

The Standard



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SAINT JOHN, SATURDAY MORNING, SEPT. 3, 1910

THE PEOPLE AND THE HIGHWAYS.

It was confidently predicted by those familiar with the improved condition of the highways and bridges in the province that the Telegraph, when it started a campaign to belittle the work of the Hazen government during the last two years, would live to regret it. The long regime of graft, plunder and incompetence which characterized the highway policy of the Telegraph's friends, the late administration, and which to a great extent brought about its downfall, is too lively a memory for the people of the province to be hoodwinked into condemning Mr. Hazen and his colleagues for the acts of their predecessors.

The prediction has been amply justified. From all parts of the province during the last few weeks have come letters and reports bearing witness to the improvement in the roads and bridges, and condemning the short-sighted and partisan attitude of the Telegraph for attempting to saddle an honest administration with results for which it is not responsible. Just as it is easier to pull down than to build up, so the old government allowed the highways and bridges to go to rack and ruin, while much of the money voted year by year to be spent on repairs and improvements found its way into the pockets of a hoard of grafters.

When the Hazen government came into power in March, 1908, this condition of things prevailed. A new and workable highway act was passed at the first session of the legislature in fulfillment of Mr. Hazen's pre-election promise, and the result in little more than two years is now in evidence. The bridges, which were naturally the first care of the government, have nearly all been repaired or rebuilt, and the highways, in which the municipalities now have an active interest, have been greatly improved all over the province. Much yet remains to be done, but the people generally realize that this is but a question of time. They trusted Mr. Hazen and, in sporting phrase, they intend to give the premier a run for his money. It is little wonder under these circumstances that, when the Telegraph, conveniently forgetting the unsavory record of its friends, singles out a piece of road, or a bridge, here and there, and condemns the government's whole highway policy because some repairs are needed, it excites only contempt and ridicule.

The following letter, which The Standard is asked to publish "in defence of truth and honesty," is a case in point, and incidentally lets in some light on the late government's methods:

"To the Editor of The Standard:
"Sir—If I knew the address of the Telegraph's 'bridge photographer, I would wire him to come at once to Rogersville and photograph the Bushie Bridge. It is a high bridge across a brook about 12 feet wide, about one mile from the I. C. R. station on the main highway between Rogersville and Kouchibouguac. It was built by the late government a few years ago. One year later horses began to drop through it. Last year a railing fell off. This spring it took a lurch to leeward. I crossed it last week in fear and trembling. It looks like a huge pile of drift-rotten logs of different kinds. Inspector Desmond is now on the ground to rebuild it the way the new government does things, and the Telegraph's photographer should get there quick.
"He should also go a few miles further to the Burke bridge and take a picture of the thirty pieces of cedar that a well-known Rogersville firm sold the late government for the modest sum of \$512. Then he should go to Chatham and cross over to the Mill Cove bridge near the pulp mill, and take a snap-shot of the railing on the south side, put on by the old government. It consists of seventeen little round spruce posts with the bark still on them, and forty pieces of rough scantling with scarf splices and spiked, not bolted and not painted.
"Then he should not forget to photograph the railing on the other side, put on by Mr. Desmond a good, substantial job, well planned and painted. While this was being done, by the way, one of the old government's defeated candidates passed along, and inquired if they were putting a new railing on both sides. One of the men replied that the other one was to be left there as a tombstone for the dead government—exit Mr. ex-M.P.P.
"The famed artist should then proceed to Tabusintac and perpetuate a gravel pit at the north end of Tabusintac bridge for which a supporter of the good old boodle government demands \$500 for gravel to finish the bridge that was built last year. But as the days of graft are over, the owner of the sandhill will have to wait till the grafters are again in power.
"If the Telegraph focus man had gone into the bushiness sooner he might have struck off the Savoy bridge in Hardwicke which Mr. Tezar Williston said the fish were afraid to swim under. This pile of rotten wood was put there by Mr. Williston's political friends, at an enormous cost to the province, and was safe for horses for about two years. Since then the little hemlock stringers have been bolted and propped to make it passable. But it is rebuilt now in the way the new government does things.
"Northumberland wants a viett from the bridge arched immediately, before all the rotten bridges are rebuilt. When he comes to the North Shore he might go to the Sheridan bridge at Bouctouche and photograph the forty hemlock logs and two boxes of bolts for which a contractor got \$200 from the old government and never struck a blow.
"Yours, etc.,
"COMMERCIAL TRAVELLER."
These well aimed shafts of The Standard's correspondent serve to recall a condition of affairs which

