

The Evening Times and Star

ST. JOHN, N. B., FEBRUARY 11, 1919

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STOPPING THE CLOCK.

A delegation from the south end of the city appeared before the school board last evening with a definite request for the use once or twice a month of the unused assembly hall of the King Edward school for the meetings of an organization which has already done much for the children of the south end and plans to do more. They found on arrival that every school principal in the city had been invited to attend, to oppose, with the approval of the staff of each school, any such use of any school building.

The ministers and others who were on the delegation, or would have been on it but for other important engagements, did not know until these teachers and Dr. Bridges had spoken what a dreadful thing it was they proposed to do. The people who attend the meetings of the South End Improvement League, are the people who meet every day in their homes, the streets, the stores and the churches without injury to themselves or others; but it appears that as soon as they pass the threshold of the King Edward school they become incendiaries, spreaders of disease, cigarette smokers and vandals. This was perhaps news to them, but no other inference could be drawn from the arguments presented in favor of turning them into the street, which has now been done. Of course the last has not been heard of this matter. Nothing is settled till it is settled right.

Dr. Bridges says he found some persons in Philadelphia and elsewhere who lamented that school buildings had ever been opened as social centres. He could also have found, no doubt, by diligent search, some individuals in American cities who would assert that republican government is a failure. The fact is that the school buildings of United States cities are used as social centres. One of the stoutest champions of such use is Mr. Woodrow Wilson, a former university president and now president of the United States. Another is Mr. Charles M. Hughes, the great Republican leader, who has said to those conducting social centres in school buildings: "The work you are doing is invaluable. You are buttressing the foundations of democracy." In Montreal Mr. John Bradford has got the schools open for social centre work. The editor of this paper has letters from school authorities in Toronto, Winnipeg, Regina, Moose Jaw and other cities telling of community activity in school buildings. Of six meetings held in Halifax one evening last week in Halifax one evening five were held in school buildings. In England a wide use is made of school buildings. In at least one American state, and there may be others, it is only necessary for a stated number of ratepayers to ask it and the school board must open the building and provide janitor service, heat and light. Half a dozen years ago there were social centres in fifty schools in Cleveland, Ohio, organized by a committee of the board of education, and the work has steadily progressed. Scores of such instances might be cited.

Now what is the matter with these ministers, business and professional men, representatives of labor, and women who are the mothers or sisters of the children of the south end, that they or any of them cannot be trusted to use an unused room in a school building once or even twice a month? Why produce a formidable array of school teachers who ought to welcome any work for community welfare to sign petitions against it? What interest more than any other citizen have they in a school building except between the hours of nine and four, so long as the building is put to a good use and their work is not interfered with? Paint does not cost any more than jails and reformatories, and if a healthy influence can be thrown around boys and girls by a welfare organization it ought to have the sympathy of every teacher. If it be true that writing of doubtful propriety has ever been placed upon a blackboard or in a book, which has certainly not been done in the King Edward school, it has been done by the product of the schools, who have been under the influence of school teachers for quite a number of years. Perhaps Rev. K. Leslie Pidgeon of Winnipeg is right, and we ought to have a little more teaching of morals and the duties of citizenship in our schools. That, of course, is not the fault of the teachers but of the system. Perhaps a community welfare movement might help the schools in that respect. It is worth trying.

Meanwhile the teachers of St. John have permitted themselves to give what is one of the most promising community welfare movements ever started in any section of the city what seems to be a black eye. In reality it will strengthen the South End Improvement League and hasten that which the teachers have chosen to set themselves to prevent.

A hunger strike by suffragists in Washington will not be so very dreadful if the good women have accustomed themselves to short rations in war time.

IN PARIS TODAY.

