

THE EVENING TIMES AND STAR, ST. JOHN, N. B., SATURDAY, APRIL 19, 1919

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THE LEGISLATIVE SESSION.

The legislative session just closed at Fredericton will be chiefly memorable for the vote which asked four members of the house to resign their seats; and for the amendments submitted by the opposition, which, while it did not ask for the resignation of the four members, was nevertheless a practical declaration of want of confidence in their leadership. It is not surprising in view of these developments that the opposition convention has been postponed a second time, since it is recognized that to go to the country with the old leaders would be to invite the political annihilation of the opposition party.

The session was also notable for progressive legislation along several important lines. The government had a good program, and if there had been fewer long speeches in the earlier weeks there would have been more time to devote to a fuller consideration of every measure submitted. As a result of unnecessary waste of time it became necessary to rush legislation at the close.

The government came well through the session. Its record was good and its policy progressive. The weakness of the opposition was apparent from the first. Premier Foster is a reliable leader, who commands the respect and confidence of his followers, and every minister showed not only a clear working knowledge of his department, but a keen desire to make the department serve the public interest more and more effectively. Whatever errors there may have been were such as might occur in any business, and the opposition could find no evidence whatever of such grafting operations as marked the old regime. The Foster government has made good.

USE OF SCHOOL-HOUSES.

One evening last week a public meeting in Toronto to discuss the Ontario housing scheme was held in a public school building. The people of Toronto do not find that a legitimate use of the assembly halls of school-houses injuriously affects the work of the schools. On the very same evening, in another Toronto school building the children and adult girls of one of the city playground groups, who had been using a school assembly hall all winter for girls' gymnasium work, gave an entertainment to a packed house of parents, who were delighted with the folk-dances, drills, marches, and dumbbell and wand and club exercises. Possibly there were other meetings in other school buildings the same evening.

The attention of the members of the St. John school board is respectfully directed to the example of Toronto. A member of the board said at its last meeting that St. John had in the neighborhood of two-thirds of a million dollars invested in its schools. For what purpose? Merely to use the buildings six hours per day, five days per week, during nine and a half months in the year? Let us get away from the notion that education only means the teaching of children a few hours each day. There are great numbers of grown folk who need leadership and inspiration for self-improvement, improvement of the neighborhood, better care of the children, and community welfare work in general. Use the school-houses.

A YEAR'S DELAY.

The legislature on Thursday night decided that it would not mark the close of the session by adding a million dollars to the debt of St. John for the loan of the New Brunswick Power Company. True, it did not pass the legislation asked for by the city, but it handed the question of the rate base over to a tribunal which will have time to get at all the facts before the next session of the legislature, and which will not be swayed by corporation influence in making its decision. The city has not won its case, but the case is not lost. The city would have preferred a settlement by the adoption of the bill fixing the rate base at \$1,850,000, but it has been saved from having that base fixed at \$2,500,000. To that extent there is cause for satisfaction. There appears to be some difference of opinion as to whether the supreme court is given such instructions under the phraseology of the bill that was adopted as the city would like it to have, but no doubt these will be broadly interpreted. In any case the whole matter will go back to the legislature and the city must be prepared to meet the company there once more.

It must be said for the members of the legislature that they displayed a keener interest in a fair disposition of the whole case than was displayed by many leading citizens. There is nothing more discouraging to those who seek the welfare of the city than the indifference of a great number of persons who would naturally be expected to show a lively interest and give influential support. They would profit if light and power and other public services were cheap in St. John, and yet they were not active in opposing the designs of the New Brunswick Power Company. That is not as it should be.

The city of St. John has done the whole province a valuable service in fighting the power company. The very best way to convince outside investors

that this is good territory is to make it known that stock-watering is not a safe or profitable enterprise. It now remains to get before the supreme court every available item of information regarding the amount of capital really invested, and proper to be considered in fixing a rate base. That is the crux of the whole controversy, and if the legislature had fixed the base at \$2,500,000 any minor concessions to the city would have been no compensation. The company have a right to a fair return on an actual investment. The city is entitled to a satisfactory service without having to pay dividends on watered stock.

