

The Evening Times and Star

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READ THE ACT.

The Times today prints the harbor commission act in full. Every citizen should read it with care. Particular attention is directed to sections 3, 11, 13, 19 and 20.

Section 3 shows that the commission would control the harbor from Green Head to Red Head. River traffic would be subject to its regulations.

Section 11 shows that while the government guarantee payment of the \$657,282.45 harbor commission debentures issued by the city, it does not guarantee payment of the \$1,943,117.55 of city bonds which represent the harbor debt. The commission must pay these, and if it fails the bondholders can hold the city liable, and the latter must therefore tax the people to provide a sinking fund which the harbor revenue has hitherto provided. Section 11 should also be read in connection with section 20, which shows the order in which payments are to be made. The government takes care to make the amount which it guarantees the third item in the list, so that there will be no danger of its being called on to make good the guarantee.

Section 13 shows that it is now proposed to abandon the nationalization policy begun by the Laurier, and continued by the Borden government, and make the harbor revenue hereafter pay three and a half per cent on the cost of the work done in the past. This is an entirely new charge on harbor revenue, and as the cost of the government wharves, including the marine wharf, and of the grain elevator, amounted to several millions of dollars, the burden would be very heavy. If the revenue failed to meet the charges, the government would use that as an excuse, as it seems to have done in Quebec, for refusing to spend any more money.

Section 19 shows that the harbor commission must get the consent of the government before beginning any new work, and that the expenditure is to be charged to harbor revenue—not to the government.

Section 20 shows what is chargeable to harbor revenues and the reader will observe that every expenditure is so charged, and that the federal government, instead of taking a load off the backs of the people, puts a heavier burden on them—for the government itself undertakes no responsibility beyond the guarantee of payment of \$657,282.45, and takes such precautions as will relieve it of even this liability.

Now this is the act the people are to vote upon on Aug. 1. The Board of Trade, which ought to be the last to do so, is out in open advocacy of its adoption, and petitions are being circulated to influence the unthinking voter. It is inconceivable that the taxpayers of St. John will give up control of their harbor on any such terms as are set forth in this act. They did not ask for the act, nor did the government. The latter drove so hard a bargain that it would be asprently folly on the part of the people to agree to its provisions. It should be rejected by an overwhelming majority, and the government called upon to continue a policy of real nationalization.

A FALSE GUIDE.

A Board of Trade is a very important organization. Everywhere it is regarded as a source of accurate information. That is why the Board of Trade in any city is constantly in receipt of enquiries from other cities and countries regarding matters which relate to the city in which it is located. Naturally, we should expect the St. John Board of Trade to exercise special care in sending forth any statement intended to inform or influence the public. Why, then, does it in its advocacy of the harbor commission act publish a grossly incorrect statement about the harbor revenue?

In the Board of Trade Journal it has printed for general circulation certain columns of figures purporting to set forth the actual receipts and expenditures on harbor account for nine years. The statement is misleading and untrue. This is a serious charge of untruth against so venerable and respectable an institution as the Board of Trade, but to show that it is true it is only necessary to point out that no mention at all is made of the receipts from the fisheries of the harbor. The reader of the statement in the Journal is left with the impression that in the last nine years the harbor showed a deficit of \$34,817.13.

But the fisheries in that period yielded \$72,018.05, which not only wipes out the deficit, but provides a handsome surplus. Nor is this all. The statement of receipts given in the Journal does not include \$1,703.14 per year rental received from North and South Market wharves, which in nine years would amount to \$15,927. The statement printed by the harbor also charges to harbor account repair work done on North and South Market wharves. North Wharf to Smythe and South Wharf to Ward are public streets, and to charge all repairs to harbor account is obviously unfair. The like is true of North Rodney wharf, which is a ferry wharf only; and under harbor commission it would still be necessary to keep up a ferry. What shall be said of a Board of Trade which so grossly misleads the public? Why does it pursue this course? And if it is not to be believed in this case, how can any credence be placed in other statements it makes regarding the harbor commission act?

Instead of a deficit of \$34,817.13 for nine years on harbor account, there has been a surplus of \$75,000 to \$80,000. The harbor pays its way. It can continue to do so until such time as the federal government is ready to resume the nationalization process which was begun by the Laurier government and continued by the Borden government when they built wharves and elevator when they built wharves and elevator and provided other facilities without making any of them a charge on harbor revenue. The Board of Trade has shown itself to be a false guide. It cannot plead ignorance in this case, for the Times gave the facts to the people over a month ago, from the records at City Hall.

