

# The Evening Times-Star

The Evening Times-Star is printed at 23-27 Canterbury Street, every evening (Sunday excepted) by New Brunswick Publishing Co., Ltd., J. S. McKenna, President.  
Telephone—Private branch exchange connecting all departments. Main 2417.  
Subscription Price—By mail per year, in Canada, \$5.00; United States, \$6.00; by carrier per year \$7.00.  
The Evening Times-Star has the largest circulation of any evening paper in the Maritime Provinces.  
Advertising Representatives—New York, Frank R. Northrup, 350 Madison Ave., Chicago, E. J. Powers, 19 South La Salle Street.  
The Audit Bureau of Circulations audits the circulation of The Evening Times-Star.

ST. JOHN, N. B., JUNE 20, 1924

## OTTAWA AND THE PORTS.

Occasionally the House gets around to the question of the ports. Hon. Mr. Graham, in the course of a debate early Thursday morning, pointed out that if the farmers of the West would do their utmost to have their grain routed through Canadian ports they could accomplish much. He reminded them that the rate to St. John or Halifax is the same as to Portland, and asked them to send their products to the Maritime harbors and thus help to develop Canadian ports.

This is good doctrine, so far as it goes, and in the Maritime Provinces the people would be very glad to hear the Minister of Railways saying, if he could say it and still abide by the facts, that the National Railways, through their agents and through their influence with shippers, were doing their utmost to have traffic routed through St. John and Halifax.

Hon. Mr. Graham's remarks gave Hon. Mr. Baxter an opportunity to point out very forcibly that, while we are getting a considerable traffic by way of the Canadian Pacific Railway, there is pressing need of further facilities here to be used by the Canadian National if we are to be so equipped as to be able to take full advantage of the trade of the West. In this connection Mr. Baxter referred to the proposed pier near the new dry dock, and reminded the Government that it is the business of this country to make expenditures for terminals at St. John and Halifax rather than at Portland.

When the Canadian National Railways are being operated in full recognition of the sound policy that Canadian traffic should go through Canadian ports, the Maritime harbors will begin to come into their own.

## IMPERIAL TRADE.

The preference resolutions which were adopted by the last Imperial Economic Conference in London have been defeated in the British House of Commons by a very narrow margin, which probably indicates that this question will figure extensively in the next general election in Britain. The resolutions were submitted to the House in accordance with a pledge given by the Prime Minister that an opportunity would be given for a complete discussion and a free vote by all of the members, regardless of party ties. The vote of Tuesday morning, the preferences, which were introduced during the war, and which are of considerable interest to Canada particularly in connection with the export of automobiles, will be suspended on July 1.

Although the vote was close—evidently closer than the Government expected—the debate which covered two sessions of the House gives but little encouragement to those in the Dominion overseas who hoped for a substantial promotion of Imperial trade through fiscal legislation in Great Britain in the near future. The Liberals and most of the Labor Party are opposed to preferential rates because they are opposed to duties on imports for revenue purposes. They assert that tariff taxes will only increase the cost of living in Great Britain, and that these preferences which have been in force were not intended primarily to assist the Mother Country by the Dominions, but were in reality a measure designed to protect certain British interests during a period of emergency. The Conservatives, on the other hand, have strongly advanced the view that the preferences should be continued and gradually increased. They point to the preferences given the Mother Country by the Dominions, particularly by Canada, and argue that a return in kind would promote both Imperial trade and Imperial unity. Neither the Conservatives nor the Liberals are unanimous on this question, but even in Canada there are Conservatives who object stoutly to the British preference unless we are to get some substantial return for it in the way of advantage over our competitors in the British market.

This is but a part of the whole fiscal question which will be the chief issue in the next general election in Great Britain, and which promises to be likewise the chief question when the next federal election comes in Canada. We claim the right to make a tariff for ourselves, in what we believe to be the best interests of Canadians, and we are bound to give the British people the same right. If the time comes when the people of the Motherland deem it wise to adopt protection, there would then be opportunity to introduce really substantial and effective preferences. Up to the present time such a plan has been rejected in Britain largely because of the argument that it would involve taxation of food.

