The St. John Standard

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82 Prince William Street.....St. John, N. B., Canada.

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Subscription Rates:

City Delivery .....$6.00 per year
By Mail in Canada ....$3.00 per year
By Mail in U. S. ....$4.00 per year

The Standard is Sold By:

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Advertising Rates:

Contract Display..... 4c. per line
Classified .....1 1-2c. per word
Inside Readers ..... 35c. per line
Outside Readers ..... 35c. per line
(Agate measurement.)

ST. JOHN, N. B. FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 1922.

THE GOVERNMENT'S RECORD.

The Hon. Walter Foster spent a pleasant half hour on Wednesday evening explaining to the free and independent electors of Glen Falls and neighborhood some of the mysteries of high finance as practiced by himself and his colleagues in the Government. Unfortunately the report of his remarks is too scanty to be of much benefit to persons who were not able to be present, but the reader is able to gather from the report that the Premier was kept on the defensive from start to finish, although he boldly announced that he would welcome a thorough discussion of the record of the Government. Well, he'll get it in due time.

The Premier said his Government would be charged with needless expenditure, but he took particularly good care when attempting to justify this expenditure to refer only to one item, and that one the increased amount spent on education, the item of all others that there is likely to be no complaint made about. No one objects to expenditure, within reason, on education; and he knows quite well that this item will call for no justification. But it is the only item that comes in that category.

The hon. gentleman must surely have been wrongly reported when he said that the large annual outlay on the roads all came from automobile taxes. That is not the story the financial statement tells, anyway.

In the light of some criticisms made by Mr. Foster on the last financial statement of the late Government, for the year 1916, the tenour of his remarks Wednesday evening was rather funny. We are about to quote now from the Premier's criticism published in the Daily Telegraph on January 4th 1917. He referred to the charges for interest which in that year, 1916, amounted to $351,004.99 exclusive of interest on the Valley Railway. He was alarmed at the prospect which lay in front of the province. Yet he evinces no alarm today, when after five years of his control of affairs the interest charges, without the Valley Railway, amount to $752,175.82. More than double the sum he was alarmed about.

"Executive Government cost us the tidy sum of $46,852.89. Taxpayers may judge for themselves whether it is worth it." Executive Government under Mr. Foster cost $70,191.65. Do the taxpayers think present day style of Government is worth the additional $25,000?

"Printing, $16,918.3; A peep behind the curtain showing the destination of this amount, would probably explain the satisfaction expressed in some quarters for the state of affairs, which year after year shows large deficits and expenditure for which the people are not receiving adequate returns." In the light of the record of the Foster Government, such a criticism is rich indeed. Mr. Foster's printing bill is $25,457.50, $10,000 more than the amount he complained of. Of course he has shown no deficits, nor expenditures "for which the people are not receiving adequate returns." Oh, no!

"Administration of Justice cost $25,512.92, a goodly portion of which, as usual, was paid to friends of the Attorney-General to perform duties for which he draws his salary." Under Mr. Foster $89,930.11 was spent under this head, again an increase of over $10,000.

"Permanent Bridges are charged with $847,166.58. The charge to this account year after year must in the aggregate total a great amount, and one would almost imagine that the province must be 'permanently bridged.'" Yet, in the five years Mr. Foster's party has been in charge of affairs, the Minister of Public Works has managed to expend no less than $2,546,892 for permanent bridges in this province that the Premier thought was permanently bridged in 1916! Mr. Venlot spent $708,992 on such bridges last year alone.

The bonded indebtedness of the province was a source of great concern to Mr. Foster in 1917, and he felt that the province was on the verge of bankruptcy and ruin at that time. Using the figures quoted in his criticism of January 4th 1917, the debt was $16,516,616. Today the amount in the Comptroller General's statement says, is $23,519,493.29. But Mr. Foster evinces no concern now.

Concluding Mr. Foster said: "Such is the position in which our provincial finances stand after eight years of the present administration's rule. Of course there will be the usual excuses and explanations, but these three items will serve to prove to the average tax-payer, just how much the Government's excuses and explanations really amount to. And these three items are:

Interest charges in 1908 ....$	178,588
Interest charges in 1916	351,004
Actual deficit for year ending 31 October last	271,727
Bonded debt and guarantees at 31 Oct., 1907	6,859,657
Bonded debt and guarantees now	16,927,646

"Think it over."

We repeat with much pleasure Mr. Foster's words, except that "eight" years should read "five" and we use present day figures:

Interest charges 1916 .....$	351,004
Interest charges 1921	752,175
Actual deficit for year ended 31 October last	507,189
Bonded debt and guarantees at 31 October, 1916	16,927,646
Bonded debt and capital liabilities at 31 Oct, 1921	$7,540,136

Compare the two accounts and "think it over."

