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THE EVENING TIMES-STAR, ST. JOHN, N. B., FRIDAY, JANUARY 16, 1925

The Evening Times-Star

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BOTH GOVERNMENTS TO BLAME

In his annual report as President of the Royal Bank of Canada, Sir Herbert Holt, while joining with many other prominent Canadians in urging a policy of retrenchment and national economy, said that it is well-nigh impossible because the country is loaded down with fixed charges. The Ottawa Journal calls this statement a "wall of despair," and then delivers a homily upon controllable and uncontrollable expenditures, stating that what is controllable is before the expense is added to the debt of the country; then the interest charges upon it become uncontrollable. When Sir Herbert Holt spoke of the fixed overhead charges he referred no doubt to the one hundred and thirty-five million dollars of interest payable annually, as well as the fifty-odd million dollars required every year for pensions. We cannot get rid of these payments. They must be provided for, but we can control many other "financial" expenses of the administration by putting them to the bone. The Journal is too apt to see red every time it thinks about Mackenzie King as leader of the government, or the Progressive party. There is no good, in his opinion, in either of them, and in demands for economy and retrenchment and lessening of the debt it is too apt to vehemently declare that the present Liberal government is responsible for all the additions to the debt since the end of the war, when as a matter of fact the Union government, led by Sir Robert Borden and Sir Arthur Meighen, were in power for exactly the same period since the Armistice as the government of Prime Minister Mackenzie King. We are not making any excuse for either of these governments for what they have done. We believe they had sufficient excuse in the war burden imposed upon the country to say to the people after the armistice: "We must get along upon as little as possible. Every unnecessary official must find employment elsewhere, and all branches of departmental activity essential to the administration of the country's affairs must be suspended for a time." We believe that Sir Robert Borden should have said to the members of parliament, "You must reduce your indemnities and get along on as little as you can." And the same might have been followed by Mr. Meighen and Mackenzie King as leaders of federal administrations. But these things have not been done, and the people are excessively weary of paying exorbitant income taxes, as well as sales taxes and impositions of all kinds. Something must be done, and the sponsor the government realizes this, the better for the country and the better for themselves. But it does no good for the Ottawa Journal or any other Tory newspaper to claim that the cost of Canada's debt since the war has been due entirely to the present government. That will never get us anywhere. The Journal stands for and approves of all the deficits on the Canadian National Railways, which are adding materially to the indebtedness of Canada, but it disapproves of what it calls the "pork barrel" and asks its readers to recollect what was said in Halifax, and Kent, Essex and Northumberland counties at the time of by-elections held there. Well, there has been no expenditure in Halifax in spite of the promise. Northumberland couldn't have asked for much, as long has been started there yet. As we know the same is true in Kent and in Essex. But all this time there have been very heavy and insistent demands on the part of the over-manned and over-worked civil service at Ottawa for increased salaries. The Journal does not complain of this, although it must know that extravagance begins right on the doorstep of the government in the city where it is published. If they can retrench in Ottawa and get along with about half of the number of civil servants employed there and make our costs of parliaments much less as well, the people throughout the west and the east would gladly co-operate to bring about a more economical condition of affairs.

Court stenographers in recent convention agreed that "men are talking faster than formerly." They could not have been acquainted with the late Senator John V. Ellis, or with the late Rev. J. DeGore, the Rector of Stone Church in this city, or the Hon. W. S. Fielding, the present Minister of Finance, when they were in their prime on the platform. One of the best of New Brunswick stenographers, past or present, Frank Hirsten, who passed away many years ago, used to say that Mr. Ellis talked from one hundred and forty to two hundred words a minute, and certainly anybody who had the pleasure of listening to the Rev. Mr. DeGore or to Hon. W. S. Fielding will agree that for rapidity of diction it was difficult to exceed them.

There won't be a total solar eclipse visible again in Canada until 2144 A. D. So when this one takes place a week from Sunday, on the 24th, everybody should get their spy glasses out.

The afternoons are getting longer. Have you noticed it? They are nearly twenty minutes longer than they were in December, and only last Sunday morning did the sun rise even a minute earlier. It is comforting, however, to know that when January ends, old Sol will begin to greet us at about seven o'clock in the morning and the days will have made a definite start to spring and summer length.

U. S. Secretary of State Charles Evans Hughes has occupied many important positions in public life. He was Governor of New York, Justice of the Supreme Court and Secretary of State all within twenty years. Now he is poor, and is starting out again to scramble for a living. He has won the approval of the people of the United States, and who knows what may be in store for him. Four years hence, if the republic wants another presidential candidate, who is better fitted for the job than Charles Evans Hughes?

