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SAINT JOHN, MONDAY MORNING, APRIL 10, 1911.

REV. MR. SAMPSON'S QUESTIONS.

The people of this city and particularly the rate-payers in Carleton are indebted to Rev. Mr. Sampson for his attempt to pin the advocates of Commission down to facts in his letter to the Telegraph on Saturday. Mr. Sampson is, or rather was, not unfriendly to Commission and as a citizen and rate-payer qualified to vote at the approaching plebiscite asked "of anyone who knows" a few pertinent and necessary questions in order to vote intelligently.

His questions are brief and to the point:—
(1) What salary is to be attached to the office?
(2) Are they all to receive the same amount?
(3) Who is to fix the salary?
(4) When once fixed can the salary be increased or diminished?
(5) If so, by whom can it be changed?
(6) What is the qualification necessary for the office?

(7) Is any provision to be made for the representation of St. John West in the board of Commissioners?
Any other citizen who takes an intelligent interest in civic affairs could add a round dozen of questions to Mr. Sampson's list and not exhaust the problems and difficulties which beset a movement to effect a radical change in the present system of conditions in Carleton, and he adds "as a resident of the West Side for the past twenty-one years, and having the interests of the 'West Side' at heart, I should like to know how the 'interests of this side are to be respected and protected. Are we to have one commissioner on the board, or else are we to trust to the tender mercies of the East 'Side gentlemen for our needs? I have heard that the 'act of union secures to Carleton certain rights. How 'will the new charter and commission affect those 'rights'?"

The Telegraph, which poses as the organ of Commission, makes a reply which by ingenuity and cunning and withal ineffectiveness could hardly be surpassed. If a bomb shell had fallen into the ranks of Commission it could not have created greater havoc than Mr. Sampson's letter. His questions avoid any reference to "business methods" or to "conducting the affairs of the city like a large business corporation," and such like airy nothings. The answers cannot be given, because no one knows, but the Telegraph, bearing the scars of many a political battle, is not to be phased by a few details of this kind, and in defence of its pet scheme rises to the occasion.

Grasping the rector of St. George's warmly by the hand, so to speak, it boldly invites him to join the ranks of "commission." "You yourself, reverend sir," says the Telegraph with a bland smile, "will help to answer your own questions by assisting the friends of Commission in thrashing out these matters AFTER the people of St. John have declared on April 18 that they desire the Commission form of government. After the vote has been taken, a new charter will be prepared and taken to the Legislature for ratification, and in this new charter your questions will be answered, for it will be set down there what salary the commissioners are to receive, how much more the mayor will have than the other commissioners, how changes in salary, if any, are to be made, and what shall be the qualification necessary to eligibility."

But the Telegraph hastily leaves this embarrassing subject and goes on to assure Mr. Sampson that "the first thing is to break away from the rut into which civic affairs in St. John have fallen," and adds a few remarks about the advantages of "a small compact businesslike committee" with which, judging from his letter, Mr. Sampson does not appear to be particularly concerned.

It does not seem to have occurred to the Telegraph that in avoiding the "ruts" in a highway the wayfarer not infrequently lands in the ditch which, like the Commission plan as presented to the citizens, is an unexplored region until the unhappy wanderer lands fairly and squarely at the bottom. Even in avoiding civic ruts, which like other ruts can be repaired, the people of St. John will only show ordinary prudence if they look before they leap and think twice before they desert the well beaten highway of representative and constitutional government for treacherous and unknown by-paths. As to the framing of the charter after the plebiscite the Telegraph solemnly assures Mr. Sampson that he or any other man who is interested will be invited to participate and that "his views regarding what may constitute justice to the West Side will merit careful attention," yet the Telegraph knows that the whole principle of the Commission plan is founded on the idea that the five commissioners are to be elected at large, and that the chances of the West Side with three representatives out of seventeen in the council today will be reduced to a minus quantity.

It is no wonder that the Telegraph failed to convince Mr. Sampson. The rector of St. George's asked for definite information, and the Telegraph had nothing to give but empty phrases. In an interview, published elsewhere in this issue, Mr. Sampson justly says the Telegraph's editorial reference to his letter is no reply to the questions he raised, and he goes on to point out that the advice to "wait and see" is entirely unsatisfactory. Mr. Sampson hits straight from the shoulder and in his review of the situation states facts which are daily becoming more apparent. St. John needs civic reform, but at least the citizens want to know what they are voting for. The people of Cambridge, Mass., are to vote on Commission, but before they vote every detail in the charter will be before them. "Why should we be asked to vote in the dark?" is Mr. Sampson's pointed question. The citizens are looking to the advocates of Commission for a reply.

