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Thursday Sept. 13th 1917.

ROADS AND AUTOS.

Is it not time that New Brunswick grappled with the road problem? The methods of the past are absolutely inadequate to meet the good roads' demands created by the growing use of the automobile; and yet these methods are practically the methods of to-day. Unless and until a comprehensive policy of road building is evolved and put into operation there must continue to be persistent outcries against road conditions and insistent demands, not for patchwork improvements—which are at best mere fair weather expedients—but for a constructive policy. Instead of seeking to "carry on" as their predecessors did with this wasteful patchwork policy, the government now at the outset of its career should give serious consideration to the development of a real road policy that is something more than an election expedient. The true policy is to study the plans of those who are achieving results and adapt their methods to New Brunswick conditions. Maine, next door, has better roads than New Brunswick, and as a consequence there are many more automobiles owned in Maine and many more tourists at Maine resorts. Maine is building new roads, and in all sections the demand is for road work, even at the expense of increased taxation, because the benefits of the good roads are appreciated by the people in the country as well as by the city dwellers. Maine is getting good roads because Maine abandoned the slipshod methods still obtaining in New Brunswick for scientific construction under business, not political, management. The revenue derived from an equitable tax on automobiles was capitalized to secure money for initial construction on first-class principles, and this gave such an impetus, both to the demand for autos and for good roads, that extension of the road policy was made easy. New Brunswick should find in the Maine experience justification for a complete change of front on the road-building problem, and for the inauguration of a scheme of road-building that would give this province real roads, and make the auto owners cheerful contributors of the necessary tax. They would far rather pay money for good roads than for auto repairs.—Globe.

"The Financial Times," a non-political newspaper, exposes how, while the Canadian people were asked to scrimp and save, that the militia department's administration was a gigantic means of wasteful and unreasonably extravagance. It says editorially:

The "Sam Hughes men" who had im-

portant administrative positions in France and England are beginning to trail back to their homes in Canada. It is now well established that no matter how competent, no matter how zealous, the man with a Sam Hughes tag was decapitated, dismissed, sacked. It has cost the Dominion a considerable sum in replacing men who had taken a year or two to learn the difficult task of administering an army of 300,000 men, four thousand miles from home. And that is not all. The dismissals invariably were accompanied by a form of delicately contrived insult not to be found outside the sphere of a pink-tea function. I have heard of one case, where the head of a department on arriving at his office one morning, was told by his assistant that he (the assistant) wouldn't need him any more. "I have got your job, and as this office isn't big enough for both of us, you are fired." Other cases are reported where lieutenants succeeded Lt.-Colonels, where civilians with a rank not below that of Major, took over work entirely new to them, and so forth—anything to hit a Hughes man where he would feel it most. No doubt in some cases the Hughes choice may have been a bad choice, but on the whole the general administration was admittedly good, and it is very hard to get away from the feeling that there has been pretty small potatoes among what we should consider pretty big men.

(From the Montreal Gazette.)
Meanless days in hotels and restaurants will not go far towards the conservation of beef and bacon. The restriction must be extended to the homes of the people if any material increase in the supply of these products for the army overseas is to be brought about. For one who eats in a public place, there are several hundred who eat in a private house. The whole problem is, indeed, surrounded with difficulties. Those who are determined to break a law of restriction can find means of so doing, but the great mass of people would, we think, conform to a law made for so great a purpose as that of keeping the army adequately supplied with meats. Aid Weldon's suggestion that the scope of the restriction be extended to the home is worth trying out.

Apples, peaches and tomatoes are promising articles in the Canadian exports this year. The Niagara district is raising an exceptionally large crop this year, and a great number of newcomers have settled in the region to carry on the fruit industry. The war has had the effect of increasing the production in this section and the problem now is how to conserve the supply, and save waste.

"Can, preserve, dry and store," advises the Canadian Food Controller.

The first cigarette and the first love affair always makes a boy suffer; after that they come easy and merely soothe his nerves or his vanity, as the case may be.

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In Plain, Greys, and Black, \$15.00, \$18.00, and \$20.00.
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Everything for Man or Boy at this Store.

