

## The Return of the Ghost of Sam Slick

"I allot," said Sam Slick, "that the Bluenoses are the most gullible folks on the face of the airth — regular soft horns, that's a fact. Politics and sich stuff set 'em a-gapin', like children in a chimbley corner listenin' to tales of ghosts, Salem witches and Nova Scotia snowstorms; and while they stand starin' and yawpin' all eyes and mouth, they get their pockets picked of every cent that's in 'em."

I WAS ENJOYING re-reading about the most famous Yankee in literature, Sam Slick, the clock salesman who in the 1800s spread the humor and philosophy of Nova Scotian Judge Thomas Chandler Haliburton throughout the world. Mark Twain's works were influenced by the works of Haliburton, and so in turn were Stephen Leacock's.

I often go to sleep while reading in bed. But I noted my bedside table lamp was still lit, although somehow it seemed dimmer. I was drowsy. A chill gust of wind from the open window suddenly blew the curtains furiously, rousing me. And I felt a presence nearby.

"I guess," I definitely heard an ancient Connecticut voice proclaim, "you've been a-readin' about me."

On the overstuffed chair in the far corner of the bedroom, hidden in deep shade, I could barely make out the form of a man sitting where I had loosely thrown my clothing when I retired. Although I could barely discern his features, he appeared to be a tall, thin man with hollow cheeks and bright twinkling black eyes.

### Never change

"I always cum along this circuit in election times," continued the strange nocturnal visitor, "for I like to hear the candidates a-promising their heads off. They never change. And the Bluenoses are as gullible as ever."

"This has been a promising year for me and the Bluenoses, too. Why, do you know they've had three elections in the provinces with the ins a-holdin' on and the outs a-hollerin' that they can side up to Uncle Pierre's Ottawa treasure chest better'n the ins."

Drowsily and disbelieving, I managed to mutter: "You just couldn't be Mr. Sam Slick of Slickville, Connecticut?"

"The same." "An as fir as I can see, it's about the same as ever aroun' here. The political language ain't changed much. And that's a fact."

### 'Same Sam'

"What do you mean, Sam? This is the twentieth century," I exclaimed in protest sitting upright in bed, "and you, you are . . . what are you?"

"I'm the same Sam I always wuz. An' I've been up in Pictou County a-listenin' to the candidates. I heard one candidate say:

"This country is goin' to the dogs hand over hand. You got no factories that run unless the government pours your money into 'em. Look at your treasury; you h'a'nt got a cent in it. And your fish, the Yankees (an' the Rooshians and Portageese) ketch 'em all. There's nothin' behind you but sufferin', around you but poverty, afore you but slavery and death.

"What's the cause of this un-



GUARDIAN-PATRIOT, CHARLOTTETOWN HATFIELD, DEUTSCH, CAMPBELL & REGAN

The issue of Maritime Union is a very old idea, dating to before Confederation in 1867. The Maritime Union Study has recommended full political union within 10 years. If progress towards that goal after 5 years makes union seem unrealistic in the 5 years following, then the programme should be reconsidered.

"Full political union would provide the most effective machinery for the fullest possible attainment of the common objectives of the region", says the Maritime Union Study. The economies of the Maritime provinces are individually too small for the effective planning and execution of development programmes. Maritimers are over-governed and thus full political union would centralize operations, reduce the duplication of routine services, and coordinate planning to streamline and lower the cost of health, education, and welfare. Full political union would also end inter-provincial rivalry against themselves and central Canada for new industry, and would make possible economic planning for the whole region. Regional planning that is not coordinated by union would add to the already over-burdened superstructure of government.

One of the problems which will be encountered is Regionalism. Proposing political union of the three provinces is believing that the people have similarities that outweigh differences. In a political union New Brunswick's French-speaking residents will want assurances that their linguistic rights will be protected within the larger political union. Nova Scotians who are relatively better off than their neighbours will think twice about union in which the assets and debts of the three provinces are being pooled.