Mr. Thomas, Secretary for the Colonies, says the Dominions are doing what they believe best for their own people in tariff matters, and that Britain is compelled to do the same. The result of the British debate on the preference will cause some disappointment overseas, but it is likely

that Canada will make no change in the British preference, at least before there has been another election in Great Britain and that country has clearly declared its future policy in relation to fiscal questions. But Britain's attitude, it must be clear, is not at present of a kind likely to invite further fiscal favors from the Dominions. Moreover it assists those who would abolish the low tariff on imports from Britain, and trade favor for favor with any country found ready for such a policy.

## ANOTHER INQUIRY.

Hon. Mr. Graham, Minister of Railways, and Hon. Dr. Baxter, of St. John, very heartily damned the resolution adopted by the House on Monday, calling for an investigation by the Public Accounts Committee of the administration of the business profits and income tax, but, while they expressed very similar sentiments, Mr. Graham finally voted for the resolution and Dr. Baxter against it. Only two Conservatives voted for the inquiry, and two Liberals and five Progressives voted against it. Mr. W. C. Good, in moving the resolution—it was really an amendment to a motion to go into supply—said that he had no specific or definite charges to make regarding bygone maladministration in the taxation department, but he felt that where there was so much smoke there must be some fire and that an investigation should be made. Mr. Melgren said the Good resolution was laudable and he intimated that Mr. Good did not really have "the courage of his own curiosity." Sir Henry Drayton said that the Good amendment was just part of "the tissue of calumny woven against himself (Sir Henry) and the Roridan Company in the last election." He thought taxation information should not be revealed, but he promised that if there was to be any unearthing of the web he would be one of the most active of the unravelers.

Hon. Mr. Graham made a characteristic address, dwelling on the sin of covering information about your neighbor's business tax. He voted for the amendment in the end, but protested that no action taken should be the result of mere curiosity, and he said that to drag private taxation affairs into the light of day would be "a profitable source of blackmail, a fruitful field for busybodies to fuss around the income taxes of others." He contended that particulars of a business, while necessarily revealed to government tax officials, should be wholly kept from business rivals. Not content with this declaration, Mr. Graham delivered a broadside against undue curiosity, saying that the world today contained "too many peeping Toms and women inquisitive as Bluebeard's wives." "We seem in the world just now," he said, "to have a mania for investigating everybody but ourselves. We are all trying to get something on the other fellow."

Dr. Baxter, while admitting the right of Parliament to do anything necessary in the public interest, opposed the Good amendment as vague and chaotic, a piece of pharisaical uplift, "one of those political sandstorms to throw dust in the eyes of the public." He intimated that Mr. Good had purposely neglected to put any real punch into his motion. All his bloodhounds were blind and toothless and had muzzles on them. "What was proposed was just a committee to snoop around and cast slurs on people's characters." What the Public Accounts Committee will actually do remains to be seen. The need for such an inquiry would have been much clearer if Mr. Good had announced just what he was driving at, and upon what specific knowledge he founded his request for an investigation. The committee will hardly engage in a mere fishing excursion. If there has been, or is now, something radically wrong with the administration of the business profits and income tax, the inquiry will be justified. Aside altogether from politics it may be assumed that the Public Accounts Committee, as well as the House, will agree in protecting the public interest without revealing private taxation information to business rivals or to people who are merely curious or suspicious.

## ENGLAND MAKES RUSSIAN COINS

London, June 20.—(Associated Press)—Dies are being cast at the Royal Mint for 50 kopek pieces for the Russian Soviet government by means of a machine which was made in France. This fact, says the Evening Standard, was elucidated in the course of a tour of the mint by a party of overseas visitors. The machines are making coins at the rate of 48,000 every eight hours.

## U. S. POPULATION.

New York, June 21.—(Associated Press).—The population of the United States totaled 112,298,000 on Jan. 1, 1924, according to estimates announced this week by the National Bureau of Economic Research. This compares with 110,883,000 on Jan. 1, 1923, and the census count of 105,711,000 on Jan. 1, 1920.

## Press Comment

### THE ROYAL PORTRAIT.

(Montreal Gazette.)

