

The St. John Standard

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ST. JOHN, N. B., THURSDAY, DECEMBER 4, 1919.

VOCATIONAL TRAINING.

The Times probably has the right idea. It wants a training school for city commissioners, though that was not in the bond when it was telling the people some years ago how the commission form of government would revolutionize civic administration. Then it believed the commission form of government would dispense with the necessity of the city fathers serving a term of apprenticeship before reaching really responsible positions as they had to do under the old aldermanic system. The commission form of government was going to attract to the city's service men of great vision as legislators, and unexperienced efficiency as executives.

It would no doubt be a good thing if the City Council would provide a training school for city commissioners, though there might be considerable difficulty procuring competent instructors for such a school in St. John. It would probably be a better thing if the present commissioners faced the problem of providing the city with a modern system of technical education and vocational training in a reasonable manner. The Commissioners may have the right to refuse the Vocational School Board money to carry on its work in a proper manner for any reason or for no reason at all; but their present attitude implies a lack of confidence in the competency of the Vocational Board, or a belief that St. John is so peculiarly situated that its young people do not need or do not want technical education or vocational training. The Commissioners in their wisdom assume that the experience of Halifax and all cities of any pretensions have no lessons for St. John. They tell the Vocational Board to demonstrate the value of technical instruction with quite inadequate resources for such an experiment, and that then if they achieve what no reasonable person would expect them to achieve they can come back and ask for what they needed before their experiment could be a success.

It is true the Commissioners may have been well advised in refusing to consider the purchase of the buildings which the Vocational Board suggested would be suitable for their purpose, but the reason given for so doing indicated an abnormal parochial outlook. If St. John is ever going to provide itself with a system of technical education and vocational training it ought to profit by the experience of other cities, and begin on a scale commensurate with the importance of the city as an industrial centre. If the activities of the Vocational Board are to be confined to piecemeal experiments without any proper equipment for facilities, its work is bound to be disappointing, and the cause of industrial education in this city will receive a setback, which though it may later afford the Commissioners an excuse for not voting money for such education, will not help the city in realizing the industrial progress which it confidently anticipates. Massachusetts has the finest system of technical education and vocational training in the United States, and though it is a State without natural resources of any value its productive capacity per capita is about \$100 over the average for the Republic as a whole.

FEAR OF REVOLUTION.

Hon. Mr. Barnes, one of the British delegates, told the International Labor Convention at Washington that trade union leaders in England were living in fear of a social explosion they would be powerless to control. And the other day Hon. Arthur Henderson declared that if a Labor Government were established in England it would effect a revolution in political and economic affairs. So whether British labor strikes to politics or resorts to the more dangerous policy of direct action there would seem a prospect of trouble ahead anyway.

At present British industry seems to be showing a power of recovery from the shock of war unsurpassed by any country. Employment is fairly plentiful, and wages high, but the cost of living is higher. Mr. Barnes apparently fears that there is danger of serious disturbances during the winter. Lloyd George has repeatedly declared that he has no fear of Bolshevism in Britain, and apparently he is not worried by Bolshevik propaganda. At any rate his Government ignores it. The other day the British Socialist Party in London held a meeting to celebrate the victory of the Red Armies over Kolchak and Yudenitch. Among the speakers was Tom Mann, a responsible official of one of the most powerful trade unions in Britain, and a man who exercises great influence upon labor policy. The burden of his speech was, "Imitate Russia, and get on with the class war." John McLean, a powerful figure in the Scottish labor movement, was another speaker, and he declared Britain was moving rapidly towards revolution. He added that the Miners' Federation had so mismanaged that they had involved the whole working class movement in

their revolutionary tactics, and he advised his hearers to get their guns ready.

Men like Henderson, Roberts, Barnes and Clynes, who believe in political action, may have their hands full to keep the younger trade unionists swept off their feet by the fanatic zeal of the direct actionists. The Labor Party has not achieved the results expected of it, and its programme is unfortunately considered too slow by the younger element. The war has accentuated class antagonisms and produced a reckless, restless temper. Even the lower deck of the Navy has been organized. A few days after the Armistice Admiral Jellicoe tried to ignore the representatives of the lower deck; the result was that Downing Street offered the representatives more than they asked for, and the Admiral was sent on a trip to the Dominions.

Mr. Barnes no doubt has sound reasons for his fears of an explosion. But the British are a peculiar people. When they talk of violence they are usually conservative in action. When they are grimly silent they are liable to be dangerous. If London followed the example of Washington and attempted to solve the problem of Bolshevism by suppressing the agitators, there would probably be more danger of an explosion than there is now.

GERMANY'S INSOLENCE.

