

THE EVENING TIMES AND STAR, ST. JOHN, N. B., FRIDAY, APRIL 19, 1918

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The St. John Evening Times is printed at 27 and 29 Canterbury street, every evening (Sunday excepted) by The St. John Times Printing and Publishing Co. Ltd., a company incorporated under the Joint Stock Companies Act. Telephone—Private exchange connecting all departments. Main 241. Subscription prices—Delivered by carrier, \$4.00 per year; by mail, \$3.00 per year in advance.

The Times has the largest afternoon circulation in the Maritime Provinces. Special Advertising Representatives—NEW YORK, Frank R. Northrup, 301 Fifth Ave.—CHICAGO, E. J. Powers, Manager, Association B.T.'s. British and European—Frederick A. Smyth, 20 Ludgate Hill, LONDON, E. C. England.

The Audit Bureau of Circulations audits the circulation of The Evening Times.

## NO COMPARISON.

The promoters of the deal which resulted in the issue of the watered stock on which it is now sought to force dividends out of the people of St. John are desperate. Whether they fear some of their own profits on the deal will be called back to pay dividends, or whether they are merely pleading for the financiers they induced to go into the scheme, they are begging the legislature to save them from alleged bankruptcy. They want the money and they want it now. They ignore altogether the evidence submitted by Auditor MacIntyre of their ability without an increase in rates to pay dividends on all the money really invested. They have a most pathetic tale to tell individual members of the house, expecting the latter to take it for granted that shrewd firms like Harris, Forbes & Co. of Boston would let the bonds default within little more than a year after they were marketed. The thing is too transparent. Certain gentlemen want to get away with their profits on the deal, and make the people of St. John pay the piper. There can be no compromise so far as the city is concerned. It cannot be believed that the legislators will be deceived by power company buncombe and the wall of the gentlemen who object to saying good-bye to sudden wealth.

## THE WAR SITUATION.

It is announced today that Italian troops will be despatched to the battle-front in France. The British yesterday repulsed German attacks south of Kemmel, on the Lys front, and around Ghent. There was no change along the entire British front last night. A French general says the battle may continue for a month or more, but he is convinced the Allies will hold on until the enemy reserves are exhausted and with the help of America the numerical superiority will be on the side of the Allies. He is further quoted by Reuter's correspondent as follows:—

"He declared unreservedly that there was nothing disquieting in the present battle situation, but that on the contrary we have every ground for confidence both in Picardy and Flanders. The Germans would continue to fling wearied divisions into battle until the moment of exhaustion arrived. The course of this battle, like all others, was essentially the same. Each side would continue to ply blow and counter blow endeavoring by weight of numbers or superior skill to find the weak points in the enemy's armor, and each endeavoring to retain sufficient reserves to turn the scale when the decisive moment was reached. After four years we are within sight of this decisive point."

Last night's cables say that one Canadian division has been thrown into the fight on the Lys front. Up to the present time the Canadians have not been engaged, as the sector they were holding was not in the line of German attack. It is satisfactory to know that the Germans have suffered very heavy losses without succeeding in gaining any vital advantage. The outlook grows more encouraging.

## ST. JOHN'S CASE.

The delegation headed by the mayor which went to Fredericton last evening, went with the same message that was conveyed by the much larger delegation which visited the capital last week. It went to say to the members of the legislature that the citizens of St. John feel very deeply on this question of the outrageous demand of the New Brunswick Power Company for increased rates, which would enable it to pay dividends on watered stock.

If the old St. John Railway Company were still in control of the plant—exactly the same plant—with only \$2,057,600 in stock and bonds outstanding against it, there would be no need of the proposed increase. The citizens are boldly asked to pay interest on \$3,100,000 instead of \$2,057,600, and on some of it at seven per cent instead of six per cent; and there is an additional \$2,000,000 on which interest must also be paid as quickly as the company can make the levy.

There is not a shadow of fair ground for an appeal for higher rates to pay dividends on watered stock. There should be no watered stock in a public utility enterprise. The people who give the use of their streets have a right to be protected in their fair and proper demand to be given an adequate service (which they are not getting) at rates which would yield only a fair return on a real investment.

That is the whole story. Everybody knows why the company wants the increase in rates. To grant them before the affairs of the company have been fully investigated would be a body blow to St. John, and would encourage exploiters of public utilities to get busy all over the province.

The city has not maintained a constant lobby at Fredericton. That should

not be necessary. The views of their representatives in the house and the presentation of the case by the city council, backed by the citizens at large, should prevail. They have no axe to grind. They are not after dividends on watered stock. They simply and earnestly plead for justice and fair play at a time when the interests of all the citizens are threatened by men who in this of all times set aside considerations of public welfare to make money out of the exploitation of a public utility. To let them have their way would be a crime against the city and the province.

## HERE ARE THE FACTS.

The following headlines appear in the St. John Standard this morning:

"Editor of St. John Times-Star wanted to influence members. Surprising request made by A. M. Belding that he be permitted to address the legislature while in session. Would be reformer able to obtain permission for Toronto clergyman to boost Dr. Roberts' pet hobby, Lax methods of government. Latter, however, declined to allow 'Wamba the Witness' to tell members how to vote."

