

The St. John Standard

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ST. JOHN, N. B., THURSDAY, MAY 21, 1914.

WHAT WOULD LAURIER HAVE DONE?

Now that the bill authorizing the Dominion Government to assist the Canadian Northern Railway to the extent of a guarantee of bonds has been passed through its first reading by the largest majority of the session, the Liberal newspapers are finding all sorts of fault with the Government on the ground that the security asked for the public assistance to be given is not sufficiently large, and indulging in the claim that if Sir Wilfrid Laurier had been in power the situation would have been so much more wisely handled. It is the easiest thing in the world, after seeing a man perform a creditable piece of work for a bystander to declare he could have done it much better, secure in the knowledge that it is not at all likely he will ever be called upon to justify his boasting. Now, in the present case, what would Sir Wilfrid Laurier have done had his government been in power in Ottawa when Mackenzie and Mann came asking assistance with the knowledge that if it were not granted there would result such a financial disturbance that the whole country would have been affected? There is but one ground upon which the question can be answered, and that is by drawing conclusions from what Sir Wilfrid did do when he was in power and similar requests were made to him, even though the necessity for granting them were not so great.

The Laurier Government made large gifts to the Canadian Northern so that the proposition at present occupying Parliament is but a small part of the aggregate of public assistance given to that railway. There is no record that Sir Wilfrid ever asked Mackenzie and Mann to turn over a share of their stock in return for a guarantee, or loan. There is no record that this wise man requested that the railway managers should reduce their capitalization by squeezing some of the water out of their stock. There is nothing to show that he suggested the giving of a mortgage to the government with the understanding of foreclosure if certain terms were not adhered to. He did not even exact a promise that the railway would ship its freight through Canadian ports.

And yet Sir Wilfrid in the course of his address on the question when it was before the House of Commons, declared that, in dealing with the C. N. R. he would be a majority partner or no partner at all. This profession from the Liberal leader is unique, in that it is one of the very few statements from his lips that can be absolutely backed up by his record. In all his dealings with the Canadian Northern he was no partner at all, except if he was a paying partner.

There was no difference of opinion between Mr. Hon. R. L. Borden and the leader of the Opposition as to the necessity of assistance to the railway. Pursual of their speeches in the debate will show that they were agreed that if the C. N. R. were not aided it would probably go to the wall, and that was a condition not to be considered. Government aid was the only salvation, for the work could not proceed without money and, owing to present conditions, the money could not be procured from private sources except with the backing of the government.

In this respect the Canadian Northern today is in the same position which the C. P. R. was thirty or more years ago, when, if the accounts of that time are accurate, the directors could not sell their stock or bonds. Parliamentary records show that in 1884 and 1885 Sir Wilfrid was more pronounced in his opposition to assistance to the C. P. R. than, during the present session, he has been to the C. N. R. He fought it fiercely and on much the same grounds and made direful predictions of what would happen if the Government persisted in its policy. Yet Sir Wilfrid himself has lived to see every prediction he made falsified by the facts.

The Government lost nothing by its advances to the C.P.R. It is only necessary to think for a minute to see what millions they would have made if as good a bargain had been driven in that case as is being forced in this.

Then Sir Wilfrid has a precedent in the case of his own pet railway, the National Transcontinental and G. T. P. He imposed no such severe conditions on that road as are being insisted on by the Borden Government's agreement with the C. N. R. Of that system the country built the entire eastern section of the road and paid in cash for it at several prices.

The country paid in cash and guarantee for two thirds of the extreme western section, and in guarantee and subsidies for a large part of the prairie section. Taken in all the Liberal government aid to the National Transcontinental and G. T. P. is more than twice the amount which the Canadian Northern will have received, and this despite the fact that the C.

N. R. system has double the railway mileage of the G. T. P. No such terms were insisted upon in the arrangement for the Laurier railway. On the contrary conditions were loose, and the work so disgracefully bungled, that there is every likelihood that the present Government will be called upon to bear the penalty of the former administration's ignorance, or worse.

The fact is that the agreement under which the Dominion of Canada will assist the Canadian Northern is the hardest bargain ever driven by a government with a railway in need of assistance. It is open, of course, for Mr. Bennett, or Mr. Nickle to say that the Government did not get enough, or they should have got more, for those gentlemen have the right to their independence of speech if they are not satisfied. Such a course, however, is not open to Sir Wilfrid Laurier, or to the newspapers supporting him, for the Liberal leader during his term as Premier of Canada made this country a partner with the responsibilities of the C. N. R. by guaranteeing their bonds. It remained for the Borden administration to insist that if the country afforded such aid to the railway as was requested there should be some security for the money advanced, some assurance that the public would be safeguarded. And it is the opinion of railway and financial men, even those opposed to the C. N. R., and of the very great majority of the Canadian people, that the assurance insisted upon by the Government is ample. The partisan Grit newspapers may, of course, think differently, but there is nothing to indicate that if Sir Wilfrid Laurier had been in power the problem would have been handled as well as is the case under the present arrangement?