Today's age demands co-operativeness. The sum of the Maritimes united will be more than the individual parts. The people must work together and individual regions must become part of the whole. However, if history repeats itself, then the future will be like the past. The geographic isolation is an asset that would be enhanced by union. The Maritimes present a challenge to themselves as well as the rest of Canada. We must make an effort to help ourselves, but if we don't, then we can't expect others to help us for much longer. If we don't realize the benefits of union then we must at least co-operate.

BY Rick Fisher

heer'd of, awful state of things; aye, what's the cause? Why big Ontario business and banks and

lawyers and great folks have swallowed all the money. They've got you down and they've kep' you down to all eternity — you and you're posteriors a'ter you."

"And what's the remedy, Sam?" I smiled.

"We-ll" came back the Yankee, "this Pictou County candidate allowed as how he had all the answers and if they only elected him to the legislatur', he'd put the big wigs through their facin's and get enough Ottawa money to make every Mac in the county rich

again."

"Oh, come now, Sam, you must be joshing," I remonstrated. "The Bluenoses do need some pump priming to get industries started up. All the factories shouldn't be in Ontario, you know. I think they've made a helluva lot of progress around here recently."

"But," interjected Sam, "there ain't enough greenbacks between here an' eternity to fill the void. Why over in Newfy I hear Joey's hangin' out his stockin' for a \$100 billion, and that's a hole in that sock big enough to sail the Bonaventure thru!"

"What's your solution, Sam?" I yawned.

"The Bluenoses always miss the boat," replied Sam. "They made fortunes buildin' wooden ships afore they wuz bamboozled into Confederation by that rummy Sir Jawn. But when the world went to iron, the Bluenoses kep' on a-buildin' wooden ships an' went broke. They mined coal way pas' the need for it.

"They were late on everything — even depressions. Why, three years a'ter we had a depression in our enlightened country, the Bluenoses jez got aroun' to havin' one here."

"And so, — what's your point?" I added wearily, for he was getting to be a bore.

"The Bluenoses have got the grandest opportunity on the face of the airth right now if they d only get off their backsides ahead of the times and not cum a-trailin' in a'ter the party's over a-gapin' and a-lookin' for a handout!"

"What do you mean?" I gasped.

"We-ll," continued Sam, "the Bluenoses don't need factories that'll pollute their streams and foul their air. They hav'nt larned the lesson that they've larned in Connecticut an' all up an' down our own glorious country.

"We've chopped down all our trees, we've polluted all our streams and the cars and trucks has not left a square inch where man, woman nor child can breath fittently. Little by little these Yankee folk are gettin' smart an' they look down east here and wish they had a little farm by clear rivers and good crisp salt water to bathe in.

### Bluenose rich

"So all the Bluenoses have to do is put up their prices and sell a little piece of land here an' a little piece there, makin' more and more handsome profit as prices rise and rise and soon the Bluenoses will be rich and they'll have all those smart Yankee traders a-pushin' an' a-shovin' to get in."

"That's pretty good Sam. I'll pass the word along. But tell me, you say you're so all fired smart, and you're always running down the Bluenoses, so how come you never made any money out of your ideas?"

"I understand that Judge Haliburton who wrote about you in his books, retired with a sizable fortune. He was a pretty smart Bluenose, wasn't he?"

### 'Forced out'

"Well - - now," stammered Sam, "I guess the reason I never did so well in Nova Scotia a'ter the first few years — and mind they wuz good years what with soft sawder and human natur' and all. But a clock company from Ontario stole all my business and forced me out."

"Now, Sam, Sam. You're as bad as your worst examples of stiff-necked Bluenoses. Don't blame everything on Ontario. Why there's a Bluenose I know who makes a pretty good thing out of Ontario."

"What do you mean?" said Sam, his mouth wide open and he appeared to be getting thinner and thinner, as he began to disappear.

"I mean, that your visit here tonight has given me an idea. I know a gullible editor on a Toronto advertising magazine that just might give me a couple of bucks for it!"