Germany's refusal to sign the protocol calling for compensation for the ships sunk at Scapa Flow and the delivery of German officers marked for trial is a characteristic action. The rulers of the nominal Republic have the same attitude towards the rules of the old Empire; they talked much of refusing to sign the Peace Treaty, and only did so after much futile protesting. In the present situation the rulers of Germany possibly see some hope of putting up an effective bluff. The failure of the United States Senate to ratify the Treaty has robbed the Allies' position of an authority which might otherwise have had. The Allied governments are preoccupied with serious troubles at home. If the Allies Government, in the hope of staving off internal revolution, allows itself to be inveigled into war with the Jugoslavs the fact would be in the fire. Such a war might be expected to arouse the anger of President Wilson, if not the American people; at any rate it would keep the United States out of the League of Nations indefinitely. Besides it would have a very disturbing effect upon public opinion in England and France, and make more difficult, and well nigh impossible, any settlement in regard to Turkey or the Balkan States.

The German Government's own position is so precarious that it probably welcomes the opportunity of diverting attention from its home troubles by adopting an insolent attitude to the Allies. It has apparently ignored the Allied demands in respect to the limitation of its army, but with the very considerable armed forces at its disposal, it is not secure from revolution. On the one hand it is menaced by the possibility of Von Glotz's army becoming the nucleus of a monarchist uprising, and on the other by the constant activities of the Reds, who are reported to have enlisted many army officers in their plans. In the circumstances the German Government might even be glad to welcome Allied bayonets into Berlin to prop up its tottering power.

It is unlikely, however, that Germany's latest insolence indicates any intention to organize armed resistance to the demands of the Allies. She is in no position to renew the struggle, and if provoked to wrath against the Allies would be meretricious. But she will no doubt endeavor to exploit the present unsatisfactory situation for her own purposes, a course which may have embarrassing results for the Allies, but which may also have the good result of inducing the United States to ratify the Treaty and assume a share of the responsibility for keeping Germany to the mark.

AS TO ROAD MONIES.

The Chatham Commercial, which has been generally friendly to the Foster Government, is not satisfied that Hon. Mr. Veniot gets adequate results for his large expenditures on the roads. It pays him the following left-handed compliment: "At the banquet tendered to the Hon. Mr. Veniot, by the N. B. Automobile Association in St. John, on the evening of the 2nd inst., so many bouquets were thrown at the Minister on account of his road activities, that he was almost snowed under with them. There is no doubt that during Mr. Veniot's regime there has been a considerable improvement in many of the roads of the Province, and so there ought to be considering the amount of money that has been spent in that regard."

"In conversation a few days ago with a commercial man whose territory comprises the northeastern counties of the Province, he informed us that 'the people in Kent and some parts of

Gloucester had never seen so much money in all their lives as they had received during the past couple of years,' though he admitted that the main roads and the bridges were in better shape now than for a long time. Of course, people want good roads; they are the first essentials to prosperity as well as to convenience. But the question is, How far into debt is the Province justified in getting, in order to obtain these good roads?"

Hon. W. L. M. King can't complain that he has not a free hand to lead the once Grand Party wherever it will arrive. The Provincial Premiers who attended the August Convention and voted against him are apparently attached to let him handle the hard business of organizing the Grits as best he can; at any rate they did not attend the meeting of the Organization Committee—being no doubt busy trying to strengthen their political fences against the stampede of farmers. Even D. D. Mackenzie stopped at home, counting the \$10,000 he appears to have secured as Opposition Leader before Mr. King appeared on the scene. He was probably afraid he would be asked for a contribution to the Party Funds.

"I am simply astounded at what is being done in this country for returned soldiers." This was the verdict in Montreal of the Hon. Robert Hunter, of Queensland, Australia, a minister in the Hughes cabinet, who is in charge of the land settlement and re-establishment in that country. Mr. Hunter is in Canada studying its system of dealing with returned soldiers.

After all, the St. John Housing Commission is not so slow. In Great Britain the Government some years ago worked out a scheme to erect half a million houses, and it is now reported that the first house has been at last completed. It is a wooden house, and cost \$3,400, the material having been imported from Norway or Canada.

Possibly Hon. Mr. Ballantyne's letter was intended as a gentle hint that the City Commissioners should have been on their job, and had the matter of reservations for the ferry bridge up when the harbor bill was before Parliament. It is little wonder the Commission idea gets the goat of The Times.

WHAT THEY SAY

No More Than Human,
(Toronto Star.)

Well-wishers of the Drury Government will not flatter it, or impute to it either perfect wisdom or freedom from the faults of human nature. It will have its troubles and its temptations and it may have something to learn from the experience of its predecessors.

Failure of Strikes,
(Hamilton Herald.)

The big strike of the printers in New York has failed. The bigger strike of the longshoremen failed. The still bigger strike of the steel workers failed. The strikers are glad to be back at work. They have lost many millions in wages, but perhaps have gained something in wisdom.

