

## The St. John Standard

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ST. JOHN, N. B., THURSDAY, JANUARY 14, 1915.

"We are fighting for a worthy purpose, and we shall not lay down our arms until that purpose has been fully achieved."—H. M. The King.

TO THE PEOPLE OF THE EMPIRE—Every fighting unit we can send to the front means one step nearer peace.

### CONCERNING CIVIC TAXES.

A glance over the estimates submitted to the City Council will show that the sums which it is planned to expend in the departments this year make a total considerably in excess of previous years, and that, if they are finally adopted as indicated, there will likely be a very substantial increase in the assessment. No suggestion has been made that any of the items in the estimates would be considered excessive if it were not for the fact that citizens may be called upon to meet extraordinary expenses. We already have evidence of a proposal to provide for a special income tax for the year 1915 to meet expenditures arising out of the war, and which, if carried out as suggested, will have the effect of adding not less than \$10 to the taxes of every man in the community earning \$1,000 per year.

A leading citizen stated to The Standard yesterday that he regarded this tax as premature, but it is not too soon to consider what effect it, taken in conjunction with the increased departmental estimates, may produce upon the tax-payers. Last year the tax rate was \$1.92 upon each \$100 of assessed property valuation or income. In the case of a taxpayer taxed on an income of \$1,000 per year, the sum of his tax would be \$19.20, reached by computing the assessment at the rate, and adding a \$2 poll tax. The city is bound by law not to exceed a tax rate of \$1.98 for a term of years, which has not yet expired, but if the estimates already submitted are to be taken as a basis upon which to approximate the rate of taxation this year, it would seem that an application for the rescinding of the limiting legislation might be necessary.

Approximately this year's ordinary estimates are likely to be more than \$100,000 in excess of last year. The Chief Assessor is authority for the statement that every \$3,500 added to the estimates means an advance of one cent in the assessment rate. Figuring on this basis, and placing the increase at the sum named, which, we are assured, is a most conservative figure, it will be seen that to provide the money asked for, the rate will have to be increased at least thirty cents on the one hundred dollars, or to \$2.22.

On this basis we find that the man who paid \$21.20 last year is, this year, liable to be called on to contribute \$24.20, or, adding the proposed war tax of one per cent, \$34.20 to the civic treasury. True, the war-tax may not become necessary, but His Worship Mayor Frink must have had a very good idea that something of the kind would have to be done or he would not have suggested that authority be procured to provide for it.

There will be none to complain over payment of a tax to meet expenditures arising out of the present war. This is Canada's fight as well as Great Britain's, and every Canadian will join in hearty, whole-souled recognition of that fact. But it is wise to seek to add so largely to ordinary expenditures when there is even the slightest possibility of being called upon to meet extraordinary demands.

The case of the \$1,000 man, of course, applies only to those citizens in very moderate circumstances, men who find they have little or no surplus after meeting the ordinary expenses of life, but how will it be with the more fortunate situated, with taxable incomes of, say, \$2,000, \$3,000 or \$4,000? The \$2,000 man last year paid a tax of \$40.40; the \$3,000 man, \$59.60; and the \$4,000 man, \$78.80. This year with the increased estimates and the rate at the figure it must be to produce the money said to be required, the tax will run about as follows: \$2,000, \$46.40; \$3,000, \$68.60; \$4,000, \$90.80.

Now let us add the proposed war-tax, and in this connection it should be remembered that Mayor Frink's suggestion calls for a graded assessment, increasing the rate to be paid as the taxable income grows. This makes the showing about as follows: \$2,000, \$96.40; \$3,000, \$158.60; \$4,000, \$220.80.

There will be very general agreement that under the circumstances something in the nature of a war-tax may become necessary, though, it is not unreasonable to expect differences of opinion as to whether the method suggested is the best solution that could be found to meet the case. There will be an equally strong belief that, with such a tax in prospect, it is not wise to add to the ordinary expenses of the civic administration. There is no disposition to starve the civic services, but at a time when economy and retrenchment are every-

where regarded as necessary policies to be pursued, there is much reason to ask whether some of the rather elaborate plans for departmental development could not wait a more auspicious occasion?

