

The Evening Times and Star

ST. JOHN, N. B., FEBRUARY 18, 1919

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SIR WILFRID LAURIER

Across Canada today flags are at half-mast, in tribute to the memory of a great Canadian. Not since the death of Sir John A. Macdonald has the passing of a public man so moved the people of the country. Like Sir John, Sir Wilfrid Laurier was active to the last, and in his case the end came even more quickly. What the loss of the great Conservative chief meant to his party, the loss of the Liberal chieftain means now to the party he led so ably for so many years. There is of course the difference that when Sir John Macdonald passed away his party was in power, and it became necessary to choose a new prime minister, while the Liberal party is not at the moment burdened with the cares of office; but the general state of parties in Canada at the present time had made Sir Wilfrid a commanding figure in relation to any new alignment after peace had been declared and public attention was again fully directed to affairs at home. For him, however, the book is closed. Now is the country at this moment concerned about his successor. It pauses to reflect upon a great career now ended, and upon the effect and influence of that career upon the life of Canada. Sir Wilfrid Laurier loved Canada and to serve his country was his aim and his delight. No man longed more ardently or labored more assiduously for racial harmony. Canada was not to him a country of jarring provinces, or creeds, or races, but a British Dominion with a common bond of unity, and the greatest opportunity of any country in the world to develop a powerful, prosperous and united nation. To that end he labored. There were times when he was misunderstood and maligned in his own province of Quebec, and times when in other provinces there were those who could not see the real purpose of the man; but through evil as through good report he persevered, trusting to the future to justify his course. Today all men testify to the purity of his motives, the quality of his courage, and the singular charm of that rare personality which ever bowed with cheerfulness to the expressed will of the people. Sir Wilfrid was inspired and sustained by the vision of a true statesman. His worth was recognized at the centre of the Empire, and at Imperial conferences his utterances commanded universal respect. During the long period in which he filled the office of prime minister of Canada the country prospered, enjoyed a great development, and drew closer to the mother country. Of the French race, he commanded the allegiance and enjoyed in a rare degree the confidence and love of Canadians of English descent. A true democrat, he had regard for the welfare of all the people, sharing their feelings and championing their cause. His own province of Quebec will mourn his passing as that of its greatest son, and the story of his life will rank high among those of the lives of the makers of Canada.

YESTERDAY'S VISITORS.

St. John saw but little of the western editors because they were late in arriving and had to leave last night for Halifax, but those citizens who met them, or heard some of them speak at the banquet were much impressed by their intelligent grasp of affairs. It was good to hear Col. Maughan say he did not believe there was another port in the world doing what St. John is doing for the comfort of returning soldiers, and to hear all the visitors speak in the highest terms of the manner in which the returning men are handled at this port. At last night's banquet Mayor Hayes, Premier Foster, Senator Thorne and Hon. Mr. Veniot set before the visitors in a clear and comprehensive way the matters of national importance, in relation to this city and province, concerning which it is desirable that the people of other provinces should be well informed. It was an excellent opportunity and the visitors showed a keen interest in the various speeches. Their stay was all too short, and we can but echo Hon. Mr. Veniot's hope that they will come again, in summer, and see New Brunswick at its best. They return to their homes with a much clearer knowledge of the resources and advantages of this province, and of the national outlook of its people.

The local military authorities are to be commended for their action in making the recently vacated hospital in St. James street available for sick women and children, dependents of soldiers, arriving by steamer from England. Such provision was needed and will be highly appreciated. With V. A. D. nurses in charge the institution will ensure care and comfort for the patients. It is not forgotten that during the influenza epidemic the military authorities did equally valuable and prompt service in helping to put the Parks Hospital in commission for immediate use.

The erection of a large municipal building on the site of the dismantled court house would provide a lot of work and the structure would be a credit to the city. Sooner or later such a building must be provided.

FIRST, A HOUSING CODE.

Here are some facts brought out by a housing survey recently conducted by Winnipeg officials:— "Vacant houses numbering 1480 were classified as follows: Fit for immediate occupation, 215; in need of slight repairs, 684; requiring extensive repairs, 866; unfit for habitation, 215. Of these vacant dwellings, 1905 were of frame construction, 147 of brick, twenty-one brick veneer, and seven constructed of concrete. The official report states: 'There is little doubt that a large number of these houses are vacant because they are so poorly built as to make it impossible for any person to occupy them in the winter. Many were not occupied after the first winter following construction.' Canadian Finance points out that these figures show the need of a proper housing code. Faulty construction, it truly says, is false economy and adequate municipal supervision of construction is an urgent necessity. These remarks apply to the city of St. John, where we have no proper housing code. Canadian Finance makes some further observations that are of much present interest. It says:— "There are certain fundamental requirements essential to a proper solution of the housing problem which require prompt consideration. Our municipal authorities would do well to consider these requirements and provide adequate remedies for them before initiating an extensive municipal housing programme. The authorities are well within their rights when they confine themselves to the regulation and supervision of the erection of houses and the performance of inspection of houses already constructed. There is much to be done in this direction before our governing bodies have occasion to embark upon the actual work of construction. It has been well said that in our large centres the tendency is to provide facilities to 'warehouse' our citizens rather than to house them. We need better houses, not cheaper ones. To cope with the extreme climate of this country, proper construction is all-important. The actual waste in fuel alone, due to improper construction, is beyond accurate computation, yet it exceeds many times the difference between the cost of proper construction and proper construction. The spread of the influenza epidemic in our large centres and the high rate of mortality suffered, were undoubtedly due in some measure to the lack of proper sanitation and inability to comply with ordinary rules of health, the inevitable result of poorly built houses. Taxation which discriminates against the house owner also retards the solution of the problem and a state of society which permits the retention of urban real estate by speculators must also be rectified before progress towards betterment of conditions can be expected."