THE PROVINCIAL AUDIT ACT.

The Opposition have frequently asserted during the present session of the House that the provisions of the Provincial Audit Act have been violated by the Government. This charge is based on a sentence in a letter written by the Auditor General to the Treasury Board in which he says that the Public Works Department pays no attention to the provisions of the Audit Act which requires that there shall be money in hand before any expenditures are made.

In calling the attention of the Treasury Board to a single section of the Audit Act the Auditor, while no doubt moved by the best of impulses, was not acting entirely fairly towards the department he criticised as there are other sections of the act which have a bearing

on the same point which also should have been referred to, as they are quite as important as the section pointed out by the Auditor.

The intention of the Audit Act is to make it impossible for the Government to conceal any expenditure beyond the amount appropriated by the Legislature. The Auditor General is furnished with a copy of the legislative appropriations for the various services and cannot sign cheques on these accounts after the appropriation is exhausted, without an order of the Treasury Board.

While it is highly important that the Auditor General shall be a responsible official and entirely independent of Government influence in handling the business of his office, it was never the intention of the Legislature to place in his hands arbitrary powers over the expenditures further than to see that every account rendered is fair and just, and that the law respecting over-expenditure is carried out. It would be unwise to place such power in the hands of any one man as would enable him to hold up important public works such as necessary repairs to roads, bridges and wharves even though the estimated expenditure for these purposes had been reached.

Last year the revenue of the Province exceeded the estimates and there were many bridges and wharves in a dilapidated or dangerous condition. The Government undertook to repair them, although the appropriation was exhausted. The usual application was made to the Treasury Department for money to pay the bills. The Treasury Board had to take the responsibility for the expenditure, not the Auditor General. His duty was done when he published the correspondence connected with granting the money. The Government was not called upon to borrow the money for this work. It was already at the credit of the Province in the bank. Had the Government not done the needed work while they had the money to pay for it they would have been justly censured for neglect of duty.

To say that the provisions of the Audit Act have been violated is untrue. If the Opposition members care to make a study of the Auditor General's reports from 1900 to 1907, when their friends were in power, they will quickly discover the reason for passing a new Audit Act. Such an investigation will soon disclose that the arrangement of the accounts have been changed one year from another with no other reason than to make it the more difficult to follow the financing of the old Government. And what appears in print does not include the suspense accounts which were necessary to cover up expenditures. Such accounts are not possible under the Audit Act. All of the expenditures of the Government, whether authorized by the Legislature or the Treasury Board, must come before the public and be made in the full light of day.

A SORDID TRANSACTION.

The Laurier Government in 1905 gave a Montreal lawyer by the name of Markey a lease for fishery purposes of the Nelson River with its tributaries and the whole estuary of the Hudson Bay, extending 100 miles on the coast and 3 miles from the shore, together with the Hays River, the Pigeon River and the Great Slave Lake. The amount to be paid therefor was the magnificent sum of \$10 per year. The area covered was over ten thousand square miles. The lease was exclusive, and for a period of 21 years. The waters included abounded in valuable fish.

In 1907 the matter was brought to the attention of Parliament and the scandalous perversion of the public franchises fully exposed. There was no defence, it was plain, unadulterated graft, handed out by the Minister of Marine to a political supporter for reasons best known to the minister and the grafter. It was plain, however, that 10,000 square miles of valuable fishing grounds were the possession of Mr. Markey instead of the people of Canada to whom they belonged.

They are still in his possession or in the possession of those to whom he may have sold them under his rights. Meanwhile the Government is building the Hudson Bay Railway, and these fishing grounds have attained enormous value in prospect. When the road is building, and more still when it is completed, will this grafter's bonanza bring riches? No one else can utilize these fishing grounds, they are Markey's for 21 years at \$10 per year.

And Markey's the Laurier Government seems determined they shall remain. Not one of the conditions of the lease, we believe, has been fulfilled, but yet Markey retains it. For four years the Opposition in the House of Commons have been demanding its cancellation, and denouncing the outrage. The Minister of Marine, driven to make a show of action, referred the matter to the Minister of Justice, and that accommodating gentleman has had it pigeon holed for two years in his department, waiting for his pet lawyer and former partner, Shepley, to get well enough to take it up. Questioned about this delay on April 6th, the minister declared that it was against public interest to discuss the matter. "Every one," he said, "is agreed that it is in the public interests that these leases should be got rid of, if it is possible by legal means." But he held out no hope for a speedy issue. And there the matter rests. What a commentary on the administration of public affairs.

