

THE OBSERVER

No. 44.

HARTLAND, N. B., April, 18, 1912.

Vol. 3.

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ARTHUR S. ESTABROOKS

ROCKLAND.

Does The News Lie Deliberately?

Shameless Misrepresentation of Facts in Victoria County Paper.

(Editorial.)

The Conservative newspapers of the province are floundering madly in their wild haste to defend and excuse both the provincial and Federal administrations. The two bodies call for much journalistic ingenuity to make plain and reasonable to an intelligent public the predicament that both governments—continually jumping out of the frying-pan into the fire—find themselves into.

Our esteemed contemporary, the Victoria County News, in its latest issue distorts facts outrageously—more glaringly, perhaps, because that it is heard from so seldom for a paper that has its being solely for the purpose of bolstering up the governments' cause in Victoria county.

The News makes in three successive paragraphs three deliberate misrepresentations of fact that approximate as many deliberate falsehoods. Here is the first of the paragraphs. Read it: "At Ottawa recently Hon. Mr. Pugsley had a resolution passed that if the road be not completed by 1915 the Dominion Government may cancel the contract, calling for I.C.R. operation after giving 12 months notice."

The readers of the Victoria county paper will know better than that such was the case. If its editor does not know better perhaps he will permit us to tell him. Here is the fact: In the document wherein the Borden government agrees that the I.C.R. shall operate the Valley railway, in section 4, page 7, it is stipulated "that if the road and bridges are not wholly completed on or before November 1st, 1915, the Dominion may cancel any lease which has been entered into, and do that without notice."

This was the Hazen-Borden agreement. Mr. Pugsley saw the grave danger to New Brunswick in this loop-holed legislation and moved an amendment that the Dominion must give a full year's notice before breaking its agreement. The amendment carried.

This is the extent of Dr. Pugsley's "obstructive tactics." Rather a safe precaution, don't you think?

We assume that the editor of the News has been entirely in ignorance of the facts in this matter. But we are positive that now the matter is explained to him he will NOT correct his error.

Passing on to the second paragraph—here it is:

"At Ottawa Pius Michaud introduced a resolution that \$200,000 of the \$1,000,000 appropriated for bridges must be used for the bridge across the St. John river at Andover—a puerile step equivalent to asking that each \$25,000 guaranteed per mile must be spent on stipulated mile sections regardless of bridges, grades, fills or cuts."

Mr. Michaud was moved to introduce this resolution through the fact that he knew, as well as Flemming and Hazen know, that there is to be no new bridge at Andover and no new railway—not if Flemming and Hazen can help it! "A puerile step" indeed! Would the people of Andover not have their interests safeguarded? Do they consider their member's amendments a "puerile step"? Well might they ask why Mr. Hazen arose in wrath and denounced the move. Why did he oppose it? Is the Andover bridge to be built? What is the million dollar appropriation for? Plainly it is not for Victoria county.

One would read the third paragraph referred to several times before "sensing it." The words are put together thus:

"At Fredericton J. F. Tweeddale introduced an amendment against the third reading of the bill—the reading which meant its passage and becoming law—asking that the 220 miles of road to Grand Falls be built within a year. Had the amendment passed the Valley Railway bill would have been dead."

Oh, hum! "Had it passed" the C.P.R. deal would have been knocked on the head. No one but Flemming and Hazen would have wept over that.

But to discuss the beginning of the paragraph there can be no such thing as an amendment against a third reading. No parliament in the world ever heard of the like. The truth of the matter is that at the third reading of the bill Mr. Tweeddale introduced an amendment to authorize the construction of the whole road to commence simultaneously. Every government member voted against the amendment and it was lost. That is the truth of the matter. What the News states is not true.

We have gone into this matter at considerable length for the reason that the Observer is read by many who read also the News, although the majority of that paper's readers possess sufficient intelligence to take its political measure at a glance.

Very properly might the people of Victoria ask that if the Valley railway is to be completed through their county in three years that construction should be commenced without delay. The Dominion Government is under no obligation to operate the road if it is not completed by November, 1915. They may give the year's notice just as soon as it is plain that the road will not be finished at the stated time.

That is plain to Mr. Flemming now.

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