

THE EVENING TIMES, ST. JOHN, N. B., MONDAY, AUGUST 7, 1905.

THE EVENING TIMES.

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VIA MONTREAL

Although the press heard nothing about it, the members of the Transportation Commission are alleged to have discovered while in these provinces that there is a strong feeling in favor of handing the I. C. R. over to a commission. The Montreal Gazette says:—

"An interesting feature of the testimony received down by the sea was embodied in the hope expressed by a gentleman representative of the Intercolonial Railway might be placed in the hands of a commission and made a much more important factor in the general carrying trade of the country. Neither the politicians nor farmers were heard, as different testimony might have been of a different character. There is, however, a strong element in the three Maritime Provinces which would like to see the I. C. R. placed on a different basis."

"AN INFAMOUS BUSINESS"

It is now alleged that the real estate owned by the Equitable Society is greatly over-valued. The stated valuation is over \$30,000,000, but President Morton has appointed Mr. Douglas Robinson, who is President Roosevelt's brother-in-law, and an experienced real-estate broker, as special appraiser. Whatever the happens, Mr. Robinson will have an interesting commission. A New York despatch says:—

"The last annual report to the state insurance department gave the value of real estate owned by the society at \$30,000,000. Of this sum the buildings occupied by the society in New York, Boston, St. Louis, Des Moines, Denver, Memphis and in Paris, France; Madrid, Spain; Vienna, Austria; Berlin, Prussia; Santiago, Chile; City of Mexico; Sydney, New South Wales, and Melbourne, Australia, are stated to be worth \$31,373,130, while buildings in New York City, Jersey City, Milford, N. Y., East Orange, Piscataway, Bayonne and Bergen Point, N. J., are valued at over \$5,500,000."

It should prove as is charged that this property has been greatly over-valued, the public will not be surprised. The more the affairs of the society are investigated the less respect the people have for the integrity of the officers and directors. It appears that a very large amount of money—considerably over half a million dollars—was used for political purposes, and that certain persons regarded the funds of the society as so much capital to be utilized for their own enrichment.

Heretofore the annual financial statements of insurance societies will be reviewed with less confidence because of the revelations in connection with the Equitable. Already there is talk of demanding a fuller accounting by some of the other big American companies. Under the heading "An Infamous Business," the New York Journal of Commerce thus denounces conditions revealed in the relations between the Equitable and the Mercantile Trust Company:—

"Enough has been disclosed about the loan of the Mercantile Trust Company— which, as the president of the company testified, fluctuated between \$300,000 and \$400,000, and was finally discovered to be standing at \$685,000, and which stood in the name of President Alexander and Controller Jordan of the Equitable Life Assurance Society as trustees— to make it practically certain that it was in effect a loan to the society and a cover for a sort of secret corruption fund. It stood on the books of the trust company for some years and was reduced and increased from time to time, while the Equitable had large balances on deposit in the same institution upon which it received two per cent interest at the same time that four per cent was paid upon the loan. How much was expended first and last out of this fund, and for what purposes has not yet been revealed. It seems to be no longer disputed that this was virtually a loan to the Equitable, and that the fund covered by it was at the disposal of the society for purposes which did not appear on its own books. Among these purposes it is now said, but not yet proved, were: the purchase of shares of the society's stock, to prevent it from 'falling into undesirable hands'; the settlement of 'embarrassing suits'; and contributions to political parties. Assuming that these were the actual uses to which the borrowed money was put, or among the uses, it appears to have been nothing less than a corruption fund. The Equitable as a corporation had no legal right to purchase or hold any of its own shares, and if minority shares were bought with its funds and held by trustees it was to keep them out of the hands of those who might make trouble by being too inquisitive. The law had been so 'fixed' that policyholders could not make trouble— some inquiries or institute suits to ascertain and enforce their rights, but this might be done by acquiring stock. The method of managing the company and using its resources required that it should be a 'close corporation,' and that none of its shares should fall into hands that would make 'undesirable' efforts to meddle with its business as it was conducted under the control of the 'majority stock.'"

That this company, other life insurance companies and many corporations have been accustomed to make contributions to both political parties there is no doubt, and that it is done with corrupt purpose and with corrupt effect is equally beyond question. It has been done to secure legislation and to prevent legislation, to secure privilege and immunities, and to impose burdens and exactions. Whatever excuse may be pleaded in extenuation or justification, it is an infamous business, which has had a most degenerating and

demoralizing effect upon public life and upon popular political action. It is one of the perils of popular government. This kind of rottenness must be exposed without mercy and subjected to the most caustic process of disinfection. It is a cancerous growth that must be eradicated if our body politic is to have health and escape dissolution.

NOT AN EASY TASK

The United States congress is likely to develop an enquiring turn of mind. There is a suspicion that the enormous annual appropriations are not always expended with due regard to economy—a suspicion, it may be remarked, that is not confined to the study of such matters in any particular country.

It is stated that ever since President McKinley got \$50,000,000 in 1898 to be used at discretion in connection with the Spanish war preparations, there has been a growing habit of the executive departments to ask for "blanket appropriations" of millions to be expended at departmental heads may decide. It has also happened that, when sufficient funds were not voted, the heads of departments cheerfully went on expending and produced a deficit. This was met by an enactment making it a punishable offence for an official to create a deficit, but the cure was not complete, and it is stated that congress will at the next session insist upon further curtailing the powers of the departments.