LABOR AND PROHIBITION.

Quite frequently we are told that mechanics and working men are opposed to prohibition. It is true of some of them, and especially true of those who are of foreign birth. Occasionally also an Englishman rises to assert that the law is un-British. But there is another side to the question or there would be no prohibition. It was presented from the mechanics' standpoint in Toronto last week when a lodge of the Mechanics' Union adopted this resolution in protest against the action of some labor officials in sending a deputation to Ottawa, asking for stronger beer. "Our attitude in this matter is, that there are more serious questions confronting organized labor today than the return of the drink traffic. The workers today do not want chloroform, they want employment, which represents their sole means of existence. The argument that the re-opening of the breweries will provide employment is economically unsound, and reflects the intellectual attainments of the pseudo-economists who support this contention. Therefore we would urge upon the more intelligent members of the labor movement, to oppose the action of some of our officials who are actively engaged in trying to restore a trade which has done more to disenchant the intelligence and weaken the physique of the workers, than any other weapon the capitalists have in their possession."

This deliverance may not please Prof. Leacock and a few other persons, but it has its merits as a fairly good presentation of the case.

The German foreign secretary talks like a man who wants another licking. He says he will resist the demand to demobilize the military forces of Germany, and oppose any war indemnity or cessation of territory. If the Allied powers stand for talk of this kind there will soon be another war.

The return of President Wilson to Washington will lend a new interest to discussions at the American capital. The president's message to the people will be awaited with very keen interest.

ONE GOES TO TRIAL, THREE ACQUITTED

Ottawa, Feb. 17.—Omer Gravelle, charged with the murder of Etienne Veilleux, by shooting in the Aylmer road on January 24, was committed to trial in the Hall police court yesterday. Aurelian Patry, Emile Gaudreau and Arthur Ferland, similarly charged, were acquitted.

TWO LECTURES THAT WERE MUCH ENJOYED

Eldon Merritt and Miss Morrison of Gendola Point

Former Tells of His Work Among the Esquimaux and Miss Morrison of China, Where she Has Been Actively Engaged

The Times, on Monday, referred to a supper and lectures given at Gendola Point. The lectures were given by Mr. Jean Morrison, a medical missionary to China, and Eldon Merritt, a missionary to the Esquimaux. Both belong to Gendola Point. Rev. Canon Daniel, in an introduction, briefly outlined the work of both missionaries, telling how exceedingly important it was, and also how singular that these missionaries, although being from the same place, had chosen fields so diametrically opposite from each other. Mr. Merritt, who was the first lecturer, described his trip from Edmonton to the shores of the Arctic Sea, with two companions and a native, who acted as interpreter and guide, started in a launch, but was able to get within only 120 miles of their objective, when the launch was burned to the water's edge, and he and his companions were stranded on a small island, with only a few provisions to last them only a short time. Although left stranded they did not become discouraged, it did not turn their faces toward the south, only made them more determined to reach their goal. They then had to stay on the shore where their launch burned, till the winter came, when they set out once more on their perilous journey, but using this time a dog team as their mode of conveyance, and their sled was large enough to carry only the provisions and the food for the dogs; they had to have food for the dogs, as it was more important that they should be fed than themselves, so it meant that nearly all the rest of their journey had to be accomplished on foot. Each day they would start as early as they could see to travel, but the day depended on what time of year it was, as the land of the "Midnight Sun" was dark for nearly six months of the year. If conditions showed that it was favorable, the average rate of speed would be about four miles an hour, and during the day they would have to stop for lunch and to feed the dogs. Their lunch consisted of hard biscuits and, if possible, some cold tea. The dogs were fed with seal meat, or any other meat they were able to get. When night came they would usually stop where they could get a supper and get warm at the same time. Generally food was scarce, and the fire could not be kept on very long, and after having travelled all day their hands and feet would be numb. On finding a suitable place they would pitch their tent, put up their camp stove, tie the dogs and feed them; then

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They would cook their own supper, which generally consisted of deer meat, hard biscuits and tea, and as soon as supper was over they got into their sleeping bags and went to sleep, only to awaken the next morning and start a similar day's work. Having travelled for five days steadily from the scene of their wreck, and more than a year from the time they had left Edmonton, they reached a settlement of natives. Mr. Merritt described the manner in which the natives lived, and their food and the way that they got it. He then told how important the work was, but order to carry it on they must have funds to buy provisions, and dogs, as they were most essential to the work. Each dog cost on an average \$88, and the life of the dogs in the Arctic regions was very short. In their journey they started with fourteen dogs and arrived with only three. The large audience, which was being held deeply interested, showed their appreciation of the lecture and lecturer by applauding heartily.

