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# The News.

ST. JOHN, N. B., FEBRUARY 11, 1910

## MR. BORDEN AND THE NAVY

Length of the criticism directed at Mr. Borden for his right-about-face in the naval question is hardly fair. It is quite true that a few months ago the Conservative leader stood for a Chamberlain bulk navy, and that within the next week or so he has hedged on that policy and committed himself to the policy of direct cash contributions to the British Admiralty. But, except for the speed and extent of this change of base there is nothing unusual about it, as Canadian politics go. Expediency and compromise rule our party system, and the Liberals themselves are not entirely free from the taint of opportunism. And it must be remembered in Mr. Borden's case that but for this compromise he would be a leader without a party. He had to choose between wrecking his party for the sake of his principles, or wrecking his principles for the sake of his party. And from the point of view of the latter Mr. Borden has chosen the better part.

However it is undeniable that the suddenness of Mr. Borden's about-face has been somewhat sensational. It was only a few months ago when, returning from England, he said in his Halifax speech: "The House of Commons last session laid down a certain policy touching naval defence in which both political parties united. It may not have satisfied the majority of the Conservative party, but it seemed our bounden duty to place it possible above the limits of partisan strife a question so vital and far-reaching and one that would affect both political parties in Great Britain with respect to foreign relations. How the present Administration works out the policy to which I have alluded remains to be seen. One governing principle at least should govern—namely, that out of our own materials, by our own labor, and by the industry and skill of our own people any necessary provision for our naval defence should be made so far as may be reasonably possible."

The first and greatest objection which I have to a fixed money contribution is that it bears the aspect of hiring somebody else to do what we ourselves ought to do, as though a man, the father of a family, in lusty health and strength, should pay his neighbor something per month for looking after the wife and safety of his home instead of doing that duty himself. That seems to me, when you work it out, to be a basic objection to this form of contribution. If it goes still further than that. Suppose you contribute this year your sum, and next year your equal sum, and thereafter year after year, for ten, or twenty, or thirty, or thirty years you will have paid out an immense amount of money. You will have been protected in the meantime, but in Canada there will be no residue left, there will be no preparation of the soil, or beginning of the growth of the tree. Yet some think that other—no one can doubt that with resources and with a population constantly increasing—we must and will have to do this ourselves, and not for our own or our coast and home defence.

However, as we have said, Mr. Borden's reversal is by no means without precedent. It has occurred before, and has suffered occasionally radical changes of view, on the question of the South African campaign, for instance. But it must be remembered that when he has changed, it has been from a wrong policy to one nearer right. And we believe that Mr. Borden was nearer right six months ago than he is to-day. But he would apparently rather be leader than be right.

## THE COST OF LIVING

Dr. Harvey C. Wiley, Chief of the Bureau of Chemistry in the Department of Agriculture at Washington, has a remedy for the increased cost of living. Just go ahead as you have been, and do not concern yourself as to what you have been eating. If you want to, only cut the amount down a bit, and make up the deficit in your stomach with more exercise, canned meats and canned vegetables. Dr. Wiley has prepared a bill of fare for one day for a family of six. For breakfast there is cereal, 5 cents; corned beef, ham or chops, 10 cents; coffee, 10 cents; and bread and rolls, 10 cents. Lunch, soup, or chipped beef, 10 cents; potatoes, boiled or baked, 10 cents; bread and butter, 10 cents; tea, 5 cents. Dinner, vegetable soup and meat from soup browned, 15 cents; potatoes, 10 cents; coffee, 10 cents; bread and butter, 10 cents. Here are very good meals for a day for a family of six at a total cost of \$1.25, which cannot be considered extravagant, and the cost of which could be appreciably lessened if more nutritious bread were eaten.

But Dr. Wiley apparently fails to take into consideration the fact that if the majority of the people eat more expensive foods in favor of the cheaper, those provisions which are now cheap will promptly rise in price owing to the increased consumption. The boycott against meat on the border reduced the price of meat in some degree, but it caused a corresponding increase in the price of fish and eggs and similar substitutes for meat.

The real solution of the problem lies in a larger production of foodstuffs. We must utilize the land more fully, apply scientific principles to farming, and adapt ourselves as best we can to conditions while undergoing the slow process of making the soil yield more abundantly. This appears to be a commonsense application. Whenever the fruit market is glutted, fruit is cheap. When the grower has been in the market for some time, and the supply is naturally regulated largely by the supply. The farmer has exceeded the latter. If more is produced the cost of foodstuffs would probably decrease. This is a problem for governments as well as for the individual.