"Whither are we drifting?" was Mr. Foster's plaintive wail in 1916. The province, under his guidance, has long since ceased to drift; it is rushing headlong now at breakneck speed into——what?

MR. ROSS' REPLY.

In very gentlemanly, but also very plain language, and "without obscuring the issue with rhetoric," Mr. Ross tells Messrs. Foss and Phillips that they don't know what they are talking about. "Mr. Foss' figures, therefore, are based on a misunderstanding of "the actual conditions under which "his plant will operate." "The "facts * * * are the only things that "count," says Mr. Ross.

It is amusing to read Mr. Foss' explanation of a discrepancy that never existed. Through a typographical error Mr Ross was made to refer to a wheel efficiency of 80%, which differed from Mr. Foss' figures which were 80%. It was up to Mr. Foss, therefore, to manufacture some excuse to make up this 20% difference, which he promptly did. As Mr. Ross now shows that his figures and Mr. Foss' were the same, 80%; the latter's attempt to explain a mistake that was never made, is funny, to say the least. But it only shows that Mr. Foss can "explain" anything, if put to it, so long as the explanation has only to go before the public which is wholly unversed in these technical matters.

Mr. Phillips' criticism "requires no "comment," says Mr. Ross. This is worse even than we thought, for Mr. Phillips surely should have learned something at any rate about the matter in the course of his connection with it.

Mr. Ross' reply merely emphasizes what we have all along contended for, namely, that the city authorities should not be satisfied with the reports of the Government engineers who are responsible for the construction of the plant. They are interested parties; and although the very last thing we would want to do would be to suggest that they are wilfully overstating the potentialities of their plant, we do venture to doubt whether they are sufficiently conversant with them to give a reliable opinion. If Mr. Ross is correct, they are not; and Mr. Ross, like Brutus, is "an honorable man"; at least the Journal of the Engineering Institute seems to think so.

Ottawa Citizen: "The Minister of Railways states that he found no desire in the Maritime Provinces for complete isolation of the Intercolonial from the Canadian National system. Apparently the roar made by certain Maritime Province members is not the voice of the people down there."

The Minister of Railways was not down in the Maritime Provinces long enough to find out anything. If he'll just come down here and stay a sufficient length of time to get his hearings, he'll have no difficulty in finding out what the people really want. They know themselves all right, and can tell him, if he'll only stay long enough to hear.

At the meeting in New York on Monday of the American Institute of Mining and Metalurgical Engineers it was complained that Japan has oil reserves for 300 years as against 20 years for the United States. But the meaning of this is that the latter is using its reserves faster than any other country.

Mr. Fielding is said to be looking to Washington again, and wondering if reciprocity is dead there. He will likely find that any reciprocity the Republicans will accept will be rather unpopular in the Province that owns the Government.

Argument as to what constitutes "waste paper" is raging in the United States. According to the Toronto Telegram, nothing is waste paper till the Globe or Star is printed on it.

WHAT OTHERS SAY

For More Effective Voting.

(Ottawa Citizen.)

The opinion is expressed that Mr. Meighen may be found advocating a measure of proportional representation, this coming session. Conservatives throughout Canada have certainly had a lesson in the last election results. They were warned in time. Mr Mackenzie King spoke in favor of P. R. last session, saying in part:

"Proportional representation, so far as I can see, is a juster system than any we have at the present time, in that it gives the electors, whether of a minority or a majority, their fair share of representation in parliament, where their views can be aired; and it seems to me that it also gives greater freedom in that it allows the greatest possible latitude to every citizen in expressing his choice of who shall represent him in parliament, because proportional representation is founded on the true democratic principles of justice and freedom. And as it gives better expression to those principles in our electoral machinery, I for one strongly favor that system."

But blind Conservative opposition would have none of it. Opponents like Messrs. Steele, Cockshutt, Currie and Edwards denounced it as something contrary to the principles of the British electoral system—ignoring the fact that it is supported by many of the leading statesmen of all parties in Great Britain. Appropriately, the bitter opponents of a more effective voting method were almost without exception left at the bottom of the poll last December. Perhaps they may appreciate the irony of it.

Only 50 Conservative members were elected to parliament, although the total vote cast for Conservatives amounted to 971,509. The Liberals took 117 seats with a total vote of 1,086,736. Even more disturbing to the Conservative opponents of P. R. is the Progressive total of 65 members, although the Progressive vote amounted to only 765,557—that is, 303,118 less than the Conservative total.

Failure of Conservative minorities to secure any representation in Quebec and several other provinces should further tend to encourage a more intelligent interest in P. R. when it comes before the House again. The whole of the 65 seats in the province of Quebec were taken by the Liberal party, with a total vote of 558,068. The Conservative votes, amounting to 163,743, failed to secure one representative from Quebec.