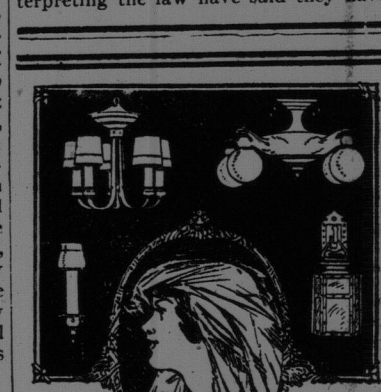
A lively stir amongst critics has been occasioned by the portrait of His Majesty on exhibition at the Royal Academy. The artistic merits of this production are being threshed out with vigor on both sides, and in some quarters the picture is denounced as a caricature instead of a likeness and as foreign to the expression of the original as though a purely imaginative effort. Meantime the artist, Mr. Charles Sims, defends himself by saying that monarchs have too frequently been painted in a manner flamboyant and legendary, an error he has striven to avoid by representing the King as a human personality. Certainly it is no new thing for a portrait to be "doctored." The touching up of features placed upon a canvas has been cultivated as though it were an essential of fine art, and many of the portraits of celebrities are more or less apocryphal. A Scottish critic wondered why the kingly images exhibited there should be such and every one painted with a nose like that of a door knocker. Louis XVIII. was given the head of a Bourbon and the body of the First Napoleon. It is strongly suspected that the features of Milton and Bunyan were more than once made interchangeable assets upon canvas. Good Queen Bess was probably fully accommodated when she warned the artists against putting any shadows—euphemism for wrinkles—in the picture. Lely made a huge fortune by keeping to the "ideal" side of impersonation by pigment. But less fortunate was the artist who was banished from court because he made the Merry Monarch to appear uglier than that eminent person had ever dreamed he could look. Perhaps no personage has been more subjected to felicitous treatment in portraiture than Shakespeare himself. Limnings of the Avon Bard that are not likenesses are legion. We might expect that Cromwell would disdain any approach to flattery. When sitting for his portrait before Lely, the Protector admonished on this wise: "My Lely, I desire you would use all your skill to paint my picture truly like me. But remark all these roughnesses, pimples, warts, and everything you see in me; otherwise, I will not pay you one farthing for it." It sounds Cromwellian to the letter. Whatever the merits of the case in regard to the portrait of His Majesty King George, we may rest assured that personally the present Sovereign is in no way less disposed to pose or be posed in any attitude other than that of the natural and urbane gentleman all his subjects know him to be.

### THE MAN WHO GETS A LIFT.

(Toronto Star.)

Another of those curious cases is reported in which the owner of an automobile is being sued for damages by a person who was being given a free ride when an accident occurred. One never hears of a case of this kind without wondering how the person who was having the free ride could enter suit in view of the circumstances, and why the law is allowed to remain as it is. Most people feel pretty strongly that if a person accepts a lift from a motorist he ought to carry the risk as well as derive the benefit of the service rendered him. It is clear, of course, that the person who pays for transportation by motor, as well as by train or boat, should be guaranteed safety in travel, and be entitled to compensation if injured. A fraction of the fare he pays is supposed to insure him against injury, and the paying of compensation to injured persons is part of the overhead charge of the transportation business. When a motorist gives an acquaintance a ride—picks him up on his way downtown or calls for him in the evening—it is a friendly act and it is regarded by both of them. It does not occur to either of them that the motorist assumes a serious responsibility in doing this friendly act. But it appears to be so, and in the event of an accident the law permits the passenger to

collect damages from the owner of the car for such injuries as he may sustain. Some of our judges in this interpreting the law have said they have



no option but to do so, although they sometimes appear to do it reluctantly. It would seem to be an old law that has not been amended since the coming of the motor age. Tens of thousands of people ride every day in other people's cars, and not more than one person in a thousand who meets with injury while doing so would sue for damages. This being so it is worth considering whether the law should be left as it is for the advantage of the few who invoke it. Everybody knows that there is a certain risk involved in motoring. The owner of a car risks his property every time he runs it into the street, and there is a certain risk to him and anyone who gets in with him when he goes driving. But surely if he carries his property and personal risk anyone who rides with him should

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