The news from Paris is not as reassuring as we could wish. The reports indicate that Germany is in no hurry to demobilize, and Marshal Foch is quoted as saying that she could soon place an army of three millions in the field. She is very slow to carry out the terms of the armistice, and the supreme war council is considering more drastic action. Meanwhile Dr. Dernburg is trying to convey the impression that Bolshevism is spreading in German cities and it is necessary to keep a large army. He presents this also as a reason why the Allies should give Germany better terms. Mr. Balfour says it would be rather dangerous to expect peace by April. The cables news is not what the world had hoped to get at this distance in time from the signing of the armistice, although so far as the league of nations is concerned there appears to be excellent progress. If it should be necessary to put the screws a little tighter on Germany there will probably be full unanimity in the supreme war council. Mr. Balfour very properly says that Germany must not be permitted to profit at the expense of France and Belgium. She must pay the price of her mad attempt to dominate the world.

FOR BETTER HOUSING.

A bill is before the Quebec legislature to enable the municipalities to avail themselves of the money made available for that province to improve housing conditions. The city of Montreal is already taking a lively interest in the question. The Montreal Gazette says:—"In connection with the grant of four million dollars, which Montreal expects to receive as its share of the federal subsidy, for the erection of workmen's dwellings, a delegation of citizens waited on the Administrative Commission yesterday, offering their support and co-operation for the successful carrying out of this important reconstruction movement, and one that was destined to be of great benefit to the laboring classes. It is said an independent commission will be appointed to administer the fund in Montreal. The delegation which met the commissioners included representatives of the Civic Improvement League, Montreal Publicity Association, the Architects Association of Quebec, Board of Trade, the Builders' Association, Trades and Labor Council and Canadian Manufacturers' Association."

The Standard this morning has a fling at Dr. Emery. He will survive it. But the Standard is not well informed. It says the doctor presided at the school board meeting last evening. Dr. Emery was not there, and Chairman Emerson presided. The latter, by the way, was able to point to notable progress made, especially in regard to school buildings and teachers' salaries, during his ten years at the board. He retires with a record of faithful service as chairman of the board.

The delicate question as to whether Y. W. C. A. women in England should smoke is exciting the public mind. Women students at Newham College, Cambridge, are permitted to smoke. We recall the impassioned lines of a former St. John poet, and member of the Anti-Tobacco Association of that day:

"Smokers in the gay saloons
Sometimes spit in their spittoons,
But amongst the filthy poor
Spitting off-times stains the floor."

The sacred school houses are to be added to the objects of veneration in St. John. The boys and girls may romp over the graves of the Loyalists, but when they or their parents approach the portals of a school house they find the superintendent of schools with a flaming sword.

The death of Dr. P. R. Inches removes a loved physician who was devoted to his profession and a citizen honored and esteemed by his fellows.

Fifty-four Bolsheviks have arrived at New York to be deported from the United States. Russia is the place for these gentry.

One day China and Japan are brothers. The next day they are bitter rivals. It all depends on who cables the story.

Canadian steel men should get in on that 800,000-ton order from India for rails and other materials.

U. S. FINANCING.

Washington, Feb. 11.—Secretary Glass today asked congress to increase the amount of Liberty bonds authorized but unissued to approximately \$10,000,000, and to give him broad powers to determine the interest rate and other terms of the loan to be floated late in April. He also sought permission to issue not more than \$10,000,000,000 of treasury notes, maturing within five years, and asked that the war finance corporation be authorized for one year after the declaration of peace to make commercial loans on exports to facilitate foreign trade.

SMOKE MACDONALD'S INDEX

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INTERESTING TRAVELERS

Times Man's Journey With Them on "Boat Train"

Wife and Children of Capt. A. Vaness. Who Recruited 60,000 Coolies for Allies—Scotch Bank Clerks on Way Here to Meet Future Brides on Tunisian

What the railway people call "boat trains" are very interesting trains upon which to travel in and out of St. John during the winter port season. The boat section of the C. P. R. mid-day express on Saturday was an especially newsworthy one to an observing and inquisitive person. Possibly the most notable travelers aboard were Mrs. Arthur Vaness and two young daughters, of New Chwang, North Manchuria, who were to sail on the Granplan on Saturday to join Captain Vaness in England. The Vaness family had journeyed via Japan and Vancouver and were enjoying their long trip very much, anticipating a pleasant stay in the motherland before returning to their oriental home.