## TELEPHONES AND THE PUBLIC

The Board of Trade committee appointed to investigate local telephone conditions and to sit in judgment on the case of the public versus the New Brunswick Telephone Company submitted a report to the Board of Trade published elsewhere, in the nature of an argument against the company's reply to the first report. It seems unfortunate that a committee appointed for such a purpose should become involved in a controversy with one of the parties before the court. No particular good can be accomplished by such a discussion. It is evident that the Company is determined in its course and, we believe, is convinced of the justice of its case. It is also evident that the majority of telephone users are convinced that they are being treated arbitrarily and unjustly. In the circumstances the report seems to be far more official and authoritative, rather than for endless discussion of doubtful points. This dispute is a matter for expert enquiry and legislation based thereon, or for formal arbitration. The Board of Trade declared its conviction that the only satisfactory settlement of the difficulty lay either in the appointment of an authoritative and impartial body to mediate between provincial public utility corporations and the people, or the fashion of the Railway Commission, or a system of arbitration such as has been adopted by the federal government in its legislation against combines. Events since then have served to confirm the opinion of the Board of Trade, and no doubt that may have existed of the provincial government's duty to take immediate action in the matter. In the interests of the public and of the men whose money is invested in this important enterprise.

## THE GAME OF POLITICS

If there is some truth in the traditional criticism that Englishmen take their politics too seriously, they have at any rate a distinct and happy gift of getting a good deal of pleasure out of their most serious preoccupations, remarks the London Times. Self-government in municipal affairs and prejudicially affect the communal spirit so essential to efficient administration. Instead of working in public spirit, it has had quite a contrary influence. It has greatly stimulated interest in civic activities and its success in those communities that have adopted it. The commission form of government has created the desire in many other cities to have it introduced. Not only this, but the original system proposed and adopted in Galveston has been improved in its later editions, especially that of Des Moines, which has attracted particular attention throughout the United States.

## GOOD ADVICE FOR THE I. C. R.

If the Toronto Star is in receipt of any government patronage, and values it, we extend it herewith a friendly warning. For while the Star and the recently reported surplus on the Intercolonial are evidence of good management, it ventures to suggest that this surplus should be used for the extension and betterment of the road. As the present management contains no such improvement. The Star's remarks imply a critical attitude, and criticism, under this regime, is tabooed. First thing the Star knows it will be set out of its patronage list and left to perish miserably.

But, though critical of the present policy of the Intercolonial, the Star's advice is sound and progressive. "The time has come," it says, "for extending the usefulness of the government road. The money which it yields, and much more, should go back into the enterprise. Branch lines should be acquired in accordance with the policy of the government announced this year. The roadbed and bridges should be kept in shape for heavy trains. In other words, the road, which has been greatly improved since coming under a Liberal regime, should be given the same protection as the same sort of road of private companies afford their own enterprises, though the latter labor under the disadvantage of being expected to pay dividends. If the Intercolonial, both ends meet, apart from expenditures on capital accounts, and at the same time give the best service in Canada, it will meet all the primary requirements of a government road. The Star believes that to give such service it might well be extended to the Georgian Bay."

## CIVIC FINANCES

The ordinary civic expenditures have been kept within the revenue; that for public works, of a permanent nature, chargeable to capital, bonds amounting to \$121,800 have been issued, increasing the funded debt to \$5,483,785; that the annual tax for interest, charges, outside of the school debt, amounting to \$121,800, together with a strong recommendation for caution and economy, form the gist of the City Chamberlain's statement of St. John's finances.

While it is gratifying to note that business principles prevail to the extent that the ever-increasing number of every department characteristic of recent years have been done away with, this favourable portion of the statement is hardly sufficient to balance the unpalatable facts of an increased debt, an increasing expenditure, and a probably increased tax rate. For a city where population and values are growing, and where the things that may be obtained are increased tax rates. In St. John as it is to-day, it is evident that either some determined economies must be made, or that some decisive and productive effort for civic improvement be made. Probably both are needed, and we believe both can be accomplished.