ROBT. REID AGAIN SUPERINTENDENT

Elected by St. David's Sunday School—Annual Meeting Held Last Evening.

The annual meeting of St. David's Sabbath School was held last night at the residence of the superintendent, Robert Reid, 12 Peters street. The minister, Rev. Hugh Miller, presided, with Miss Alberta Nelson, as secretary. Reports were read from all departments, and the various organized classes, showing an enrolment of 389 in the main school; 46 in Home Department, and 46 on the Cradle Roll. The total money contributed from all sources was \$1,008.27, as follows: For Missions, \$538.93 and general expenses, \$469.34; the average attendance for school was 184.

The following officers were elected: Honorary superintendent, John Rogers; superintendent, Robert Reid; associated superintendent, D. W. H. Magee; general secretary, W. Ronald Vane; financial secretary, L. T. Allen; J. D. Jamieson; recording secretary, L. G. Sinclair; librarians, J. S. Elliott, C. L. Henry; superintendent, primary, Mrs. E. J. Mays; secretary of home department, Mrs. W. M. Smith; secretary, L. B. R. A. Miss B. Henderson; superintendent, junior church service, Miss Alberta Nelson; plant junior church service, Miss Marion Whiting; secretary church attendance, S. Douglas MacGowan; leader C. S. E. T. A. R. Crookshank; leader C. G. L. T. Miss Marjorie Robinson; organist, Miss Phyllis MacGowan; assistant organist, Maurice Watson. Executive committee, Robert Reid, D. W. H. Magee, W. B. Nae, A. R. Crookshank, Miss J. Milligan, Mrs. R. A. Jamieson, Mrs. M. Robinson, Mrs. A. W. Petch and Mrs. S. Hanson.

The appointment of a missionary superintendent and a church leader was left to the executive committee.

The close of the meeting a very pleasant half hour was spent in social intercourse, and the members adjourned to the banquet hall, where a hearty vote of thanks was passed to Mr. and Mrs. Reid.

ROYAL ARCH MASONS INSTALL OFFICERS

Harold Hooper Leads Carleton Chapter—Pleasant Social Hour Follows Ceremony.

There was a large gathering of masons at Masonic Temple last night when the installation of officers of the Carleton Royal Arch Chapter was conducted by the Most Excellent Grand High Priest William H. Smith, assisted by Grand Lodge officers.

The officers installed were as follows: H. F. Harold Hooper; K. A. C. Lennan; J. W. Duncan; treasurer, H. A. Porter; secretary, A. B. Steves; C. H. J. S. Hoyt; P. S. P. E. Speer; R. A. C. H. P. Dainy; M. of S. V. Wetmore; M. of 2 V. T. J. Ballantyne; M. of 1 V. E. J. Boyaner; Tyler, George Hay. After the installation the members adjourned to the banquet hall and were served supper. With orchestral music and vocal solos by DeWitt Cairns and his quartet, the evening was brought to a close with the singing of God Save the King.

Wetmore Case In Police Court Ends

Satisfactory explanation having been made to Police Magistrate Henderson and no evidence having been produced in the case of Cyril F. Wetmore, charged with misappropriation of funds to the extent of \$85, the prisoner was released from custody at noon yesterday. Wetmore was arrested several days ago and after appearing in court he was remanded. He was taken to court again yesterday. After a few remarks by the magistrate he was released.

MAGAZINES AS TEXTBOOKS.

LONDON, Jan. 16.—(United Press).—Reading, riting and "bitching" may or may not be taught most effectively to the young of the old-time hickory stick, but one of the best means of making geography visual to children is through the use of travel posters and picture clipped from magazines.

Marie dear,
Oooh! Now the snow is flying today! I'm 'most 'frandy-cat enough to hug the fireplace, instead of going to that tobogganing party. But josh says to bundle up like an Eskimo doll, or rub on telly.

Campana's Italian Balm and then neither wind nor weather will hurt me. Campana's is the only thing that keeps my hands smooth and white since I started washing dishes. Peggy.

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Letters to The Editor

CITY AND POWER COMPANY

To the Editor of The Times-Star:

Sir:—The letter dated January 15 from Mr. Pooler, of the N. B. Power Company, to His Worship the Mayor and the Commissioners of the City, suggests the desirability of another plan of the power question in St. John. As a member of the Civic Power Commission and a third member of "Hydro" from his very inception here, might I be permitted to make a few remarks on Mr. Pooler's letter and the situation in general.

While Mr. Pooler's proposals for co-operation appear well founded and made in an apparently proper spirit, yet I feel that a note of caution might well be sounded on the subject of the proposed amalgamation, and even on the question of entering into negotiations at all. Much negotiating has already been done, and the present stand of the city on the power question is the outcome of these negotiations and the result of carrying out the expressed will of the people.

