

The St. John Standard

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ST. JOHN, N. B., SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 1920.

TAXES AND RENTS.

By all accounts the landlords of St. John are taking time by the forelock and boosting rents on the assumption that their tax bills will be greatly increased this year; and there is wrath among the tenants.

Some day the landlords may be called upon to make sacrifices, but the time is evidently not yet. Many landlords in St. John have done very well during the war. They doubtless have had reason for boosting rents; cost of up-keep and repairs have increased; but the landlords cannot justify any large advances in rents on the grounds that they have been called upon to pay big increases in taxes.

When Commission Form of Government adopted the new assessment act it allowed the landlords to get off easy by comparison with the income people. In 1914 real estate in St. John was valued for assessment at \$19,615,000; last year it was valued at \$23,780,000. In five years certainly there has been some new building in St. John; in any case there has been very little increase in valuations of real estate compared with the increase in market prices quoted on real estate.

In 1914 citizens of St. John paid taxes on incomes of \$5,233,600; in 1919 they paid taxes on incomes of \$14,987,850. While real estate valuations for assessment increased about \$4,000,000, incomes were increased by \$9,700,000.

The following figures deserve attention:

	Valuation of Real Estate.	Valuation of Income.
1911	\$16,516,000	\$4,147,100
1914	19,615,000	5,183,600
1915	20,229,000	5,253,600
1916	21,346,000	5,576,900
1917	21,735,800	6,778,000
1918	31,938,900	8,137,100
1919	35,780,900	14,987,850

Number of Ratepayers. Rates of Taxation.
1911 13,127 1.94
1914 14,582 1.92
1915 14,696 1.94
1916 14,602 1.95
1917 15,489 2.18
1918 15,876 2.27
1919 18,164 2.62

In 1914 real estate, with a tax rate of \$1.92, would have contributed \$376,708 to the city treasury; in 1919, with a tax rate of \$2.62, its contribution would be \$623,056. In 1914 on the basis of a tax rate of \$1.92 income people contributed \$99,523 to the city treasury; in 1919 they would on the basis of a tax rate of \$2.62 contribute \$392,480. Under the old and new systems of assessment exemptions and graduated rates affect these figures, but the effect on the average taxpayer's position would be small. What follows is that while taxes on real estate have increased about 68 per cent., taxes on incomes have increased about 360 per cent.

Possibly under the old system real estate bore too heavy a burden, and the income people got off too easily. But the point emerges that landlords are much better off under the new assessment act than they were before in comparison with the citizens who pay taxes on income, and big increases in rent must have other warrant than increases in taxes. There has been no increase in valuations of real estate for assessment purposes comparable with increases in valuations of commodities or of incomes.

This year the tax yield from incomes will doubtless be greater than last year, for returned men will not be granted an exemption this year. The landlords will not be asked to pay the whole of the increase in assessment. And it is worth reflecting that real estate valued at \$5,000 in 1914 would not, even assuming there had been no new building in five years, be valued at more than \$6,000 in 1919; and that the increase of tax in the five years could not have been more than \$42.

GERMANY'S LARGE ARMY.

In view of Germany's defiant attitude respecting the Allied demand for the surrender of war criminals, interest attaches to a report of the British Government about the present strength of Germany's armed forces. By the Peace Treaty Germany ought to have an army of 100,000 men to keep order, and a police force equal to that maintained before the war. The British report says Germany now has an army of 1,000,000 men, divided as follows:

Regular army	400,000
Land forces of navy	12,000
Regular army reserves	200,000
Civic guards	300,000 to 400,000
Armed constabulary	40,000 to 50,000

Moreover, there are new voluntary military organizations, whose strength is unknown. Alluding to these The London Times says:

"They are more dangerous both to the domestic peace of Germany and to the peace of her neighbors than even the Regular Army. Organizations like the Emergency Volunteers and the Civic Guards are a standing temptation to the leaders of military resis-

tion precisely because they are voluntary and tend to attract people with common political views. The danger to the stability of the state is now far greater from the old military party than from the Spartacists. Nor will a German Army under its old chiefs cease to be dangerous to its neighbors because it is labeled with fancy names. On the contrary, the chief lesson of the war was that there is no hard and fast line to be drawn between what is military and what is civilian. What makes the difference is not the name or the details of the organization, but the spirit of those who control it. If any Power ever seeks in the future to do what Germany did in this war, it will not be by the same methods, and what we must be on our guard against in our enemies is not a vast accumulation of compulsory levies, but some adaptation of civil organization to the purposes of war. That is why the Allies must regard with especial suspicion the volunteer organizations described in our article today. A regular army can be watched and controlled far more easily than these formations which masquerade as voluntary associations of citizens for the preservation of internal order."

