

THE EVENING TIMES AND STAR, ST. JOHN, N. B., MONDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 1911

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ST. JOHN, N. B., NOVEMBER 27, 1911.

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THE BOARD OF WORKS

It will be impossible for the city council to ignore the report of the special committee which was published in the Times on Saturday. It must consider the report and take action, either in support or in condemnation of the committee.

The report fully justifies the contention of this paper at various times that there should be a real investigation of the methods of civic departments. The citizens cannot fail to see in this report proof that the conduct of the affairs of the board of works has not been such as a business house would insist upon having. There has been a lack of system, which has led to a waste of time, and which seems also to have made it impossible to tell the exact cost of any piece of work. The committee reports that the director of the department has been autocratic and that there were transactions in which aldermen figured which were somewhat irregular. The chief fact that seems to have been brought to light is the lack of system, for that involves constant waste. What business establishment would be content with such loose methods of handling men and materials?

It will not do to lay all the blame on the director. He is not responsible for the fact that the investigation was not made long ago. The aldermen who were disposed to resent all demands for enquiry will now see that they were themselves in the wrong. They must now deal with this report. What are the conditions in other departments?

WHAT SHALL WE DO?

What will be the practical result of recent discussion of the need of action to make the people of New Brunswick better satisfied, so that they will not go west and to gain for the province a share of the immigration rushing past its doors?

Bishop Richardson's very striking address has been supplemented by statements made by immigration commissioners of the Canadian Northern Railway and the Salvation Army. Nearly two years ago a conference of business men and provincial editors held in this city stated clearly that the great need of the time was such action as would build up the rural communities for upon these depended the prosperity of the province.

What is to be done? The time for profitable action is passing. The westward movement continues; not only of immigrants from the old country, but of our own people, especially the young men who should be our most valued asset. What are we going to do about it?

This is not a problem that can be solved by governments. They may lead, and lend very valuable assistance, and provide money and men for practical work; but there must be an awakening of all the people, and their sympathy and support must be enlisted in a general movement to boom the province. The life of rural communities must be made more profitable and attractive. Municipal councils, boards of trade and other organizations ought to get together and study the problem. The cities and towns of the province have been making progress, and their progress would be far greater but for the fact that there has been an actual decline in some of the rural sections during the last ten years. The whole province must move forward together. We know now where the weak point in the situation is, and the best proof of our ability to hold our own among the provinces would be to replace weakness and loss by strength and growth.

AMERICAN AND ENGLISH JUSTICE

The United States as the most murderous of nations, is the terrible indictment presented by a writer in Collier's Weekly. He quotes statistics and makes comparisons to prove that "in the number of murders per million of population, the United States stands first among the civilized nations."

Not only does the nation occupy this lonely eminence of shame, but the record of the number of murderers who escape punishment is equally disgraceful. "Roughly speaking," says this writer, "not one murderer in ten in the United States escapes the inside of a penitentiary; not one in four is brought to trial, and not one in twenty-five of those brought to trial receives a death sentence." Putting it in another way, about one murderer in eighty-six is executed. There were nearly 9,000 murders in the United States last year, and 104 executions. There was one murder for every hour of the day and night for the whole year.

The writers in Collier's asserts that, as that much depends upon the social standing of the murderer. If he is a negro or a poor foreigner he is very likely to be arrested, condemned and executed; but if he has friends and money and social station, the chances are more than 80 to 1 that he will not be executed for his crime.

It is further shown that immigrants are not more responsible than others for the murders committed. They come from countries where crime is punished more severely than in the United States. But their children, born in the United States, succumbing that there is no such restraint as there should be, tend to drift into crimes which their parents avoided. Of the murders committed a very large number is by more youthful, and less sane, persons.

The writer in Collier's asserts that, as conditions at present exist in the United States, the assassin is protected by the law which should rid society of his presence, and gives some very striking ex-

amples of the miscarriage of justice to prove the truth of the statement.

Let us contrast this terrible picture with one of British justice, drawn for us by an American. The scene was a court in India, and the man who tells the story was Mr. Price Collier, whom Sir Andrew Fraser described before the Canadian Club of St. John as "a great American." In his series of articles on India, published this year in Scribner's, Mr. Collier told this story:

"The case (in a court in Bombay) was one of appeal from a decision of the lower court condemning two Hindus to death for murder. It was a disgusting story, and most of the evidence was circumstantial, except that of a lad of sixteen, a decedent, who claimed that he had been forced by the others to take part in the crime. There sat a Hindu judge, and beside him an English colleague, and the case was argued for the appeal by an English barrister. Many hours, much money, much investigation and sifting of evidence had gone into this dull matter of the guilt or innocence of these three Hindus of the very lowest caste. The British machine was working as carefully, as minutely as though great personages or important matters of state were at stake. It was an object lesson of the slow, ponderous English way of being just. It was a sledge-hammer to crack an egg, but it was justice for those cowards, who possibly earned two or three cents a day, and just as nice, as careful and impartial as for a prince."

"I have sat in the highest court (in India) I have sat in the highest court, and also in front of the deputy-commissioner's tent pitched on the plains of the Punjab, on a hot day, and thus seen justice meted out to the high and low, and to all conditions of men and women, and now that I am far away from it all, I marvel even more that I did then, at the patience, forbearance, kindness and impartiality that I saw."

Collier's Weekly says that Sir James Whitney's opinion of tax reform, which he obstinately opposes, is that of the Hoozier when he first saw a giraffe. The doubter looked and looked at the weird creature. At last he said: "There ain't no such animal."

Japan furnishes another proof of her interest in the affairs of the western world. She will be represented by a track and field team at the Olympic games in Stockholm next year. Those interested in athletics in Tokyo and other cities are giving their assistance in selecting the best men, and it is said that in some events the men from Japan will make a remarkably good showing.