Easier in Korea,
(Exchange.)

In Korea if a man meets his wife in the street he ignores her presence and passes on as if she were a stranger.

Work Way Out,
(Toronto Mail and Empire.)

The British pound in New York is now worth less than \$4. As the British government will not artificially support exchange, further declines are inevitable. This can only mean further restrictions on American exports, and declining prices in many export commodities. Europe will have to produce and work most of its own way out of the shortage, and in the long run this will be better for all peoples.

A Monument,
(Herald.)

There is a monument in Vera Cruz bearing an inscription to the effect that it marks the spot near which the fallen soldiers of Mexico "drove the American marines out of the country." It is no wonder that simple Latin soldiers there are not overwhelmed by any sense of the proximity of the great, powerful and self-respecting United States.

A BIT OF VERSE

YOUTH PASSES,

I
His time was spent
In God's replenishment.
Of all that He makes good.
His daily food
Was love. His joyous mind
Sought but to find
The love of every heart.
He wrought his part
In high disdain
Of loss and pain,
And in his eyes
Was no surprise
Nor dread at all
Whate'er he cald.

And now he sees the truth
Of all the dreams of youth.
He joins the throng
Who touch God's hand
And link the things of home
With those that are to come.
—Allen Brockington, in The Nation.

A BIT OF FUN

Unnecessary Warning.
"This seems to be a very dangerous precipice," remarked the tourist. "I wonder why they have not put up a warning board."
"Yes," answered the guide, "it is dangerous. They kept a warning board up for two years, but no one

Benny's Note Book

BY LEE PAPE

Pop and me was taking a walk before supper, me asking a lot of questions and getting answers to about half, and all of a sudden I had a Moor to ask pop a question and then quick meek around in back and wawk on the other side of him.
 With I did, saying, Pop?
 Questions, questions everywhere and not a drop of thawt, sed pop.

If horses only had one leg do you think they could ony run one quarter as fast? I sed.

And I quick snuck around back and hepp on wawking on pop's other side, and pop sed, You must be awill thersy for information today, y' dont you ask me a hard one? And he looked down to warg I use to be but wasent, saying, Warg the doose are you? And he looked down on the other side, saying, How the mischief did you get over heer?

Dident you know I was heer, pop? I sed. And we kept on wawking and pritty soon I sed, Do you think it would make you much smatter if you lerned about 25 langwidges, pop?

And I snuck around on the first side agen, and pop sed, It would either make me smarter or kill me, probably both—warg have you got to agen? Do you think my neck is made of rubber, how many places do you want to be at one time?

Dident you know I came back agen, pop? I sed.

O shut up, sed pop, and I sed, Do you think I make a good detective? And I quick snuck back to the other side agen, and pop sed I think you would make a better eel—confound it, now this has got to stop. I've axually got a pane in the neck trying to find you.

Wy, dident you know I came over on this side agen, pop? I sed.

This wawk has gone far enuff, to put it mildly, sed pop. And we started to go back pop keeping a hold of me by the eer all the way so I couldnt change eny more.

?

Have you ever tramped through a crowded store just before Christmas and wondered to yourself "What on earth can I get for Jack?"

Most everybody around you was wondering the same thing—what they could buy as a gift for the "somebody" they had in mind.

And when you finally got out on the street again, you met one of those particularly

clever foresighted friends, who breezily epitomized your troubles with "Too bad, you should have done your shopping two weeks ago."

You have just about three weeks to complete the purchase of all your Christmas Gifts.

Write for the Birks Year Book and do all your shopping in the privacy of your own home.

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fell over, so it was taken down."—Exchange.

The Wise Fool.
 "Knowledge is power," observed the Sage.

"Oh, I don't know," commented the Fool. "A low-browed pugilist can make more in one night than an educated man can in a year."—Cincinnati Enquirer.

Indulgent Father.
 Customer—Here, what's the meaning of this? I don't mean to be shaved by this kid!

Barber—He's only my own youngster. I let him have a bit of fun to day, sir, because it's his birthday.—Edinburgh Scotsman.

He Started Something.
 "Jack told me I was queen of his heart."

"Well?"
 "I asked him where the crown jewels were."—Boston Transcript.

How It's Done.
 The publisher—How are you going to introduce accurate local color in

your new story of life in Tibet? You've never been there.

The Eminent Author—Neither has any of my public.—Judge.

Why?
 Small Brother—Mr. Jaggs, are you a baseball player?

Caller—No, Willie.
 Small Brother—Then why did St. Sil tell Ma you were such a good catch?—Baltimore American.

She Knew the Symptoms.
 "Madam" announced the new maid, "your husband is lying unconscious in the reception hall, with a large box beside him, and crushing a paper in his hand."

"Ah," cried her mistress in ecstasy, "my new hat has come!"—Houston Post.

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