Herr Noske, Minister of Defence, declares that there are 400,000 men in uniform in Germany, and protests that he cannot discharge 300,000 by April 1st, 1920, to conform with the Peace Treaty, as the army of the unemployed is already a danger to the State. He adds that Germany is so poor that she will reduce her military establishment as soon as security is re-established and employment obtainable for the discharged soldiers.

As according to Winston Churchill the total serving in His Majesty's forces on December 1 was 485,000 men, which by expiration of service would be reduced to 229,000 in three months, some concern is being felt in Britain and France over Germany's obstinacy in keeping up large forces. But it is hardly likely that Germany has any sinister design of renewing the war, though she will doubtless continue her policy of trying Allied patience to the limit. If she provokes the Allies to drastic action, she will only invite further punishment.

A NARROW POLICY.

The Maritime Farmer, a paper which the Western Grain Growers tried to buy recently, says:

"At the recent meeting of the Council of Agriculture and the United Farmers, held in Manitoba, it was determined that the Dominion Government be asked to continue sales of wheat, until such time as the markets of the world are normal.

"This, we take it, is part of the New National Policy, this particular feature of which has been devised largely for the benefit of the Grain Growers of Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba.

"The Maritime Farmer does not propose to criticize the demand, except to absolutely condemn the restriction which surrounds it.

"A guarantee of the price of wheat was a war measure and as such was accepted loyally by the farmers of the Maritime Provinces.

"Then when the United States in 1919 decided to guarantee \$2.24 per bushel for wheat, Canada was, through the demands of the Grain Growers, forced to adopt a very similar policy.

"Again, the farmers of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island fell into line and 'paid the piper.'

"The war is over now and if prices are to be guaranteed for farm products, then in the opinion of the Maritime Farmer, the generosity of the people of Canada should be taxed as well for those farmers who do not grow wheat as for those who do.

"If we are to have an inflated price for wheat—then let us have the same measure of protection extended to the dairy and other products of the Maritime Provinces.

"If this thing is to be perpetuated, in the name of all that is fair and reasonable, insist that the Dominion Government fix a minimum price for our milk, butter, cheese, potatoes, apples, etc., which farmers must produce in the Maritime Provinces.

"The New National Policy, of which so much has been said, invites Maritime Province farmers to continue to pay fifteen to twenty dollars a barrel for flour, from fifty to seventy dollars a ton for feed, any old price for oats, and at a time when investigations are being conducted with a view to lowering the price of milk, the production of which depends on a supply of mill feeds at open market prices.

"Recently the farmers of Eastern Canada have been compelled to pay increases for flour and feeds, because the Grain Growers, having agreed to accept a fixed price for their wheat, demanded a new arrangement the minute the terms of the original agreement ceased to favor their pockets."

THE SPENDING BUG.

Hon. Mr. Smith is apparently determined that the Minister of Public

Works will not have all the glory of spending the public money. He has created a new department, the Forest Service, which last year expended \$187,346. Under the old system of accounts the expenditures in what is now called the Forest Service were classified as follows:

	Fish, forest and game collection.	Stampage
1914	33,259	27,814
1915	31,605	31,861
1916	33,800	29,398
1917	37,773	27,582
1918	51,759	23,693

In practically doubling the expenditure in one year Hon. Mr. Smith has made a record for his department. The explanation given is that it was considered necessary to take greater measures to protect the forest and the game. If the money has been efficiently expended for those purposes there would be little cause of complaint; the forests are the principal asset of the Province, and with the high prices of forest products should receive the fullest protection possible. But Mr. Smith's record as an administrator does not justify the presumption that he got value for his expenditures. While he has rapidly increased the expenditure for game protection, the general testimony has been that his enforcement of the game laws has been lamentably lax.

The following figures show how the current expenditures on roads and bridges have increased since Hon. Mr. Veniot took charge of the Department of Public Works:

	Roads.	Bridges.
1913	\$138,236	\$173,910
1914	126,756	194,521
1915	179,919	149,788
1916	138,626	146,238
1917	189,488	217,146
1918	184,032	221,718
1919	265,657	348,178

Among a great deal of other damage the storm has played havoc with trees on King Square, the principal adornment of the city's central beauty spot. The storm first flung an elm beauty upon the trees, and then as in anger stripped away the branches, leaving in some cases only a skeleton trunk. General regret will be felt by the citizens, for it will be years before King Square can be restored to its former beauty, an object of pride for citizens and of admiration for visitors.

WHAT THEY SAY

Or Here, Either.