happily no longer exists. The honest and progressive policy of the Hazen government may provoke the hostility of the Telegraph and its friends in the local opposition, but their attitude is well understood. The popular outcry against the condition of the roads and bridges, which drove them from office in 1908, has ceased. The people are content.

AS INTERPRETED IN ENGLAND.

The average Canadian reader, says the Vancouver News-Advertiser, is tempted to cynical remark by the solemn leaders which are found in the metropolitan British press concerning the Canadian free trade revolt, and especially referring to Sir Wilfrid's assurance that he is a free trader. "What do the tariff reformers think of this?" "What have the British advocates of a preferential tariff to say now?" demand the Liberal organs. They quote the Grain Growers' memorials as if they had been signed by every farmer in Canada. They reprint Sir Wilfrid's latest statement that protection is robbery as if he had not said so in stronger language fifteen years ago and continued the robbery ever since.

The London News quotes two or three of the memorials presented to the Premier and says "Sir Wilfrid so far from resenting welcomes the demand of the west. He is a free trader and he merely asks for driving force behind to carry Canada in the wake of England's shining example. The West is supplying the driving force and Canada is turning against the tariff in the very hour that English protectionists are exhorting her to testify on behalf of protection."

Not long after these words were printed Sir Wilfrid was hearing from a western delegation a demand for higher tariff on lumber, and was speaking comfortable words in reply. The London Star did not foresee such an incident when it published news from Winnipeg calculated "to sadden the heart of Neo-Protectionists." The news was that Sir Wilfrid had said "Protection is a great wrong and makes millions dishonest one with another. It makes the individual selfish and dishonest, and inculcates the vicious principle of expecting value where none is given."

But not all English journals take so seriously Sir Wilfrid's praise of free trade. The Express is so unwell as to call the Canadian Premier "Mr. Facing-Both-Ways." The Express has somehow got the impression of Sir Wilfrid that "when he is in the West he is a free trader who must protect himself, when in the East a Protectionist with academic sympathy for Free Trade." And again: "He is a Free-Trader-Protectionist. You are Free Traders, and I am a Free Trader. I swear by Cobden, I swear by Gladstone, by Asquith, and by George. But, oh, my friends, let us never forget that this is a young and frail country. Let us, dear brethren, sink our fiscal convictions and continue to collect the necessary revenue by customs duties." Thus shall a statesman be all things to all men and preserve both theory and practice in separate compartments. A great wit was once asked his age. "When I am with old people," he said, "I am a hundred, and when I am with children, I am ten." Sir Wilfrid Laurier also has great intelligence.

It is evident that our fellow subjects in the British Islands are somewhat confused over the fiscal creed of the Laurier administration. The case demands patience. Mr. Fielding will deliver a budget speech in a few weeks.

IN HOLIDAY ATTIRE.

The advent of the Dominion Exhibition in addition to the publicity and other advantages which will result has had a noticeable effect on the appearance of the city. It is doubtful if ever before has there been such a general campaign of painting and decorating as has been in evidence the last few weeks. Business firms have repainted their signs and house-holders in all parts of the city have shown a desire to brighten up their dwellings. The stimulus to trade is only transitory, but the movement for a cleaner and brighter city should remain permanent.

