super-Dreadnoughts can be built. Popular feeling along this line will be likely to make the Opposition debate after the holidays even more dabby and dubious than it has been thus far.

Suppressed.  
(Edmonton Journal.)

How did it happen that the Toronto Globe, in its report of the proceedings in Parliament the day that Mr. Borden brought down his naval proposals did not mention the fact that Mr. Oliver was the only member on either side of the House who did not rise and sing "God Save the King"? His refusal to do so was surely one of the striking features of the day. The only explanation, of course, is that the Globe thought its readers would think a good deal less of Mr. Oliver if the fact were made known to them. Are his Edmonton constituents more callous?

Before and After Taking.  
(Vancouver News-Advertiser.)

Fifteen years in office brought Sir Wilfrid Laurier to the point of establishing a Canadian navy composed of the second class, second hand, obsolete cruiser Niobe, and the second hand obsolete gunboat Rainbow. Fifteen months in Opposition has brought Sir Wilfrid Laurier to the point of advocating two Canadian fleets, each led with a super-Dreadnought. Fifteen years in Opposition will find Sir Wilfrid advocating a Hyper-super-improved Dreadnought fleet for every Canadian cove, while restoration to office would probably mean a squadron of slab rafts with a log canoe flagship.

The Fleet Unit.  
(Toronto News.)

To construct immediately two naval units in Canada is equivalent to asking a boy to build a grand piano in the woodshed. How can these ships be manned without the establishment of naval training ships and a naval militia? Does the Liberal party realize that 5,000 trained men would be needed for these two units? Does the Liberal party remember the difficulty of manning two cruisers?

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Each one will prove a reliable time-keeper. This we guarantee.  
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## PRESENTATIONS.

E. C. Keirstead, teacher of the Lead era Class of the Tabernacle Sunday school, presented to each member of his class a very pretty Christmas greeting in booklet form. The class thanked him heartily and united in wishing him a merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

In the school room of Tabernacle church, Sunday afternoon members of the Brotherhood class presented to Rev. J. B. Wetmore, pastor, a handsome Bible and to Mrs. Wetmore a very nice hand bag. The presentations were made by W. U. Hatfield. The members of the young ladies class presented a Bible to their teacher, Arthur B. Keirstead.

On Sunday afternoon, at the close of the Sunday school session, members of the young men's Bible class of Exmouth street church, presented to their teacher, W. A. Adams, a travelling bag, accompanied by the following address:

Dear Teacher:—Another year has passed and we are again on the threshold of celebrating the most important event in all the year—the birth of our Saviour.

Coupled with this celebration is the bringing of gifts, and so we, the members of your class, wish to present you with this travelling bag as a small token of our appreciation of the kindness shown us during the year and also for the divine instruction we have received from you as teacher, together with our best wishes for a happy Christmas and a bright and prosperous New Year.

Signed on behalf of the class,  
FRED HASTINGS,  
JAS. MOORE,  
THEO. WOOD.

Dec. 23, 1912.

An American Tourist.  
(Everybody's.)

A party of tourists were visiting the ancient landmarks of England, and their guide was supplying them with valuable historical facts.

"This tower," he expounded, "goes back to William the Conqueror."

"Why, what's the matter?" asked one of the party. "Isn't it satisfactory?"

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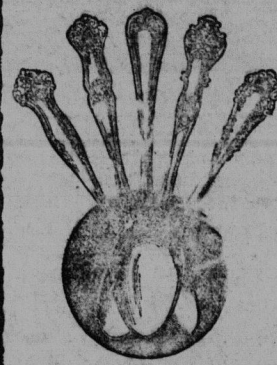
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