Miss Morrison.

Miss Morrison gave some of the history of China, its vast area, and its large population, and described some of the customs of the people, and also the different religions that exist in the country. Of five hundred millions of people, she said, only two million had yet been converted to the Christian religion. She compared the population of China with that of other countries, saying that if the people of Italy, France, Spain, Belgium, Japan, The British Isles, Mexico, Austria Hungary and Germany, should be killed, the Chinese could settle these countries and still have a population equal to that of the United States. She then took the audience with her from San Francisco to China, by means of lantern slides that she had taken on her trip and during her stay in China. Having taken the audience to San Francisco to Honolulu, they stopped there a day and a night, and during that time she took pictures, so she was able to show the Chinese people, the houses of palm trees and other beautiful scenery that adorned the island. After ten days of travelling from Honolulu they arrived in Japan. The scenery, she said, was almost beyond description, and only those who had seen it could appreciate its splendor. The Chinese people, she said, were a mixture of the people of China, and the people of the Orient. From Shanghai they next sailed up the river Yang Tze to the centre of China where Miss Morrison was stationed.

Miss Morrison told what girl in words Yang Tze means son, and Tse means sea, the name of the river meaning the son of the sea. It is very wide and long, and is one of the largest rivers in the world. The modes of dress used by the Chinese were illustrated, and also the strange customs of the people of the Chinese women. Although this custom was gradually dying out, she said, it still was quite common to see some of the older women with bound feet. The feet were bound when they were about four years old and from that time they were never free from pain. As their bodies grew heavier the weight on the small feet caused ulcers and the pain was incessant. The interesting features of the strange country were illustrated and enjoyed by all.

Both Miss Morrison and Mr. Merritt dressed and brought with them some of the people among whom they had been working. Both lecturers expect to return to their respective fields in the near future to carry on the good work which they have started.

SMOKE MACDONALD'S INDEX

Dollar Day

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Canada at Mons' At The Imperial

Fine War Picture of Historic Event—Prince of Wales in it—"In Bondage" and Mutt and Jeff

Imperial Theatre scored heavily again yesterday in presenting the remarkable British film "Canada at Mons"—the gladsome entry of our own boys and generals, along with that wonderful little chap, the Prince of Wales, into the beleaguered city of Mons, the last grand smash and dash of the Maple Leaf fellows. In addition, the Universal Mutt and Jeff stage-life story, "In Bondage" was a sumptuous and yet intensely human, indeed a salutary lesson to many a Canadian girl who would be led by the glamour of the stage if she were allowed.

"Canada at Mons" photographed on the Western front, presents in strikingly dramatic form, the events immediately preceding and following the brilliant capture of that city by the Canadian Corps. Scenes are shown of the repairing of the roads and railways by Canadian Engineers—the advance of the cavalry—and an excellent close-up of the Canadian guns covering the advance of our infantry. Excellent pictures of the tank service in the old French cathedral, attended by the Prince of Wales, General Currie and the Canadian staff officers. The photography is excellent, every scene being exceptionally clear and distinct. "Canada at Mons," from the beginning to the end, is intense in its realism, and the continuity of each scene is so logical that it cannot fail to hold the interest of every member of the audience.

The remainder of the Imperial's programme consisted of a very fine social uplift story dealing with stock life and entitled "In Bondage". Mae Murray, the famous metropolitan star and danseuse essayed the leading role, that of a dancing girl in a musical spectacle. How though a married one at that. How this faithful little wife evaded the many pitfalls of the stage and remained helpful and constant to her sick husband seeking health in far-off Arizona pointed a lesson to many a young spouse and rounded out a very beautiful and exemplary photoplay.

The Mutt and Jeff animated cartoon was very funny indeed. It told of the adventures of these famous characters as lion tainers. The music was excellent and altogether it was a good show. Tomorrow the Metro corporation presents the comedy star Olive Tell in a rich production entitled "Secret Strains." The Burton Holmes traveltogue will deal with quaint Quebec.

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SATISFIED WITH METAGAMA

A typewritten letter of appreciation, signed by over 300 passengers of every rank on board for the excellent service and food furnished on the passage across the ocean was given to the officials of the C. P. O. S. yesterday upon the arrival of the Metagama.

Colin Mackay, a former local newspaper man, returned to the city yesterday on the Metagama. He was an officer on the steamer St. George, which operated in the English channel during the war. The St. George, it will be remembered, formerly ran on the Digby-St. John route.

Among the passengers on the Metagama yesterday was Honorary Colonel C. D. Chown, D. D., of Toronto, general superintendent of the Methodist Churches of Canada.

A REASON

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