### THE BRITISH NOTE.

An interesting and sane view of the reply of Sir Edward Grey to the protest from Washington against alleged interference by the British Government with United States commerce on the high seas is taken by the Christian Science Monitor of Boston. The Monitor commends Sir Edward for the fair and businesslike tone of the document and remarks that if he had not desired to be conciliatory he might have shown that in the present case Great Britain had proceeded only along lines similar to those adopted by the United States at the time of the civil war, when the United States government felt it necessary to assert its right to search for contraband articles in ships sailing under other flags.

Continuing, the Monitor says in reference to the action of the United States during the civil war: "The American prize court proceedings of this period, we think, are furnishing Sir Edward Grey with all the precedents he may ever be called upon to cite in future notes touching upon the present case. In our opinion, however, he will not feel called upon to cite them. He is aware, as the Washington government is, that these precedents would not have been established in the civil war period had the various governments been able to hold those of their people in the seagoing trade from violations of the United States rules relating to contraband, and that it was not against insincerity of governments so much as against the cupidity and dishonesty of a certain class of private traders that the Washington government in those days was driven to the employment of seemingly harsh and overbearing methods to protect itself. We doubt if we are mistaken in the belief that the Washington government realizes today that it is not the legitimate but the illegitimate commerce of the United States that the government of Great Britain is striving to suppress."

"Naturally, Great Britain insists upon its right of search. As naturally, we believe, would the United States insist upon it, were the cases reversed. It is the only possible way in which Great Britain can prevent the shipment of contraband finally to nations with which it is at war. The United States would find it impossible to guarantee the legitimacy of cargoes leaving its ports. It would be unwise for it to do so, because there might be excellent cause later on for questioning its guarantee and this would simply increase and intensify complications. It can only, with regard for its own best interests, insist, as it does, that the utmost freedom shall be granted American commerce where it is proved to be legitimate, leaving those of its merchants who shall export contraband articles to look out for themselves."

"Germans Utterly Tired of War" says newspaper headline. Yet only a few months ago the German people were led to believe that they could whip France in three weeks, Russia in three months and Great Britain in half a year. The half year is almost up but there are no signs that the Prussian power has accomplished any of these things. France is gradually pushing the German soldiers nearer to the frontier, Russia is successfully advancing against the combined efforts of Germany Austria and Turkey, while Great Britain has shown herself more than a match for her enemy. And Lord Kitchener is authority for the statement that Great Britain will not really commence to fight until the period. The German people are just beginning to comprehend the real situation.

Turkey is to get one-fifth of the war indemnity if Sharpey's wins, and the Ottoman Empire's integrity is to be guaranteed by Germany as one of the conditions of peace if the war goes against her. It is entirely in line with the Kaiser's point of view to imagine he will have the deciding word to say no matter how that war goes.

Chief Clark's tenure of office as head of the St. John police force came to an end on Tuesday night. He will carry with him into private life the very best wishes of thousands of citizens and good friends whose esteem he earned during a quarter of a century of conscientious service.

It is now stated that the lack of news from the front is due to the weather man rather than to the censor. All the same we still incline to

the opinion that the censor has something to do with it.

Apropos of the suggested increase in the civic assessment the Globe pertinently remarks "Taxation extraordinary will make impossible business as usual."

### A War Poem.

Our Lands 'ne'er thought of danger,  
Nor with claims gathering near,  
Our Country free from anger,  
The thought that Peace was here,  
And when the 'call to fight'  
Came o'er our peaceful Sands,  
We entered in with all our might  
To help dear Mother Land.

The storm clouds gathered deeper,  
And from across the seas  
Came England's sons to help her,  
To crush her enemies.  
And on the gory field,  
Her sons go forth to fight,  
And if it must be, they'll die to shield  
Our Land from fatal night.

The Kaiser thought it trying,  
In such a time of Peace,  
To keep his men in training  
If war was going to cease;  
But in his heart was 'War,'  
And well he knew his plans,  
To raid the lands, and spread the gore  
While all were shaking hands.

But while the War is waging,  
Our Country suffering wrong,  
The Kaiser holds his troops along,  
So Belgium's quiet Country  
Was first to feel the blow,  
But we hope to gain the victory  
And crush the cruel foe.

—Gertrude I. Peck.