MOTHERS' ALLOWANCES

A bill was introduced in the Nova Scotia legislature last week which provides for a commission to investigate the hours of employment of women engaged in industrial occupation and other matters pertaining to such employment, and likewise mothers' pensions or allowances. The bill was read a second time. The Chronicle report says:—

"Explaining it, Mr. MacGregor laid most emphasis upon the pension phase. It had been proven notably successful in the province of Manitoba, and nearly half a million dollars had been spent there last year in allowances, although pensions were only granted to families whose assets were below five hundred dollars. There was not as yet sufficient information and knowledge of conditions in Nova Scotia to warrant placing a burden upon the municipalities, but it was highly desirable to have a commission look into such a thoroughly important question."

The question of mothers' allowances is attracting more and more attention everywhere. The Children's Aid Society of St. John frequently has its attention drawn to mothers who have children and no means of supporting them except by their own work; and the very fact that they have the children and no one to care for them, makes it extremely difficult to go out to work. During the last year a number of families in this city have been separated and the children scattered because the mother could not support them. If such a mother received an allowance from the state she could care for her children, and so do the state a real service. Let us get it into our minds that the mother who cares for and educates her children is in reality doing the state a great service. When we do we will all be in favor of mothers' allowance in all deserving cases. The fact that some children would be better if separated from shiftless or feeble-minded mothers does not lessen the force of the argument. The state owes a duty to the children, and in the vast majority of cases it would pay to help the otherwise helpless mother to keep her little ones with her.

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POWER COMPANY DECISION OFF UNTIL NEXT SESSION; COURT TO FIX RATE BASE

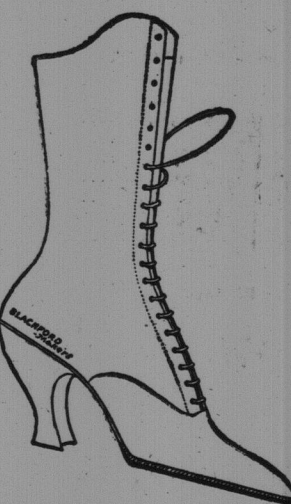
Fredericton, April 18.—The New Brunswick Power Company bill was taken up in the legislature at 5 o'clock on Thursday afternoon in committee of the whole. The St. John members were heard in opposition to the *Currier* rate base but there was little prospect that they could secure a change. About 9 o'clock in the evening Hon. Mr. Robinson suggested postponing the matter until the next session to give the members opportunity to study the matter more carefully. Premier Foster suggested that the supreme court of the province might rule on the disputed points. Mayor Hayes, who was present, assented to postponement after consultation with citizens by phone. At 11.45 a special committee was appointed to confer and report on the course of action to be adopted. This committee reported at 1 o'clock in the morning, submitting a new bill referring the rate base to the supreme court. The *Currier* bill was withdrawn and the new one substituted. Other business was completed and the lieutenant-governor appeared at 2 o'clock, assented to bills passed during the session and prorogued the house.

One point and one point only is left to the decision of the supreme court of the province in respect to the matter of the New Brunswick Power Company. The bill substituted for the *Currier* bill and amendments and passed in the last hours of the legislative session simply empowers and requires the court to determine whether the sum of \$2,500,000 presented by the commission as a

Like the little boy in the story, Freda, unless she was asleep, was always just going into mischief or just coming out. It was "Don't touch that!" from morning till night. In fact, the little girl had been consistently naughty for a week, and her mother was in despair. "Really, child," she said at last, "I should think you would get tired hearing me talk to you so much."

In most decided tones the child returned: "Well, mother, I do."