Captain Vaness is an Anglo-Chinese merchant who recruited and transported the 60,000 coolies used in the British armies in the west. For twenty-five years he has conducted a far and brilliant business in China and owns a small fleet of steamers engaged in the trade. For a long time he has been a very useful man to the British Empire. He was engaged in quelling the Boxer rebellion and personally fought and captured the rebel chief.

Mrs. Vaness says that the capture of the German stronghold and pleasure resort, Tsing-Tau, by the Japanese ally gives Japan a hold in that section. British troops could have done this if there had been any available at the time. Tsing-Tau is the beauty spot of the east as a sort of exclusive modernized resort. It was built up by the Kaiser "merely as an advertisement," Mrs. Vaness thinks; a sort of oriental sample of German thoroughness. However, it is now a goner. The very interesting Manchurian-born English children accompanying their mother appeared excellently educated, and it was amusing to hear them talk Chinese, which they did for the fun of passengers.

On the same train two Scotch bank clerks from the same town in the Highlands met by accident. Both were returned soldier buttons and both came out of the far Canadian west. When they interrogated one another as to the reason for their journey east each blusily confessed that it was to meet "a lassie frae home," due to arrive on the Tunisian. So they agreed to get married together in this city and honeymoon back via Montreal and Toronto.

Still another passenger on the Saturday train was a tall and extremely English Englishman with a Londoner hat and an Oxford accent. He was of the British consular service at Shanghai, China, and his descriptive chats to fellow travelers about that busy oriental metropolis were followed with the keenest interest.

There were more than a score of western Canadian English families en route to the British Isles to reunite with the remnants of their families after the ravages of war, taking advantage of the first opportunity to travel for civilian reasons in more than four years. Two of the home-goers were returned soldiers who were again crossing the ocean with their wives and kiddies. Several said they intended taking up their homes in the homeland as war casualties and aged parents made it necessary for them to "keep the home fires burning."

KNIGHTS HOLD DANCE. Their first assembly and dance since the beginning of the war was held by the Knights of Columbus in their hall, Colburn street, last evening. There was an exceptionally large attendance, and the dance was undoubtedly one of the most successful that the Knights have ever held in the city. A programme of fourteen dances and music was provided by four pieces of the Imperial orchestra. The choropones for the dance were Mrs. W. E. Scully, Mrs. F. G. McKinnon, Mrs. D. W. Harper and Mrs. A. J. Mulcahy. The committee in charge was composed of A. C. Wilson, lecturer, assisted by T. C. Olive, Joseph Harrington, William O'Leary, F. J. McDonald and William

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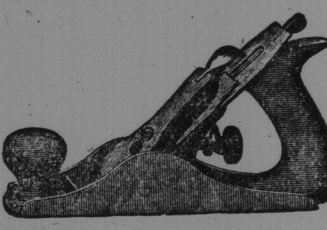
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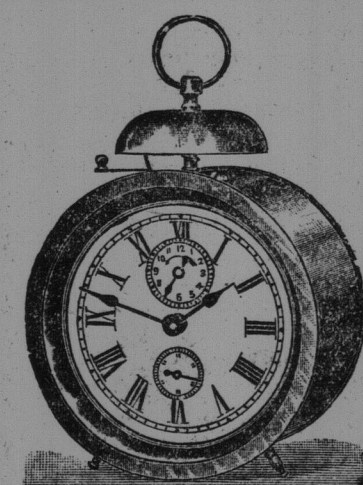
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Carney, Mrs. P. J. Fitzpatrick and Mrs. Murphy, assisted by Mrs. A. P. Ryan, Lynch, was in charge of the refreshments. Henry Regan poured, and Mrs. Robert Mrs. William Knill, and Mrs. Fred.



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