A small kingdom given to a party favorite, for \$10 per year, with conditions attached which have never been fulfilled, with a continued clamor for cancellation from all decent men who had knowledge of the transaction, and yet for four years no cancellation, no action but dilatory references, and now it would seem almost impenetrable legal difficulties in the way of preventing this fraud upon the country. It is dollars to doughnuts that Markey keeps his lease, or that the country will be obliged to pay him handsomely for giving it up.

How much will Markey make, and how much will those behind Markey make?

The Telegraph:—"After the vote has been taken, a new charter will be prepared and taken to the Legislature for ratification, and in this new charter Rev. Mr. Sampson's questions will be answered, for it will be set down there what salary the commissioners are to receive, how much more the mayor will have than the other commissioners, how changes in salary, if any, are to be made, and what shall be the qualification necessary to eligibility." So kind of the Telegraph! So delightfully ingenious!

"Will you walk into my parlor?" said the spider to the fly.
"It's the prettiest little parlor that ever you did spy."

Current Comment

(Family Doctor.)

One after the other diseases are disappearing. Smallpox, typhus, hospital gangrene, diphtheria, malaria, Malta fever, consumption, are all going. All "germ" diseases are going. Length of life is extending. As many people died at forty in the reign of Queen Elizabeth as now live to seventy.

(Elevator Constructor.)

The editor was dying, says an exchange, but when the doctor bent over, placed his ear on his breast, and said, "Poor man! circulation almost gone!" the dying editor sat up and shouted: "You're a liar; we have the largest circulation in the country!"

SONS OF TEMPERANCE ON THE NORTH SHORE

Encouraging Reports Received at Meeting of Kent-Northumberland District Division, at Newcastle, last week.

Newcastle, April 8.—Kent-Northumberland District Division, S. of T., met here yesterday. Rev. R. H. Staver, presiding. Delegates present were: Harcourt—Rev. R. H. Staver, D. W. P. Newcastle—H. H. Stuart, D. S.; Rev. W. J. Dean, W. C. Day, Rev. Dr. Cousins. Chatham—George Stothart, Miss Lizzie Eddy. Rexton—H. M. Ferguson, J. P. Douglass—H. C. Stothart, Richard Atkinson, Miss Helen Gray. Leggville—Alvin L. Babkirk, Mrs. J. W. Johnston.

The membership report was as follows:

	Dec. 31, 1910	Mar. 31, 1911
Bay du Vin	69	67
Douglasville	29	30
Newcastle	42	44
Leggville	20	20
Chatham	44	59
Doaktown	65	65
Harcourt	73	72
Rexton	43	43
Grangeville	40	41
Bass River	37	37
Richbuck	75	75
Coal Branch	38	38
South Branch	24	24
	644	684

The committee on the state of the order reported:

1.—We find an increase in the two counties of 40 members.

2.—We are pleased to report that Northumberland Division, Chatham and South Branch in Kent, have been reorganized.

3.—The finances are in a healthy condition.

4.—We would heartily re-endorse the amendments to the Dominion and provincial liquor laws proposed at the recent meeting of this district division last January, and since approved by the provincial executive of the W. C. T. U., the grand scribe of the province, S. of T., the G. C. T., of the I. O. G. T., and others, and urge upon the Dominion and New Brunswick governments the necessity of the amendment of the liquor laws in accordance therewith, viz:

That each government, in its respective sphere, prohibit the importation of liquor by private individuals into districts under C. T. Act or local option; that liquor required for legal purposes be purchased from government vendors; that persons arrested for drunkenness be imprisoned under penalty of imprisonment, to tell where they got their liquor; that government vendors publish annual statement of all business; and that the abuse of prescriptions being obtained from medical men outside the municipality be done away with, except where necessary to medical cases in which an adjoining municipality.

5.—We congratulate the Nova Scotia legislature upon the amendments they have made to their provincial prohibition law, among which are: The finding of liquor on any premises to be, until contrary is provided, evidence of intent to sell, although no barroom appliances may be present; law officers to have power to search for and seize liquor without warrant; the finding of illicit liquor concealed or falsely labelled to be prima facie evidence of intent to violate law and prosecutions for such offence to immediately follow first conviction, and no appeal from stipendiary magistrates' decisions. And we urge upon both Dominion and New Brunswick governments the necessity of making their liquor laws as effective as those of Nova Scotia.