The result in Nova Scotia is even more disproportionate. The Liberal party took all 16 seats in Nova Scotia, with 136,064 Liberal votes. The Conservative total of 87,988 might just as well have been dropped into Redford Basin as into the ballot boxes, for all the effect it had on representation in the new House of Commons. The Progressive votes in Nova Scotia amounting to 35,741 were similarly ineffective. A fair proportion, in accordance with total votes cast in Nova Scotia, would have given the Liberal party 9 seats, the Conservative party 5, and the Progressive party 2 seats.

In Prince Edward Island, the Liberal party took all 4 seats, though less than half of the total votes were Liberal. Actual totals were Liberals, 33,950; Conservatives, 19,904; Progressives, 8,890. Even though all the Progressive votes were added to the Liberals, the Conservatives in Prince Edward Island would still be entitled to one seat at least.

It would, perhaps, be somewhat ambitious to ask that the next redistribution in Canada be carried out on the plan of grouping constituencies, so that no constituency would elect fewer than three members. But proportional representation could well be introduced into the more compact constituencies, the cities especially, so that the minority of Conservatives in Montreal would secure at least one voice in the House, and the minority of Liberals in Toronto likewise be heard.

The single transferable vote, in place of the present method of marking X, would ensure that majorities in every constituency would be represented. It has been estimated by Mr. Ronald Hooper, hon. secretary of the Proportional Representation Society of Canada, that majorities in between 40 and 50 constituencies secured no representation, owing to contests in single-member constituencies with more than two candidates nominated for one seat.

There is still much educational work to be done before Canada is ready for P. R. throughout. But a substantial beginning should be made, while redistribution is being dealt with in the new parliament.

Our Own History.

(Edmonton Journal.)

It is no new thing that attention should be called to the possibility of Americanizing Canada. Over and over, these many years past, some one has risen to say that we are in danger of losing our national identity through overmuch and overclose contact with our neighbors to the south, and the disposition sometimes to follow their example rather than to work out ways and theories from many different angles and in many different quarters.

Let the case be stated again by a lecturer in Montreal, Dr. J. Clarence Webster said the other day to the Women's Canadian club of that city that "the influences at work in determining our character are more American than British." If this is true, it is a serious matter.

Time to Get Busy.

(Toronto Mail and Empire.)

There are crying needs to which the government should be given attention in this present winter. We are glad that it removed Mr. Meighen's order-in-council of last year providing for the relief of unemployed people in the towns and cities. There must be many orders-in-council passed if most urgent needs of the public are met as they should be met. There are many questions whose postponement by the government means agony to large numbers of the people in this or that section of production. These are matters with which the government should be dealing now. Orders-in-council must be passed, and many of them, if the government is really attending to its duty.

Not Fireworks But Business.

(Manitoba Free Press.)

The country is not so interested in the government putting the opposition to rout or in opposition attempts to block the government as it is in seeing the business of the country go ahead.

THE LAUGH LINE

A Myth.

"What is a myth, pa?"

"John Barleycorn, my son."

Self Centred.

"Is he self-centred?"

"Why if fortune ever knocked at his door he'd shout for as she could never knock elsewhere."

Easy.

Bobby wanted a donkey—and he had seen the donkey in a nearby field.

"What would happen if I stole that donkey?" he asked his father.

"You would get six months in prison," replied his father.

Bobby thought a while, and then said:

"You wouldn't forget to feed it while I was away, would you, father?"

We Should Say.

Mr. Pester—Silly practice, isn't it, for women to alter their figures to suit the styles.

His Wife—You men needn't talk. Ever since the eighteenth amendment went into force I've noticed the men padding their hips.

Quite Innocent.

Mr. Nextdore—Does your husband go out nights as much as he did before prohibition?

Mrs. Watmore—Yes, but his pleasures are quite innocent now. He goes out nights just to enjoy the moonshine.

Not His Idea.

"Now," said the doctor to the young married man, "if you will take this medicine you will sleep like a two-year-old."

The patient survey the prescription doubtfully.

"Well, doctor," he answered, "if you mean like our baby I'd rather not take it."

Too Bad.

Flora—Yes, Miss d'Asher is a clever artist, but all her women are left-handed and knock-kneed.

Fauna—Poor thing! She can't help that. She can't afford to hire a model and has to use a mirror.

A Real Sport.

"I'm afraid my husband is thoroughly infected with the gambling spirit," said a woman to her neighbor.

"Why so?"

"I said to him yesterday: 'Did you go and see Dr. Thompson?' 'No,' he answered. 'Thompson's sign read 11 to 1, while Dr. Smith's office advertising said 10 to 1, so I chose the one that gave the best odds.'"—Boston Transcript.

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Benny's Note Book

BY LEE PAPE

I went in the shoe place to get a nale took out of one shoe this afternoon, and I took the shoe off to give it to the man and I had sutch a big hole in my stocking my heel stuck rite out as if it thawt that was wat the hole was for, me thinking, Good nite, that wasent there this morning.