OAK HALL.

GADSBY'S LETTER

OTTAWA, Sept. 8. In spite of a national debt of a billion and a half of dollars, which may exceed two billions before the war is ended, this brave little country of Canada, already staggering under a tariff as high as Haman's galleys, has decided to take the Canadian Northern Railway, which means additional obligations amounting to hundreds of millions of dollars, and to keep the railway.

It is only fair to the country to state that it does it against its will. The C. N. R. was put through its second and third readings under duress, the Opposition having fought its terms to the last ditch. But Finance Minister White and the little Toronto group who were interested in C. N. R. bonds and C. N. R. common stock would not be denied. So the brute force majority did the trick. Where the country will get the extra six hundred and fifty million dollars to meet the C. N. R. needs heaven only knows.

Some time ago the Finance Minister made the remark that it looked almost like a religious movement to him because no doubt the Finance Minister was trusting that the Lord would provide. To which the answer is of course, that the Lord may provide, but the people of Canada will pay the shot.

For some time past the Canadian Northern has been the most troublesome of the three transcontinental railways. Along about 1912 the people's patience began to be exhausted. There were numerous complaints that further aid was sending good money after bad, but the Finance Minister and his friends struck it along for five years longer and now they are paying a goodly sum for a railway which Sir Henry Drayton says belongs to the people already. It belongs to the people, so the famous Drayton-Ackworth report says, because the people have paid for every mile of it.

This outstanding fact was tacitly recognized by the Borden Government in 1915, when the Dominion Treasury was asked to cough up another forty-five million dollars for the C. N. R. out of the hole. The money was handed over with this provision: that if the C. N. R. defaulted on the interest, the railway would be liable to foreclosure and become the property of the people of Canada in the regular way. In return for this forty-five million dollars bond guarantee the Government took over common stock to the value of \$330,000,000 was spurned, the Government being determined to go to the C. N. R. as much as it could for nothing. Nobody dreamed, however, that when the time came to foreclose the Government would flinch again and insist on making the pledges of the C. N. R. common stock another present.

But other times other counsels. The C. N. R. did not pay the interest. The Government did. According to the Act of 1914 the Government should have stepped in and seized the railway. But no. This was too cruel. Besides Finance Minister White had a happier thought—to give Bill and Dan a few million more for their work as nation builders—equity of redemption he calls it—pay the group to whom in ways overt or otherwise the six hundred thousand remaining C. N. R. shares were pledged and to have the people of Canada foot the bill. The Act of 1914 was consequently rescinded and the Act which has just been railroad through under duress will now go into force.

By this Act it is proposed not only to purchase the six hundred thousand shares of stock which are practically worthless as a present investment, but it is intended to permit the C. N. R. company to retain its equity as a corporation which will, of course, make the Government an owner of the stock liable for all the bonds guaranteed and unguaranteed, as well as other liabilities. E. M. Macdonald of Pictou has figured out that the liability will be \$650,000,000 plus whatever the arbitrator decides is the value of six hundred thousand shares of common stock in an insolvent railway. That Bill and Dan have any equity of redemption in a railway that the people of Canada are paid for or any claim on Canada as a pair of nation builders who insisted on building a transcontinental railway simply because everybody was doing it, sensible men laugh to scorn. But that does not alter the fact that Sir William and Sir Donald are to be given another consolation prize of a million or two for the six hundred thousand shares of common stock still in dispute. It seems that the only fellows who made ten millions or so as building contractors for the railway, and that that isn't enough, everybody is to be well taken care of, including the Toronto group who own the six hundred thousand shares of common stock and a considerable portion of the bonds which they have been buying up in England at forty cents on the dollar in the expectation that the Dominion of Canada will pay for them at par. According to the best authorities the C. N. R. is worth from ten to twenty million dollars less than its outstanding liabilities, so you can easily figure out how little the common stock is worth.