VALUABLE NO MAN'S LAND

The Socialist's last thirty-eight seats in the Reichstag, in the German elections nearly five years ago. The Conservatives were encouraged to abandon electoral reform, increase the tariff and pursue the usual tory course. Now the tide has turned again toward the Socialists, and the government is alarmed. Commenting on the situation the Saturday Evening Post says:—"If the Prussian suffrage had been honestly reformed; if there had been lightning of military burdens, some moderate tariff concessions—but when and where did true-blue conservatism ever yield an inch until it was hit over the head with a club?"

Wolf Island, a valuable tract of land in the Mississippi river between Kentucky and Missouri, may be "No Man's Land," says the St. Louis Globe-Democrat. In response to an inquiry sent out several days ago by officials of the United States land office in Springfield, a law firm of Charleston, Mo., to which the communication was referred by the recorder of Mississippi county has advised the local government land officials that the island does not belong to Missouri, but was the property of Kentucky. There were no records, according to the writer, to show ownership of the land by this state.

The officials of the land office some time ago received word from the department of the interior that this land had been ceded to Missouri after an investigation in 1857 by an engineer from the interior department. The officials of the land office are attempting to clear up the titles to the land which have been filed with the government through various land offices of the state.

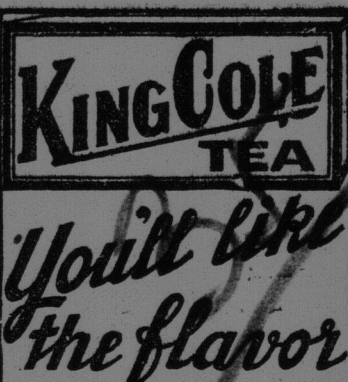
The investigation which opened the question as to the ownership of the island was brought about recently by a desire on the part of the officials to correct a mistake which had been made in the recording of a claim for a tract of land on the island by Benjamin Woodruff in 1857. A plan of the island was found in the records of the office, but an attempt to find the heirs of Woodruff resulted in a reply from Charleston, the former location of one of the government land offices, that the island belonged to Kentucky.

The letters will be forwarded to the officials of the department of the interior at Washington, that steps may be taken to untangle the situation, which threatens to invalidate all the titles to land on the island.

Wolf Island over which the litigation has been waged, is a tract about three miles square in the Mississippi river between Mississippi county, Missouri, and Hickman county, Kentucky. On one side the island appears to be nearly in the middle of the stream, but according to a report of the engineers of the interior department the main channel of the river is on the east side, separating the island from Kentucky.

The length of most national anthems is in inverse ratio to the size of their respective countries. The Belgian "Brabanconne" is much longer than the "Marseillaise" of France or "God Save the King" of Great Britain. While there are but sixteen bars in the Russian anthem there are seventy-two in the Siamese. The record for length is held by the San Marino anthem, which has ninety-seven, or more than twice as many bars as there are square miles in the republic.

In Great Britain the consumption of tea per head has now reached 6.8 pounds annually, which is more than double the amount which was so long held the first place.



FOLLOWING THE CALF

(By Sam Walter Foss.)

A poem with a moral for all slaves of precedent is what its author called the following:

One day through a primeval wood,
A calf walked home, as good calves should;
But made a trail all bent askew,
A crooked trail, as all calves do.

The trail was taken up next day,
By a line dog that passed that way;
And then a wise belivether sheep,
Pursued the trail o'er vale and steep.

And drew the flock behind him, too,
As good belivethers always do;
This crooked lane became a road,
And from that day, o'er hill and glade,
Through those old woods a path was made.

And many men went in and out,
And dodged and turned and bent about,
And uttered words of righteous wrath,
Because 'twas such a crooked path;

The forest path became a lane,
That road became a village street,
And this, before men were aware,
A city's crowded thoroughfare.

And soon the central street was this
Of a renowned metropolis.
And men two centuries and a half
Trode in the footsteps of that calf.

Each day a hundred thousand rout
Followed the zigzag calf about.
They trod the footsteps of that calf.

The years passed on in swift fleet,
"I have visited courts and prisons
(in India) I have sat in the highest court,
and also in front of the deputy-commissioner's tent pitched on the plains of the Punjab, on a hot day, and thus seen justice meted out to the high and low, and to all conditions of men and women, and now that I am far away from it all, I marvel even more that I did then, at the patience, forbearance, kindness and impartiality that I saw."

They followed still his crooked way,
And lost one hundred years a day,
For this such reverence is lent
To well established precedent.

A moral lesson this might teach,
Were I ordained and called to preach;
For men are prone to go it blind
Along the calf paths of the mind.

And labor on from sun to sun,
To do what other men have done.

They follow in the beaten track,
And out and in and forth and back,
And still their devious course pursue
To keep the path that others do.



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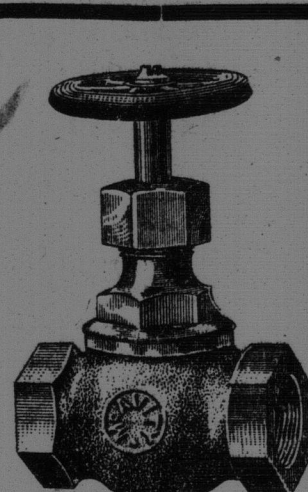
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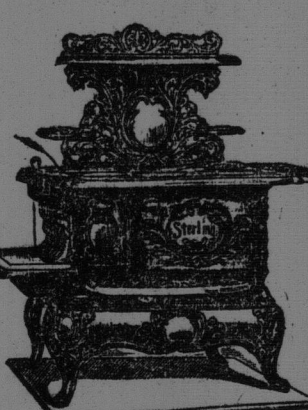
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