The stores are beginning to be made specially attractive in expectation of the throngs of visitors. The special arrangements for lighting the principal thoroughfares leading to the exhibition represent an outlay of the city's money well spent, and will give the appearance of a carnival after nightfall. St. John is preparing to celebrate right royally the biggest event of the kind ever held in the province.

The exhibition itself contains many features of interest which were beyond the scope of provincial fairs. The directors have made the most of the Dominion grant, and are deserving of great credit for their untiring efforts. The old buildings have undergone a transformation and the additional floor space provided has been eagerly snapped up by exhibitors from all parts of Canada and the States anxious to display their wares. The "made in St. John" exhibit will be of particular interest, and it is safe to say will surprise many of the present as well as former citizens, who have not realized the strides in manufactures that the city has been making in recent years. With favorable weather the next ten days should constitute a record for St. John in many ways.

"Hon. Wm. Pugsley loaned his name to the directorate of a Cobalt concern," says the Montreal Star, "when the shares were selling around 22 cents. They are now 2 cents." And yet the poet asks "What's in a name?"

Mr. Bentley is again heard from. His letter, which appears in this issue, shows an inclination to avoid the main question. The pulpwood is still blockading the highway to St. Martins, and Mr. Bentley is still guilty.

CURRENT COMMENT

(Toronto News.)

At Nelson Sir Wilfrid Laurier admitted that "the country is paying more dearly, perhaps, than any of us anticipate, for the National Transcontinental Railway." This was putting the case mildly, and the "perhaps" might have been omitted. Mr. Fielding told Parliament at the outset that the road would involve an outlay of \$51,000,000. Its cost will exceed \$200,000,000. This is a business government's way of doing business. When completed the system will be handed over to a private corporation for 100 years, which means forever.

(Vancouver News-Advertiser.)

It is said that the most successful folk of Sir Wilfrid's western tour was made by Hon. Frank Oliver at the Calgary meeting, where he said, "Mr. Chairman, we do not wish to come here to talk politics." This brought down the house.

(Hamilton Times.)

One British manufacturer has just booked an order for \$240,000 worth of motor delivery wagons, trucks and cars for Rio Janeiro. John Bull doesn't go about with a brass band, but he gets the business.

(London Free Press.)

The correspondent of the Montreal Herald (Liberal) with Sir Wilfrid Laurier says the people probably came more to see than to hear him. This confirms the circus idea.



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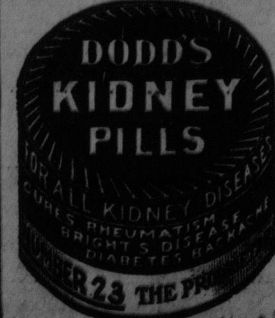
Woodstock, Sept. 2.—The crops are in fine shape throughout the county. There is an exceedingly large crop of wheat. Hay in abundance and every barn is filled. Oats are plenty and look good. The acreage of potatoes is not as large as last year, and some of the tubers show signs of rust. Harvesting is advancing well with good weather.

Miss Lucinda Marsten died at her sister's home in Meductic this morning after an illness of one year with paralysis. The funeral will take place tomorrow afternoon.

Rev. Fred Bertram, who has been pastor of the churches in the Meductic and vicinity left today to resume his studies at Sackville. Last night at the home of Mrs. H. F. Grosvenor at a meeting presided over by George L. Porter, an address was read to him.

Mexico City, Sept. 2.—Mexico's celebration of the one hundredth anniversary of her independence, begun today, will continue until the end of the month.

The Japanese exposition will be opened this week by President Diaz. The inauguration of the exposition of Hygiene will also be a feature of this week's programme.



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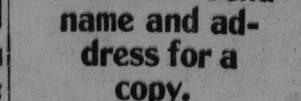
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Halifax, N. S., Sept. 2.—At a meeting of shareholders of the Bank of Nova Scotia here yesterday authority was given to the directors to increase the capital of the bank from three millions to five million.

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