THE SHIPPING MEN.

The Times today prints a letter signed by representatives of several shipping companies favoring harbor commission. They scrupulously avoid reference to the St. John harbor commission act. The Canadian Pacific, which has a large steamship business at this port, is not among the signers. That omission is significant. Among those represented is the Robert Reford Company. The Times on Saturday quoted from the Portland, Maine, Argus, to show that a representative of that company was one of a delegation last year of shipping men who were very deeply interested in harbor development at Portland, and who were sure that port would have a wonderful future in summer as well as in winter. But there was no suggestion that it should be put in commission. It is interesting these shipping men to know that ports like Antwerp, Hamburg, Rotterdam and Havre, not to mention any on this side of the Atlantic, have got along very nicely under municipal control, and without a "harbor commission under government control." It is greatly to be regretted that the local shipping men have not embraced the opportunity to explain how a port can be built up by an act which places heavier burdens on its traffic. The average citizen would not offhand assume that the thing could be done.

But let there be no misunderstanding on this question of harbor commission. It is quite conceivable that if the Hon. William Pugsley or Sir Douglas Haas, both of whom had part in real nationalization work at this port, had been in Ottawa when the St. John act was drawn, he would have had such an act drawn as would bring relief instead of a heavier burden. Harbor commission such as would free the port from burdens might meet with the approval of the citizens. Many of them undoubtedly favor the principle, while they condemn such an outrageous act as is now presented. The letter of the local shipping men, rightly read, contains a condemnation of the present act, which does the very reverse of what they desire to have done.

A NECESSARY EXAMPLE.

(Stratford Herald) In Sudbury a settler has been sentenced to one month in jail with hard labor for setting a fire which resulted in the destruction of half a million feet of pine timber. The magistrate was recently convinced that this was a clear case of culpable negligence, and in view of innumerable warnings, legal restrictions on the making of fires, and the damage done in this case he decided to make a salutary example. His action will meet with approval from all those who have considered the constant and enormous danger to our forest wealth from devastation by fire which is usually the result of somebody's carelessness. A tree growing for ten years, the Japanese cypress, one of the smallest specimens of the horticultural world, reaches the size of a golf ball.

THE INFANT PRODIGY

A veteran entered at my gate, With locks as cherry-blossoms white; His clothes proclaimed a prosperous fate, His boots were arrogantly bright.

The hat was glossy on his head, Gold-rimmed his eyeglasses, gold his chain, In gold he dressed his waistcoat-spread, And gold-headed was his cane.

Without a preface thus he spoke, "I've called to get my annual due," "Whereat I, too, the silence broke, With, 'Who, respected sir, are you?'"

"What is your claim against me, pray? A many-childed man am I, Hard pinched my monthly bills to pay, And prices rule perversely high."

"Not know me? Everybody knows And gladly gives his mite," quoth he, "Why, I'm a baloon twaddling dandy, I am an Infant Industry."

"Forgive me, Reverend Shape," I cried, "You set my faith a heavy task; This infancy which seems your pride, Is it your second may I ask?"

"Or have you, where so many tailed, The key to life's elixir found? You look like one who never ailed, In wind and limb sedately sound."

"You doubt my word? (Excuse these tears, They flow for you and not for me.) Young man, for more than seventy years I've been an Infant Industry."

James Russell Lowell in the Evening Post, 1890.

IN LIGHTER VEIN.

The young married woman went home to her mother and sobbingly declared she just couldn't be happy with her husband again.

"I wouldn't have minded it so much, mother," she sobbed, "if Charles had answered me back when I scolded him, but he just said something worse."

"No; worse than that, mother!" and the young wife sobbed afresh. "Tell me at once!" indignantly demanded her mother.

"He—he just yawned."

Gets Her Just The Same. Times have certainly changed. In grandma's day a gentleman used to cry upon a lady with much formality and stately ceremony; now he merely drives up and looks for her to come out?—Boston Transcript.

Many amusing stories are told of the absent-mindedness of a certain prelate whose see is on the road to Lyons. For example, he was traveling on a branch line in Devonshire, and when the train stopped at a place where tickets are inspected he searched his pockets in vain. "It did not matter in the least," said the railway official.

"It matters a great deal," said the bishop's reply, "how can I tell where I am going to if I cannot find my ticket?"—London Morning Post.