Proving you never can tell wats going on behind your back, and I sat there looking at my heel out in the air and some man was setting there waiting for his shoes to get fixed so he could put them on and go out, and just then who did I see wawking in but Mary Watkins, me thinking, O wiss, holey smoaks. And I grabbed a hold of a newspaper on the bench next to me to cover my foot with it, and the man waiting for his shoes grabbed it rite back agen saying, Hay, wats the big idear, this is mine. So I quick stuck my foot all the ways undermeath the bench and Mary Watkins asked the shoe man for her mothers shoes and then she turned arround and saw me setting there with one one leg in site, saying, Hello Benny, wats you doing heer, my goodniss what are you setting like that for? Have you got a cramp in your feet?

Yes, I sed. Sounding like a good idear, and she sed, Well then wy dont you hold it in frunt of you and kick it out all you mite, thats wat to do wen you get a cramp.

I tried that, so now im trying this, I sed.

Wy dont you try it agen? sed Mary Watkins, and I sed, No, im trying this, and she sed, Thats a crazy way, well ill jest wait a wile and see. Wich she sat down to do, me thinking, Heck, good nite, and I sed, You better not wait, its libel to take 2 more hours, ive had these before.

Well ill wait a little wile anyway, she sed. Wich she started to do, keeping on advising me to kick my foot out in frunt of me and me keeping on not taking the advice, and she waited so long my foot under the bench dident have any feelings left in it, and as soon as she went I quick pulled it out and wat did it have in it but a real cramp and I quick kicked it out in frunt of me all my mite about 10 times and it got all rite.

Proving she was rite.

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RESOLUTIONS CO
ATTENTION OF

Convention Goes on Record and Against Issuing of United States and Free

Special to The Standard
Fredericton, N. B., Feb. 23—Resolutions occupied the attention of the United Farmers of New Brunswick convention here this afternoon. The session upon them was varied and lengthy. The convention, on motion, decided to pay up the deficit of $1,[illegible] by means of a contribution of $25 from each branch by use of [illegible] members.

The convention passed a resolution against unfair freight rates of raw [illegible] on farm products; against [illegible] extravagance on the part of the C. [illegible] management, and against the [illegible] of passes except those issued by law.

The convention also passed a resolution that the time had arrived when the tariff on farm implements and machinery should be removed, and that negotiations should be opened with the United States with a view to establishing reciprocal trade arrangements with that country. This resolution was referred back to the resolutions committee for re-wording, but was again presented and passed with [illegible] dissent.

In discussion on this resolution Judson Carey expressed the opinion that the Canadian farmer was under a tremendous handicap.

J. P. Reilly remarked that unemployment was the product of protection. It had been in effect forty years and this was the result.

C. F. Alward dealt particularly with the reciprocity agreement of 1911, and the reasons why it should have been adopted instead of being defeated.

H. G. Sharp said that the farmers did not want all but enough. Reciprocal relations with the United States were absolutely necessary. Unless they were brought about the Maritime

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Over Half Million Spent On Streets

Reports of Road Engineer and Street Superintendent Give Details of Expenditure.

The annual reports of the road engineer and superintendent of streets, submitted to the Common Council yesterday morning by Commissioner Frink, contained very full details of the work done on the streets during the past year.

The report showed that during 1921 the sum of $600,000 had been expended upon the streets in new pavements, sidewalks, retaining walls, cleaning, watering and sanding the thoroughfares. There are now 11.6 miles of asphalt and granite surfaces. New pavement was laid during the year amounting to 10,771 square yards at a cost of $[illegible]. This average equals two and one-half miles of pavement laid during the year. Repairs were made to 4,795 yards of asphalt pavement at a cost of $4,846.65.

Ordinary street repairs cost $[illegible] during the year. The sum of $8,[illegible] was spent on suburban roads, such as Musquash, Sandy Point, Anthony and Bear's Head. On Rockwood Park $4,[illegible] was spent, and on repairing walls, $19,750.01. Repairs to retaining walls cost $506.29. It cost $30,[illegible] to operate stone crusher No. 1, and $[illegible] to run crusher No. 2. Street lamp repairs cost $10,[illegible]. The sum of $2,[illegible] was spent in the painting department, and $[illegible] spent on public grounds. Plank sidewalks and fences cost $1,[illegible]. Street cleaning, including scavenging, sanitary, watering, operation of dumps and snow removal, cost $58,[illegible].

MAGIC BAKING POWDER
To [illegible] manufacture [illegible] scientific [illegible] are required [illegible] the highest [illegible] same to [illegible] leavening [illegible] the power [illegible] ingredients. This [illegible] has been [illegible] coast [illegible] attention [illegible]