## THE PARTIES AND THE NAVY

The Conservative opposition, or at least that section for which Mr. R. L. Borden is able to speak with authority, has joined issue with the government on a naval policy on two main points—Canadian control and Canadian construction. They demand that the event of any possible defence, or naval affairs, and prejudicially affect the communal spirit so essential to efficient administration. Instead of working in public spirit, it has had quite a contrary influence. It has greatly stimulated interest in civic activities and its success in those communities that have adopted it. The commission form of government has created the desire in many other cities to have it introduced. Not only this, but the original system proposed and adopted in Galveston has been improved in its later editions, especially that of Des Moines, which has attracted particular attention throughout the United States.

## GOVERNMENT BY COMMISSION

The experience of American cities which have adopted the commission system of government does not bear out the theoretical objections to it. It is a municipal affair and prejudicially affect the communal spirit so essential to efficient administration. Instead of working in public spirit, it has had quite a contrary influence. It has greatly stimulated interest in civic activities and its success in those communities that have adopted it. The commission form of government has created the desire in many other cities to have it introduced. Not only this, but the original system proposed and adopted in Galveston has been improved in its later editions, especially that of Des Moines, which has attracted particular attention throughout the United States.

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## BISHOP CASEY'S LETTER

The pastoral letter of the Bishop of St. John read yesterday in all the Catholic churches contains a message of notable significance. The letter is a very fair and sane statement of the position that the Church is out of touch with the needs and the evils of the day. The sins mentioned are very real and very serious, and the Bishop's words are of the way of direct and discriminating condemnation.

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## ENDANGERING THE INTEGRITY OF THE EMPIRE

she knows that the total of Canada's resources in men and money are very far from being without the asking. In the meantime Canada proposes to sit herself to share effectively in Imperial responsibility. Including the event of war to build weapons and to contribute to the cost of an offensive Imperial defense, rather than to hire others to fight for her. She is planning for the permanent future rather than for an imaginary emergency now. And she is planning for other things than war-making herself ready to take her place in the equal partnership that will be the Empire of tomorrow.

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## PLACED OUTSIDE THE PARTY PALE

In these communications the point raised was not that the Sun had misrepresented the Board, but that it had criticized the government; not that the Board was withholding business from a paper which had treated it unfairly, but that the politicians were penalizing a paper which had dared to disagree with their views.

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## POTATOES FOR CUBAN MARKET

18 Carloads of New Barrels for Them

ST. CENTREVILLE

It is Understood That There is No Insurance on Little Coaster

DIGBY, Feb. 8.—Eighteen carloads of new barrels, seven thousand in count, began to arrive in Digby this week to be forwarded to Fredericton, where they will be filled with potatoes for shipment to the Havana market via St. John. The second consignment went forward by S.S. Yarmouth yesterday. The complete set from the barrel factory at Port Williams.

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## COMET'S COMING

May Reveal Possibility of Much

PARIS, Feb. 7.—A disaster befalling the inhabitants through proximity of Halley's comet, seriously discussed. Although no one has yet predicted that the comet's approach, nearly to whether the earth's atmosphere. The question, therefore, is whether the comet's atmosphere is so rarefied that it will be able to penetrate the earth's atmosphere. The comet's atmosphere is so rarefied that it will be able to penetrate the earth's atmosphere. The comet's atmosphere is so rarefied that it will be able to penetrate the earth's atmosphere.

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## BOSTON STEALS ST. JOHN SHIPS

Cuban Line Decides to Cut Out This Port

BOSTON, Feb. 8.—The St. John and Boston and Cuba Steamship Line, which since last October has been operating a regular service from Boston to Havana via St. John, will in future run its boats direct from Boston to Havana. The line was opened last fall for the purpose of providing New England with a direct route for goods to Cuba in place of the previous route via New York, which entails transshipment at that point. The call at St. John was originally made for the purpose of filling the ships with New England merchandise, but the line has since been re-routed to a more direct and profitable cargo could be secured from this port alone.

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## BADLY CRIPPLED WITH LAME BACK

Could Not Walk Straight

Very few cases can cause you as much pain as a lame back. Sitting down in a chair, or even standing, nearly kills you—walking is agony. Even when you lie in bed, that nagging pain keeps up its ache, ache—and when you roll over or try to get up again, well, it brings tears to your eyes. Mr. Mackenzie, an old resident of Elmfield, Nova Scotia, knows what it is to have a lame back—and he knows, too, what to take to cure it, and is free of pain and suffering.

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## SMILES A FAR PLUNGE

Young Girl Suffers from Asking Parents

NIAGARA FALLS

Smiling face, pursued as she was by the brink of the Cataract, to be Mrs. Buffalo committed to the river just and going over the "police" women appeared.

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The Independent