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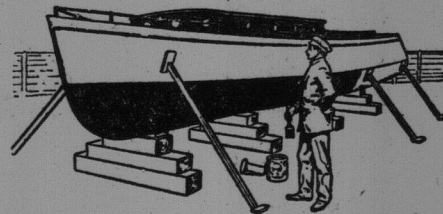
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rate base for the company is correct, or, if not, to determine what the figure should be.

This rate base is the foundation of the scheme recommended by the *Currier* commission for the future operation of the company. The whole financial structure, the amount of interest and dividends to be paid and, consequently, the rates which must be fixed in order to meet these charges rests upon this figure. The city's chief contention has been that this figure was not correct—that it was almost \$1,000,000 in excess of the proper figure. In preparing the bill which refers the matter to the supreme court, the sub-committee of the legislature apparently felt that, with a rate base which would not be open to question, the legislature would be prepared to deal with the other features of the matter when it comes before them next year.

In referring the problem to the appeals division of the supreme court, which consists of Chief Justice Sir Douglas Hazen, Mr. Justice White and Mr. Justice Grimmer, the legislature conferred upon the court ample powers to make their review and original investigations as thorough as may be required in order to enable them to judge between the recommendations of the commission and the contentions of the city.

C. P. R. AIR SERVICE

Ottawa, April 18.—Notice is given in the *Canada Gazette* that the Canadian Pacific Railway Company will apply to parliament for an act authorizing it to establish, maintain and operate services by aircraft between such points within or without Canada as may be found desirable. This is the first application made in Canada for authority to make use of the air for commercial transportation of any kind.

"Does Clara expect many wedding presents?"
"Oh, yes; but she has no idea she will receive as many as she expects."

Shall Uncle Sam Give His "Little Brown Brothers" Their Independence?

Philippine independence is "almost in sight," President Wilson by letter assures the delegation of forty Filipinos who have come to the United States to persuade the American people that the time has arrived for the birth of a Philippine Republic. And Secretary Baker, who read the President's letter to the delegation, added "I trust that the day is very close at hand."

While many newspapers predict that the Filipinos' request will be granted, there are others who are not in favor of the idea. The Boston Transcript, for instance, characterizes the attitude of the administration as "inviting rebellion in the Philippines," while the New York Tribune declares that "this is no time for experiment."

The leading article in this week's LITERARY DIGEST—April 19th—is the illuminating presentation of public opinion upon this problem. You will also find many other interesting articles in this number, among which are:

The Failure of Government Operation in the U.S.

Is Mr. Burleson Wrecking the Mail Service, Crippling the Telephone and Telegraph, Destroying the Liberties of the Press, and Killing the Movement for Government Ownership?

Why Steel Stagnates
Why Chicago Re-elected Thompson
Proposed Alliance of France and Italy
Lest France Forget
How the Animal Kingdom Chews
Turning Weeds Into Wool
The Beginning of Our Art Alliance With France
Calling Home the Church of Wesley
A Methodist Tribute to the Jew
Lithuanians in the United States
Personal Glimpses of Men and Events

Striking Illustrations, Including the Best of the Humorous Cartoons

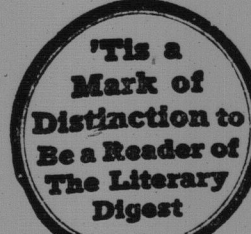
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Germany Fixes Blame for Defeat
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To Lend Uncle Sam's Tools
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Clemenceau's Eloquence
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The Digest a Foe to the Special Pleader

The bursting of the war-cloud upon the world five years ago let loose in all countries a flood of propaganda, which found one of its main outlets in the public press. This great tide of partisan and prejudiced origin is still flowing through many channels into our newspapers and magazines. Not all of it is directly harmful but it is essentially misleading, because bias is its original source and fount of being.

THE LITERARY DIGEST, while it gives you from week to week all the salient news of the press, domestic and foreign, helps you to keep your viewpoint sane and sound by presenting opposite extremes of opinion, with bias or partiality toward none. You read it in absolute security from the danger of a one-sided appeal. Try a change today by studying both sides in THE DIGEST.

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The Literary Digest

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