In theory this seems easy. But every member of congress is interested in having appropriations made that may benefit his part of the country, and must therefore appear in the double role of a critic and a man seeking favors. Under such circumstances fraud may be prevented, but extravagance will hardly be checked.

ASTUTE MR. WU

A few years ago the American papers had a good deal to say about Mr. Wu Ting Fang, the Chinese minister at Washington. He was a clever diplomat, and became quite a social lion. With centuries of Oriental philosophy and culture behind him, Mr. Wu did not hesitate to smile on occasion at the asseverations of the average American, and to express his views with engaging frankness. But he had learned the art of flattery, and when he was recalled there were suggestions that perhaps he was too much Americanized to suit the views of Peking.

It must therefore produce a slight shock in Washington and New York to learn that Mr. Wu is behind the retaliatory policy of China in response to the American exclusion of Chinamen. Mr. Wu was evidently learning something while he was making pleasant speeches to his American friends, and came to the conclusion that the pocket was their vulnerable point of attack. It is expected that as a result of the Chinese boycott a more favorable treaty with the United States will be secured.

Mr. Bramwell Booth, writing to the London Times, says the total number of applications received by the Salvation Army from persons desirous of emigrating to Canada during the six months ending June, was 6,832. Out of this number suitable positions were found for 3,250.

Mrs. Chadwick's creditors, to whom she owes about \$2,000,000, will have about \$14,500 to divide between them. The fact will assuage their grief when they are tempted to mourn over the contrast between her former splendor and her present limited scope of activity.

Dr. Orshyatekha, head of the Independent Order of Foresters, is a man of infinite resource. His latest proposition, to invade a portion of the funds of the order in Northwest lands and settle them with Foresters, has been approved by the supreme court of the order.

The statement that M. Witte has advised Russia to be prepared to continue the war may be taken with a grain of salt. The peace talks between England and Russia have hardly begun. The New York American is not a high authority, as a rule.

The suggestion of an alliance between Great Britain, the United States and France, is received with favor in London. Such an alliance, with Japan the ally of England, would dominate the world, for the world's good.

Wool, cotton, leather and furs have all advanced sharply in price during the last few months. Wool is practically twice as high in England as it was in 1902.

The city council will no doubt have an interesting session this afternoon.

BIG SALMON RUN

(Toronto Globe.) This is the fourth year when by a strange freak of nature the salmon run in British Columbia is heaviest. For three years the run is indifferent; then follows the big season. The run commenced July 15th, and the outlook is good. Amelius Jarvis, who has returned from a long visit to the coast, believes that the heavy run may be made an annual event by assisting nature, and in the Government hatcheries he believes the solution lies. Thirty canneries which he inspected are doing well. From Fort Simpson to the west of Vancouver Island the fish were large and of good quality. They are not running too fast, which enables the canneries to get up with the output. The traps are averaging 150 fish per day. Mr. Jarvis asserted that the Government should restock the streams. Artificial stimulation had proved his use in the Sacramento and Columbia Rivers.

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METHODIST MISSIONS

Rev. Dr. Henderson's Eloquent Sermon in Queen Square Church Yesterday.

The sermon of Rev. Dr. James Henderson, of Toronto, in the Queen square Methodist church yesterday morning was an account of the growth of the Methodist missionary movement under John Wesley and his coadjutors in England and the extension of the movement, ending with an appeal to the church to supplement by money contributions the efforts of the present day workers in western Canada.

The subject chosen was the church's beginnings at Jerusalem. There always is, said Dr. Henderson, an inner light from which the good must go out—from the centre to the circumference, from the near to the remote, from home to heathen lands. This is the divine order. A deaf ear to the heathen call is spiritual suicide.

The central buoy of Methodism and John Wesley, its founder, was the missionary movement. Among the illustrious contemporaries of Wesley were Agassiz, scientific; Cowley, poet; Burns, soldier; Burke, orator; Sheridan, playwright; Garrick, actor; Hogarth, Handel, Napoleon, Wellington, statesman. And further, some like stars are fast burning out; but the name of John Wesley, friend of mankind, can never fade.

The movement, he said, gives us a clear insight into the character of the nation at the time. If you want to know something of a nation in her palmy days you must turn over the pages of her old pill-books—the imperial Rome, the glories of the commentaries of Caesar; the orations of Cicero. If you want to know the inner and under life of old England you must begin the study of Wesley and those who worked under him. Here England is seen at her best in those times.

The men and forces opposed to these brought out as well England's worst. The perage was openly profligate and profligate. The common people, in the words of an old writer, "had clean gone over to the devil." Burglary, highway robbery, murder and kidnapping permeated every corner of the island. In one year a whole army of criminals—50,000; in one period seven months twenty-seven men, women and children were executed in one jail alone. Not until the missionary movement swept the whole island from sea to sea did the tide turn. This saved England at a critical moment in her history.

Not did that movement stop over there. It crossed the flood and made us what we are today. It was the old saddle-back preacher that preached the gospel to the well the foundation of this great dominion than any other party. Eager to follow the trail of the settler, these men preached from the stump by day and listened to the howling wolf by night. They preached and prayed and sweat the people wholesale into the church.

These are the men who are going to save Canada. There is no bigger man than the old. When pen and poetry and brush and camera have told their tale the story has only been begun. Canada's centre of gravity, with respect to population, is moving westward. The cities of the west are growing. This question the church in the west, calling upon the people of the east to help answer. This is a cash request. When the laborers are willing to sacrifice all earthly to save the field it becomes our duty to aid in their support.

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