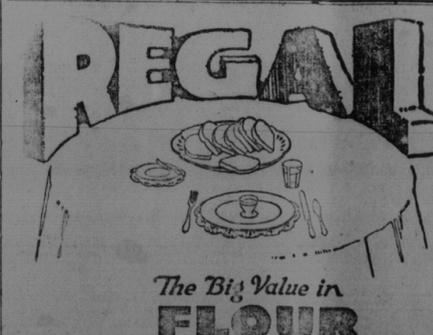
(Calgary Herald).
"In Vancouver the public school teachers want a share in the management of the city schools. Within certain limits the idea is a good one. An advisory committee of teachers could prove of great value to the Calgary school board.

Canada's Ships.

(Kingston Whig).
By its shipbuilding policy the Canadian Government has done much to replace the world's tonnage sunk by the German submarines. Canadian-built vessels, sailing under Government control, are now plowing the seven seas, and still others are an assurance of construction. The Canadian merchant marine is a credit to the country.

Two Parliaments For Ireland.

(London Daily Mail).
Courage, sincerity and imagination have gone to the making of the scheme of Irish settlement which the Premier recently outlined in the House of Commons. It is a better scheme than any previous Government has produced. Embodied in a bill, even with such defects as mark it, the scheme should win the acceptance of all men of good will in all parties. The complete independence of Ireland, which involves secession, is something which cannot be contemplated. It is not an imaginable alternative to this scheme. There will under the Government's proposals be two Parliaments for Ireland, one for the North and another for the South. They will have ample powers, including control of such matters as education, labor, housing, local government, railways, and municipal affairs.



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Benny's Note Book

BY LEE PAPE

Yesterday afternoon I felt like blowing soap bubbles and I started to look for my soap bubble pipe and couldn't find it anywhere, which the more I couldn't find it the more I felt like blowing them, thinking, G, I know what—all use pipe pipe.

Wich I went up in the setting room and got it and made some soap wattr in a bowl down in the kitchen and started to blow bubbles and after about the 10th one I started to get a fearese sensation in the stumck like somebody beginning to get sick, thinking, G, wizz, holey smoke, I wonder if its this pipe? Wich I properly was, and I quick unpumped the soap wattr out of the bowl and put the bowl back and went up and wen I stopped feeling pale I went out to see if any of the fellows was out, and after suppir pop felt in his pockets for se-gars, saying, Jest my luck, not a se-gar—O well, that gives me an idee, Ill smook my good old pipe for a change.

And he took his pipe and started to put tobacco in, saying, After all, a pipe is mans true friend, theres nothing like a good old pipe. No there izent, if youre tawking about smel, sed ma. Im tawking about refreshing taist and soothing aroma, sed pop. O, I thawt you we're tawking about smel, hee, hee, sed ma. A womans sents of humor ts like eating hot mints pie the feris thing in the morning, its always rong, sed pop. And he lit a match and started to blow in smook and blow it out agen, and all of a suddin he stopped, saying, Soap, soap, izent that lovely, soap. G, gosh, jimminy, I thawt. And I snuck out and started to go down stairs, ma saying, That reminds me—I mixed some dressing in a bowl for suppir and it taisted of soap and I had to throw it all out, wat on earth could that boy of bin up to? Benny, called pop. Benny, called ma. Me not heering either of them on account of jest closing the frunt door after me.

BY GOLLY! IT'S A SHAME!

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A BIT OF VERSE

TO A SPRING HAT.

Oh filmy bit of plumed straw
Suggestive of a bloomy May-day,
And costing more than we shall draw
Upon our next evening pay-day
Except for you we shouldn't know
While still the bitter winds are
Humming,
If winter ever means to go
O spring is really ever coming.

Before the ground-hog leaves his hole,
Remarks his monumental blunder,
And murmurs hoarsely, "Bless my
soul!"
What can be keeping spring, I
wonder!

You blossom in the city ways
A radiant, bud-embowered jewel
To prophecy of happier days
When thoughts no longer dwell on
fuel.

Above Belinda's coat of fur
Which still she wears, when days
are airy,
You prove that this is spring to her
Although to us it's January.
And though we often times object
To what Belinda spend her cash on
When she's so charmingly bedecked,
We haven't any quarrel with fash-
ion.

For spring seems still a long way off,
Each day the winter skies seem
clearer,
And we are not the man to scoff,
At anything that brings her nearer
With fires of hope our hearts are lit.
The world again seems bright and
merry.

When we behold this witching bit
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NOTICE OF MEETING.

A Special Meeting of the Shareholders of The Standard, Limited, will be held at the Company's offices, 82 Prince William Street, St. John, N. B., at three o'clock on the afternoon of Tuesday, February 17th, 1920.

THOMAS BELL, Secretary.

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