The whole thing is now up to the arbitrators who are to determine the price to be set upon this block of six hundred thousand shares of watered stock. Their decision is final. Dr. Fugate's motion that the arbitrators' award be reviewable by Parliament having been rejected by the usual brute force majority. The people are not likely to forget this piece of strong arm work even with conscription and win-the-war to divert their minds. The Conservative press is already busy tipping the arbitrators of the fate of the stock should not be valued on its present worth but on its potential earning power, for fifty years from now. There ought to be thirty millions in it for somebody. If the arbitrators are honest they will not award sixty million dollars for this C. N. R. wall paper, but will hand the railway over to the people without any more nonsense.

Incidentally it is interesting to compare the Borden Government's kid-glove dealing with the C. N. R. and Uncle Sam's way of conducting a railway deal. The United States Government, through Commissioner Lane, decided that they wanted the Alaska Northern Railway, as it was needed as a part of their railway scheme. They found out that the road cost over \$6,000,000, and that there was a goodly lot of representing the bondholders. Instead of dealing with the committee they went behind their back, to the Canadian banks which had a lien on the road for \$1,050,000, and made an offer for that much accompanied by a threat that if they did not take it they would get less. Whereupon the Canadian banks—the same banks that are interested in the Canadian Northern—forced the sale through.—H.F.O.

German Stamps for France.

There is a saying that "philately follows the flag," and this has proved true time and again in the present world conflict. Military forces which have occupied enemy territory have had their own national stamps charged for use in the captured territory, or have seized and overprinted the stamps of the land invaded. This was true when the Entente captured German Pacific Islands, portions of Africa then held by the Teutons, Turkish islands, British in Persia, and it was true when German and Austrian forces occupied parts of Belgium and Russia. The German philatelist has seen a set of a stamp—not the stamp itself, but the culture of the German stamp charged with a character indicating its intended use in Switzerland. The first of the stamps which followed the flag appeared close upon the iron heel which crushed Belgium. Before the end of 1914 German stamps had been put forth, overprinted "Belgium" and of a new value, for use by Germans occupying Belgium. Since then this series has been extended. Only recently six new values were issued. But during all this time it has been surprising that Germany, fond of putting forth occupation stamps, has never printed a special set in connection with the occupation of French soil. The seizure of Belgium and Russian territory has been responsible for five or six different series, yet France escaped. Now we learn that the Germans have put forth an entirely new set. This time they are the ordinary German stamps, bearing the familiar "German in arms" picture, but the word "Belgium" is now omitted from the surcharge, the overprint consisting exclusively of a value expressed, as before, in centimes and francs, and not in the German planning and mark. What does this new series signify? It is suggested that the stamps are for use in the German-occupied French regions as well as in Belgium, and that for this very reason the "Belgium" is omitted.—Exchange.

A Natural Barometer.

One of the simplest of Nature's barometers is a spider's web. When there is a prospect of wind or rain, the spider shortens the filaments by which its web is sustained and leaves it in this state as long as the weather is variable. If it elongates its threads, it is a sign that the calm is judged by the length to which the threads are let out. If the spider remains inactive, it is a sign of rain. If it keeps at work during rain, the downpour will not last long and will be followed by fine weather. Observation has taught that the spider makes changes in its web every twenty-four hours, and that, if such changes are made in the evening just before sunset, the night will be clear and beautiful.

Speedy Freight Handling.

Some fine work was accomplished by the Port of London Authority the other week in the rapid discharge of cargoes, says Tit-Bits. Six thousand five hundred and six tons in bags and bulk was discharged in the Millwall Dock in 36½ working hours; a similar cargo of 4,890 tons was discharged in the same dock in twenty-four hours. In the Surrey Commercial Dock 7,545 tons in bulk was discharged in 34½ hours, an average of 247 tons an hour, one day's working of eleven hours resulting in no less than 3,297 tons being unloaded.

During the recent Shakespeare celebration a number of local amateurs appeared in the great dramatist's most famous tragedy. Next day the principal actor inquired of a critical friend what he thought of the performance. "It was great! Simply great!" was the reply. "As you played Hamlet it was easy to see why Ophelia should go and drown herself."—Boston Transcript.

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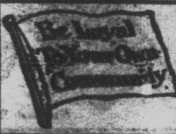
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