### About Gen. French.

In the current issue of Collier's Weekly Captain C. S. Goldman, M. P., writes of General Sir John French. The following extract is taken from his article:

I have just returned from France, where I have visited the Compiègne-Soissons battle fields; and wherever I went I heard expressed on all sides the highest admiration for Sir John French—for his splendid spirit in co-ordinating so closely with General Joffre and subordinating himself to the general strategic plan.

Somebody once, at a London dinner while proposing his health, said French was "the incomparable Ney" of the British army. That was after the Boer War when he had again and again proved his skill as a leader of cavalry; but it is not every colonel that makes a good general, or a good general a supreme commander in the field. French has not only been a brilliant leader of cavalry, but has proved himself to be general of no mean order. In fact the war has produced the man.

French in South Africa went his way regardless of praise—he was rarely mentioned in despatches; his operations were too swift and secret for the war correspondent to get alongside and it was not till the conclusion of the war that people began to reflect that no one had anything to say against French.

Silent, good-tempered, and alert, there he was, ready to do his duty if called upon, but refusing to press his claims at all; he stands in the minds of Englishmen as a type of man on whom they can rely in moments of emergency—solid, steadfast, and capable.

When history comes to be written we shall know all the early blunders of the war. The French false opening by raiding Alsace and Lorraine—how the Belgians said so long but must be relieved by such and such a date—how the French were not ready and were not able to keep the appointment—what time the British were to relieve them to pieces—the contemptible little British army was hurled across the Channel under French, and took a hand as they alighted from the foot-boards of the panther troop trains.

General French must have known that it was not military strategy which took him to Mons—but sheer humanity. The story of that retreat will stand out in the pages of history blazoned with brilliant deeds. The Spartans at Thermopylae and Sir John Moore at Corunna made great retreats but I believe for coolness, order, and precision, Sir John French's retreat from Mons will stand beside either.

Von Moltke always shook his head with perfect seriousness when praised as a general: "Ah! I never had to retreat; that is the true test of generalship." And when you come to think of it, it must be so.

Our soldiers fought all day—seemed to drive the enemy back and then retired. They naturally wanted to know why, and if they had not had complete confidence in their eluder, would have lost heart.

Again and again the cavalry had to wheel round and fight rear-guard actions—for it is so fatally easy for a quick walk to become a run—for a retreat to become a rout. "Keep them on the run" is the commonplace of warfare. The difficulty is to set the pace and find where you can stop. This General French did. He led them nearly to the walls of Paris and then suddenly the Germans came to the conclusion that the retreat was not so successful as they had hoped. Indeed, in the words of Chatham, "They had done nothing and suffered much." And that was due to Sir John French.

This is the same "General by the name of French" upon whose head Captain Carvell of Carleton County poured out his words of abuse. Captain

Carvell says "his" (General French's) "ideas are ridiculous." Captain Goldman should be more careful else ex-Captain Carvell might inflict physical punishment upon him as he once did upon Dr. Edwards of Frontenac who dared to dispute some of the statements of the Carleton County braggart.

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## Little Benny's Note Book.

BY LEE PAPE.

I was sleepy as anything before I got up this morning and it felt as if it would be drill cold out of bed and I didn't want to get up anyway, and pop called me about 10 times and I answered him each time and after a while I heard the front door close, meaning pop had went out.

G. I thawt, I bet in to late for skool now, enway. And jest then ma called up stairs, saying, Benny Poits, Im kumming up there in 2 minits, and if yure not up and dressed there will be trubbl.

G. I thawt, I gess I bettir get up. Wich I did, and wen ma cam up I was putting awn my ahir shoe.

Wats the exphnayshn of this, sed ma. I got a nake in my shoe, I sed.

Let me see, sed ma. And she took took the shoe and felt in it, saying, Nonsents, theres nuthing in heer water.

Well there was wun in it I sed. Wich there was, only I didnt say wen, wich was yestidday.

Well if there was its flowd out agon, now you get a gate awn you, sed ma.

Well, there was a nake in it I sed.

If you say that agon youll ret the shoe sumware you leat expect it, sed ma, do you realize its 2 minits to 9.

Then Im late for skool and I cant go becase Ill get a bad mark, I sed, if you dont go at awl its awl rite, but if yure late you get a bad mark.

Youll go, awl rite, Ill rite you out a note for the teetbir, sed ma.

Wich it was lucky she did, becase I got to skool about a haff an hour late, losing about 10 moar minits watching 2 berds flying around the skool yard fiteing.

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