A WELL MERITED TRIBUTE

The Frederick Gleason last evening paid the following well merited tribute to Mr. J. B. M. Baxter, K. C.: "The St. John Standard refers this morning in very appreciative language to the services rendered to their constituency by Messrs. Baxter and Carson, the members of the Legislature for St. John county. It is quite true that at no time have the interests of that county been more wholeheartedly looked after or more efficiently served than has been the case since Messrs. Baxter and Carson have represented it, and the people of that county have every reason to congratulate themselves upon the wise choice they made at the last election."

"But Mr. Baxter has been much more than a county representative, prominent though he has been as such; his energies have been devoted quite as much to the advancement of the welfare of the province at large, as they have to the particular interests of his own constituency. As a lawyer, his ability is unquestioned; as a debater, he is the equal of anyone in the House; as a man of affairs, he is in the front rank; and no member of the Legislature has given greater and more earnest attention to the details of the business that has come before it than he has. During the temporary absence of the Attorney General, owing to indisposition, in the earlier weeks of the late session, Mr. Baxter attended to the work of his department; and again when the Attorney General, in Mr. Fleming's absence, assumed the position of Acting Premier, it was to Mr. Baxter that he once more turned to assist him in carrying out the duties of the Attorney General's department."

"Many of the measures which became law during the late session, were due to Mr. Baxter's initiative. As one of the most prominent lawyers in the province, enjoying a large and varied practice, he has better opportunities than most practitioners of ascertaining wherein the efficiency of our legal system and laws are lacking, and he put one knowledge thus acquired to practical use by suggesting the proper remedies. That he is one of New Brunswick's coming men, no one who has any acquaintance with him will deny."

The huge 72-inch telescope which the Dominion Government has purchased is to be located in Victoria instead of Ottawa. The decision is based on the fact that in the Pacific coast city the skies are clear for a longer period, and thus better facilities are afforded for astronomical observations. It is now in order for the Telegraph and Times to discover that if it had not been for Mr. Hazen the telescope might have been located in St. John.

The Borden Government will guarantee \$45,000,000 of bonds for the Canadian Northern Railway and the country will get in return \$40,000,000 of stock in that company and a mortgage on all the rest. The Laurier Government wasted \$40,000,000 in the N. T. R. Railway and the country got nothing for the expenditure except a

world-wide reputation for dishonesty and loose methods.

The latest news from Mexico indicates that Mr. V. Huerta had instructed the delegates who will represent his government at the A. B. C. mediation conference in Niagara Falls, that he is willing to resign the presidency if such an action will help to solve the difficulty between the U. S. and Mexico. But a cent he has been reading the Boston American.

The confederation booked for Indian town yesterday refused to "confederate." The secession who predicted it can now sympathize with the editors of the Telegraph and Times who declared Canadian voters would rush to endorse the reciprocity campaign of the late Laurier government. As prospects they are all in the same class.

An American golfer with a name so typical as "Outset," has been defeated by a Mr. "Tubs" in the golf championship meet in England. What is in a name anyway?

Diary of Events

HISTORIC DAYS IN CANADA

For many years the twenty-first of May was celebrated as a holiday by the pioneers of what is now Elgin county, Ont., the date commemorating the founding of the settlement at Port Talbot on Lake Erie in 1803. Col. Thomas Talbot, who had been a soldier in Canada and Europe and private secretary to Major-General Graves, first Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada, was the leader of the little party which on May 21, 1803, invaded the wilderness at Port Talbot. He chopped down a tree as the formal inaugural ceremony, after which the men who accompanied him fell to work with a vim to make a clearing and construct log houses. Talbot had obtained a large grant of land in that section from the government, and, after seeing the settlement fairly started, he returned to civilization to induce further immigration. For over a quarter of a century he labored to carry out his colonization schemes, and induced no less than 40,000 people to settle in the wild places of Upper Canada. These pioneers, who played so large a part in the development of the prosperous Province of the present, lived hard but happy and contented lives. They fought and conquered all the wild forces of nature. Their homes were log cabins, mostly of one room with one window. They wore rude clothing, and their food consisted of animal or of coarse cloth spun by the women from hemp or flax. Furniture was made from trees and hewed out with axes. Often they were forced to subsist for months on a diet of Indian corn, wild rice, the flesh of wild animals, fish, roots and nuts. In spite of these hardships, however, the settlement flourished, and privation was gradually replaced by comfort and even some degree of luxury.

THE PASSING DAY

THE WORLD'S GREAT CANALS.