The St. John Standard of April 10 contained a report of the proceedings of the Social Service Council of New Brunswick, at which Dr. Shearer, honorary secretary of the Social Service Council of Canada, was present. That report says:

"On motion a hearty vote of thanks was extended to Dr. Shearer for his presence and counsel. In reply to the vote of thanks Dr. Shearer referred to the work of the Dominion Council and asked the help of the provincial council in pushing on the good work. He referred especially to the public health bill now before the legislature at Fredericton. He congratulated the government and the people of the province on such an up-to-date measure which was much needed at the present. He said the bill was not too drastic and could do much to better living conditions in the province. It would mean sacrifice on the part of some but no needed reform ever came without sacrifice. After some discussion A. M. Belding, Rev. F. S. Dowling and Dr. Shearer were appointed a committee to go to Fredericton and lend all the assistance in their power to the passage of the bill."

Mr. Belding was not at the meeting, as he was in Fredericton attending the final meeting of the provincial committee on vocational training. Next day, however, Dr. Shearer and Rev. Mr. Dowling went to Fredericton, and the former, who is accustomed to addressing legislative bodies on matters relating to social service, expressed a willingness to address the members of the New Brunswick house for a few minutes if it were possible, in behalf of the Social Service Council of New Brunswick. Mr. Belding interviewed Premier Foster, and asked if Dr. Shearer could be heard for fifteen minutes. The premier replied that if Dr. Shearer were in the chamber when the house rose at six o'clock he would, immediately upon adjournment, introduce the visitor and request the members to remain a few minutes to hear his message. Dr. Shearer gladly assented, and after the house adjourned he talked for perhaps ten or fifteen minutes, delivering the message of the Social Service Council of New Brunswick, which had endorsed the public health bill and sent him there as its spokesman. The Standard's statement that "Mr. Belding wanted to address the legislature himself, but even the government could not stand for that," is a gratuitous falsehood, as Dr. Shearer, Rev. Mr. Dowling and Premier Foster will testify.

Incidentally it may be observed that the health bill which the Social Service Council of New Brunswick endorsed ought to pass.

The Standard's Fredericton correspondent says that at the legislative assembly yesterday "the well filled galleries after hearing the leader of the opposition went away more than convinced that by far the greater portion of the ability and high purpose in the legislative assembly of this province is to be found in the group of men sitting to the left of Mr. Speaker and comprising his majesty's loyal opposition." What a pity the members of various royal commissions were not there to be enlightened, and Mr. J. K. Flemming there to applaud the gifted speaker on this historic occasion.

The four civic candidates, knowing the views of the citizens and sharing them, were very emphatic last evening in denouncing the New Brunswick Power Company's demand for increased rates. Why should there be a moment's hesitation at Fredericton to grant what the city asks, and have the matter of the relations between the city and power company settled in the only way that is fair and just?

St. John welcomes Hon. Everett Colby, not merely because he represents the congress of our great Ally, but because he comes with a message from that Ally and from our Allies and our own sons in France. He comes at the moment of a great crisis in the war, and from personal knowledge he can tell us much we ought to know. Moreover, he is a brilliant speaker, who can hold an audience by the power of his eloquence.

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The Road to Camp.

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Native—"About five miles as the crow flies."

Tommy—"Well, 'ow far more is it if the crow has to walk and carry a rifle and kit bag?"—TIT-BITS.

Fit Only for Father.

Daughter—"I'll put on my raincoat and run over to the post office to see whether there is any mail for us."

Mother—"Do not go, daughter! It rains so hard that it would really be a crime to chase a dog out of the house. Let father go."—Edmonton Bulletin.

Putting It Mildly.

"What do you think of my poem on spring?" asked the poet.  
"To be frank, I don't think it does spring justice," replied the editor.—Louisville Courier-Journal.

The Bishop's Parable.

Bishop Paul Jones of Utah was asked by a committee the other day to support a rather extreme Sunday ordinance. "Gentlemen," the bishop said, "the wife of one of my ministers saw her little boy last Sunday morning chasing

the hens all over the farmyard with a club.  
"I'll learn you," he was shouting. "I'll learn you to lay eggs on the Sabbath!"—Florida Times-Union.

He Couldn't Afford It.  
A negro who had an injured head entered a doctor's office. "Hello, Sam! Got out again, I see?"

"Yes, sah; I done got carried up with a razor, doc."

"Why don't you keep out of bad company?" said the physician, after he had dressed the wound.

"Deed, I'd like to, doc, but I ain't got 'nuff money to git a divorce!"—Vancouver Province.

Calling the Kettle Black.  
"I despise a hypocrite. Now there's Johnson, for example; he's the biggest hypocrite on earth."

"But you appear to be his best friend."

"Oh, yes; I try to appear friendly towards him. It pays better in the end."

The Needed Ingredient.  
"How's she getting along with her knitting?"

"Great. She's finished a pair of socks."

"Fine."

"Yes, but now she's got to wait until the army enlists a boy with feet small enough for those socks to fit."

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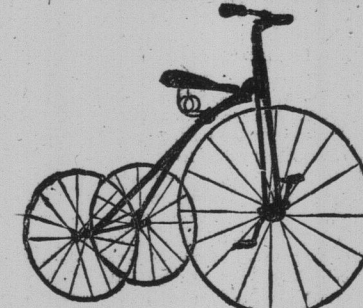
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