(Signed) REV. W. J. DEAN, H. M. FERGUSON, A. L. BABKIRK, H. H. STUART, HAROLD C. STOTHART, Committee.

The next meeting will be in Chatham in July. Time to be fixed by executive.

At the public meeting in the evening there was a first class musical and literary programme and speeches by Revs. R. H. Staver, W. J. Dean and Dr. Cousins, urging prompt and united action of citizens in favor of a clean town at the approaching elections.

Principal L. R. Hetherington, James Keener, H. H. Stuart and D. C. Smallwood also spoke. Several of the speakers strongly supported the candidature of H. H. Stuart and D. C. Smallwood for aldermen and Dr. F. L. Pedolin for mayor.

THE METHODIST SUPERNUMERARY FUND.

The good St. Peter writing a second letter to the same persons and on the same matter, gave his reason for so doing, a desire "to stir up their pure minds by way of remembrance." And the same idea is given us by Kipling in the Recessional by the repetition of the words "Lest We Forget." The writer therefore is in excellent company when "calling to mind" what he had previously written on this subject which is of general interest to the church, while of special concern to the Methodists.

And here it is important to remember that the name of the fund is "Supernumerary" and not "Superannuation"—the first is for the Methodist ministers and their widows in the Maritime Provinces, the second for those laboring in the rest of Canada. By using the latter term a bequest of \$5,000 by a New Brunswicker was claimed by the officers of that fund, and to carry out the well known intention of the testator not a little trouble was experienced.

Speaking of the Supernumerary Fund is enough to make it clear in order to be a claimant he must be a minister of the Methodist church in the territory referred to, and as such is required to abstain from all secular work and give himself entirely to his calling, to go where he is sent, to pay an annual assessment which has varied its amount, and use his best endeavors to promote the interests of the church.

For this he is to be provided with free fuel, a well heated house, with an income derived from the people with whom he labors, and grants from certain other funds, the aggregate never falling far below \$500, and when he retires from active service

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to receive an annuity at the rate of \$10, for every year of active service—his widow to receive one half that amount, thus one who has done full work for twenty years would be entitled to \$200.

But for many years the fund has only paid about \$0 per cent, and to bring about a better state of things is the object of the present canvass being made by Rev. George Steel. The amount required is \$50,000, of which \$23,000 is allotted to Nova Scotia, \$12,000 to New Brunswick, and \$15,000 to Newfoundland.

According to the latest accounts Mr. Steel has secured in cash or pledges about \$8,000, which does not inspire very strong hopes of securing the balance. Why? In a church like the Methodist inability is not to be entertained for a moment. What then? It has been said that some of the claimants are well to do and do not need it. That may be true in a very few cases, but even if it is true, the supernumerary is not a pauper, and a bargain or contract is a sacred thing, and should be fully carried out. But as a class they are needy, and their claims should be paid in full. The righteousness of their claim is admitted, and hence the present appeal.

But there is another matter that should not be overlooked. Time does not cancel moral obligations, and implied promises should not be thrust aside. It will be remembered that at the Woodstock conference of 1909 this whole question was pretty thoroughly discussed and the judgment of that body was that steps should be taken to make good the unpaid balance of the claim for that year. Some efforts were made and the outlook was so encouraging that the expectation was that at the least one-half would be paid by Christmas, the balance at the conference. But the thing was allowed to die, and not a cent was forthcoming, and another year is nearing its end, and with it another unpaid annual claim.

Now the sum required for the first year named was \$2,015, for the forty-five years named, with a somewhat lesser amount for the next because death had lessened the number of the claimants. The forty-three claimants here referred to were those belonging to the New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island conference. Surely their claims for these two years are not to be ignored, surely after all that was said about the righteousness of these claims and the implied pledges made and expectations awakened, the Methodist church is not going to allow death to settle them. Such is the present outlook.

I. N.

Holy Week Services.

Today, Tuesday and Wednesday the Masses and devotions in the Cathedral will be at the same hours as on week days during Lent. On Wednesday evening, the Tenebrae will be chanted at 5 o'clock. On Thursday morning, Pontifical High Mass will commence at 9 o'clock, and during the Mass the Holy Oils will be consecrated by the Bishop. On Holy Thursday evening the Tenebrae will be chanted. On Good Friday morning the Mass of the Presanctified will begin at 10 o'clock, and in the evening Tenebrae will be chanted, followed by a sermon. On Holy Saturday, the office will commence at 7:15 and Mass a little before 9 o'clock.

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