While the Panama Canal is the greatest engineering project of its kind ever attempted in the world's history, there are several other "big ditches" worthy of attention. Third in cost among the great engineering projects of the world is the famous Manchester ship canal, which was formally inaugurated by Queen Victoria twenty years ago today, May 21, 1894. The appropriations made by Congress for the construction of the Panama Canal amount to \$322,541,468. The Suez Canal, completed in 1869, cost \$100,000,000, while the Manchester Canal stands third, having cost \$85,000,000. This canal, thirty-five and one-half miles in length, makes a shortcut of the great industrial city of Manchester, connecting it with Liverpool. It is wide and deep enough for ocean steamers drawing twenty-six feet to dock at the wharves. The city of Manchester paid one-third of the cost. The Welland ship canal in Canada, when all the proposed improvements are completed, will rank among the most important and expensive of the world's ship canals. It runs parallel to the Niagara river, from Port Colborne on Lake Erie, to Port Dalhousie, on Lake Ontario, a distance of nearly twenty-seven miles. The total cost of the project is \$25,000,000. The increase of the depth from fourteen to twenty-two feet and other improvements will cost \$10,000,000 more. The Welland canal overcomes the obstacle to navigation between the lakes presented by the Niagara Falls.

The Cape Cod level ship canal, now nearing completion, is another mighty project of this nature. It is about a dozen miles in length and will be a deep, wide waterway, linking Buzzard's Bay and Massachusetts Bay will shorten the sea route between Boston and New York by about sixty-three miles. The Cape Cod canal is expected to be navigable by the middle of summer, but will probably not be opened for general business until November.

The Suez Canal, connecting the Mediterranean and Red Seas, was completed in 1869, at a cost of \$100,000,000. Most of the labor was performed by Egyptians who were forced to toil for a mere pittance, barely able to keep them alive, and who were watched over by brutal overseers who constantly plied their lashes on the bare backs of the Khedive's slaves.

Germany's greatest canal, and the most important "ditch" of continental Europe, is the Kaiser Wilhelm canal connecting the Baltic and North Seas. It was completed in 1895 at a cost of \$40,000,000. It is a sea-level canal, thirty-six feet in depth and sixty-one miles long.

Longest of the world's canals is the Erie, between Albany and Buffalo, 387 miles. It was completed in 1826, and cost \$25,540,800. The Erie, and the Oswego and Champlain canals, are now being enlarged by the State of New York to a depth of twelve feet. The cost of the improvement is to be kept within \$101,000,000.

In the matter of tonnage, the canals at Saint-Sauveur, Marie, while comparatively short and inexpensive, far surpass all of the other canals of the world. The tonnage passing through the ditches connecting Lakes Superior and

Little Benny's Note Book

BY LEE PAPE.

I was setting awn our front steps reading a library book this afternoon and I looked up and here was a old man with white whiskers standing there looking at me, saying, Go rite awn reading, little boy, if thares anything I luv to see its a little boy improving his mind by mens of litterchure.

So I went awn reading, beeing rite at an exsiting part, and the old man kapp awn standing there looking at me a wile and then he sed, And may I ask the name of yure book.

Frank Fernot awn His Unkels Ranah, I sed.

Well, well, that sounds kwite intristing and instructive, sed the old man, I sippose he conkers templayshins and various thinks like that.

He hasent as far as I got, I sed.

Of course it takes time, just as in life, sed the old man, perhaps you woodent mind explaning the plot of the book as far as you ved.

Yes sir, I sed, he goz out to his unkels ranah in serch of adventure, and awn the way out hes attacked by a man with Frank Fernot kwik shoots him dgd.

Goodies, sed the old man, but of course he shot him in self defents, that is, not with malice aforeth.

No sir, I sed, with a 44 caliber.

Well, go awn, sed the old man, and I sed, Atfir that he rides away as fast as he can because he beers the mans trends kuming with horses and guns, awl beeing robbers, and they have a fite awn horse back and Frank Fernot kills 3 of the robbers, but he dont get killed himself, beeing a good dodger, and then he kwik rides away agen torhis his unkels ranah.

Wat, sed the old man, awl this bloodshed and he hasent even reetched the ranah yet.

No sir, not yet, I sed, befor he kums to the ranah he kills a trane rob-bir and has a fite with sum moar outlors, wounding them but not killing them, and then he reetches his unkels ranah.

Goodies grayshis, sed the old man, I sinseerly hope that atfir he gets there he lays aside his pistol and terns over a noo leaf.

No sir, I sed, as soon as he gets there he helps to tar and fethir a horse theef and shoots a gambler, and thats as far as I got.

And I started to read agen, and the old man shook his hed and sed, Well, well, well, and wawked up the street still shaking his hed.

Huron are more than three times as great as that of Saint-Sauveur.

The Manchester canal is in one way the most remarkable in the world, since it was built through a country densely settled with interests for obtaining and registering the same from time immemorial, thus presenting problems not encountered in the construction of other waterways.

Charges of a very serious nature have been brought against the two men. There will be no prosecution in the courts, however, the father of the two young girls who made the charge being satisfied to let the matter end with the suspension of the constables, it is stated.

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