A rose by any other name would be as sweet and the Power Company of today is not at the root so different from the Power Company of a few years ago. True the Federal Light and Traction Company is in control, but this was the case back in 1922 when the city made its final proposal to buy out the interests of the Power Company for about 2½ millions of dollars and Mr. Sanderson was present and in control when this offer was refused. It is no doubt a fact that this refusal was, in part, prompted by the hope that the city might be prevented by some stratagem from going into the sale and distribution of power.

Let us suppose for a moment that the offer had been accepted, St. John would have been saddled at once with an additional capital expenditure of \$2,000,000 and in return would have acquired (1) the gas plant; (2) the street railway and (3) the power business then controlled by the Power Company (exclusive of street railway requirements) before we started in the business and this despite the fact that the Power Company still retains a considerable portion of its power business.

This is an indication of greater use of electricity for domestic and commercial purposes. The total capital expenditure necessary to obtain this end was about \$875,000 including interest charges to date, construction cost, buildings, cost of unused current, stock on hand etc., and today St. John is enjoying power rates that are only a fraction of the rates formerly charged.

The fact that the Power Company's rates of today are practically on a par with the city rates, is no proof of their desire to give the citizens of St. John power at low rates. It is the only course they could pursue in the face of such drastic competition.

As Mr. Pooler says, St. John does not have adequate street railway and gas service as well as the cheap light and power which hydro has made possible; but why ask St. John to acquire what it has already attained in the latter branch for the promise of better things

in the two former? A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush. Promises of renovations to the gas plant were made on the occasion of an amalgamation some years ago, but hopes were not realized, and we are still faced with a low grade service and excessively high cost on this essential commodity.

Electricity, today, enters so intimately into the everyday domestic and commercial life of a community, that it ranks with water supply and drainage. What would the average citizen think of permitting private monopoly of these utilities?

Professor Baird of the U. N. B. states that "Providence" has been watching over St. John, referring to the possible dangerous conflict between the two distribution systems. Admitting that all electrical overhead systems in public thoroughfares are a potential source of danger, there is still some room for doubt as to the necessity of some folks in their concern for the welfare of our citizens. I think personally that Prof. Baird, in his preliminary report, as quoted by Mr. Pooler, went just a little further than the circumstances of the case warranted.

At any rate the city will certainly correct any dangerous conditions which may exist and the courts is to be commended for so ordering. In justice to the Civic Commission it is only fair to state that no court order would have been necessary if the Power Co. had permitted the correction of these infractions as the erection of the system went on. We proposed doing all the necessary work entirely at our own expense but co-operation was flatly refused by the Power Co.

Mr. Pooler likewise deprecates the duplication of poles in our streets. We have no doubt that the necessity for the same must be laid to the need of cheaper power and the impossibility of getting it without the duplication. Here again the Power Co. refused to co-operate in refusing the free use of our poles for the two systems.

Mr. Pooler's idea of co-operation seems one-sided and is based on the presumption that the city should turn over the business of the Power Commission to the Power Co. in return for a nominal control of rates. I say nominal because the fixing of rates would be beyond our power, the reason being that the Power Company has had legislation enacted authorizing them to fix rates on certain conditions and these rates will be maintained at about the present level. Providence might not be so watchful over our interests as Prof. Baird says it has in the past. The fixed charges of the Power Company (I quote from the Kestis report) not only prepared to demonstrate the futility of trying to reduce rates)

would not permit of selling domestic current below 10 cents a k.w.h., net even if the hydro current were delivered to their switchboard free of all cost to them. If this were true then, and we have Mr. Kestis's word for it, we hesitate to hazard a guess as to the cost of service today if the increase in capitalization fuel mentioned were to be added.

It is sincerely to be hoped that in this matter of a proposed get-together with the Power Company the city fathers will exercise the keenest caution, go fully into all facts pertaining to the situation and consider fully and well what has already been accomplished by hydro for St. John.

Thanking you, Mr. Editor, I am Sincerely yours, JOHN N. FLOOD.

VOTING ON FEB. 5

Writ Issued For By-election in Gloucester County—Nominations January 29.

FREDERICTON, Jan. 15.—The writ was issued today for a by-election in Gloucester county to fill the vacancy in the Provincial Legislature caused by the elevation of Hon. J. P. Byrne, former Attorney-General, to the Supreme Court bench. Polling will take place Thursday, Feb. 5, and nominations one week earlier, Jan. 29.

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Special Mannish Tailored Coats all wool
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