WOOF! WOOF!

Romping up and down the stairs, Bouncing on my hip, Pulling cushions off the chairs, Sinking in a nap.

Eating all the chocolate cakes, Swiping custard pie, Filling up with nervous quakes, Fearing he would die.

Playing much with friendly cat, Falling over his feet, Sitting on my brand new hat, Stealing all the meat.

Sleeping always like a log, Waiting for the next, That's our little "yaller" dog, Foolish Larry Boy.

OPPOSES ENVOY TO VATICAN.

Not Needed by the United States, says Dr. Egan.

The United States needs no Ambassador to the Vatican, in the opinion of Maurice Francis Egan, former United States Minister to Denmark and prominent Catholic layman, writing in the Columbia, a new monthly magazine published by the Knights of Columbus. "At the beginning of the present administration," Dr. Egan writes, "the usual attempt to induce the president to reopen the question of diplomatic relations with Rome was made. It is a curious fact that there is always a small number of political Protestants engaged in supporting this recent movement, no doubt with the best intentions. Candidates have been mentioned for the office. But the fact that England and France maintain official relations with the Vatican is no example for us to follow."

"The Apostolic Delegate to the United States fulfills every rational motive for the closer bringing of the spiritual and ecclesiastical affairs of America with the head of the church."

The only time that such a mission was needed, Dr. Egan writes, was during the Philippine negotiations, which President Roosevelt carried through successfully without it.

"The United States of America has no interests which ought to be made a subject of negotiations with the Holy Father," he concludes.

THE ISLE OF MAN.

(Hall Gable, in The New York Times.) Although I have published several Manx novels, I always find when I publish one that I am addressing many readers who would be the better for some knowledge of the Isle of Man.

All that is generally known about the island is that it is a health and holiday resort for the people of the northern counties of England and Ireland and the southern end of Scotland, but I think it has claims that rise higher than that. It lies anchored out in the middle of the Irish Sea and as you approach it from the mainland it looks like a bird sitting on her nest. The majority of its human inhabitants are such as are to be found in other seaside resorts for summer visitors, with a few ivy-covered and turreted mansions of moderate size and a number of thatched and white-washed cottages which stand with their sides up to the highroads and are usually screened by the thick foliage of the tamar tree, or the scarlet drooping branches of the beech.

But it bears to the close observer a hint of ancient history, of legend, of poetry, and of the struggles of the ruins of old churches, the remains of at least one abbey and of a large ecclesiastical fortress, the battlemented, four-squared walls of an Elizabethan castle, a number of ruinous crosses, and (above all in historical interest) a circular turf mound, which is probably the only visible relic in the world of the ancient Althing, the open-air parliament of the Norse Republic.

REORGANIZING ECONOMIC FORCES

Marked Progress, Says James B. Forgan—Re-establishing Normal and Healthy Conditions.

Economic forces have been so far reorganized upon a sound and prudent basis of peace-time enterprise as to breathe exertion and firm planning ahead once more, according to a review of the encouraging signs on the business horizon prepared for the New York Commercial by James B. Forgan, chairman of the board of the First National Bank of Chicago, whose constructive leadership has been a factor in the building of the country's business strength. Mr. Forgan's analysis is:—Since the armistice much has been done to bring about a return to normal and healthy conditions in this country and the world at large. While it is true that an enormous task still remains before the wheels of progress are fully set in motion again, it may be well to review recent accomplishments which give ground for hope that ultimately bright skies will dispel the temporary gloom.

"In the first place it ought to be noted that peaceful conditions are gradually returning to war-torn Europe, as is evidenced by the recent acceptance of the reparations agreement by Germany, and the recent settlement of the Ruhr. Mr. Forgan's analysis is:—This last especially is a hopeful sign, because it means that direct negotiations some of the enmity and hatred of Germany toward France and France toward Germany, which has menaced the peace of the world for the last fifty years, should disappear, then, indeed, we may hope for some permanent settlement. Another factor toward progress lies in the Russian situation, where Bolshevism seems to be gradually fading out of existence, as its own leaders are repudiating some of its most vicious tenets. If the war era, controlled by Russia again becomes a part of the civilized world, it will be a great step in advance toward the rehabilitation of international trade and industry. All this will in turn affect our own conditions in a beneficial manner, for as conditions in the rest of the world improve we shall be able to export our surplus commodities and thus find employment for our own people at home."

It is interesting, also, to note that liquidation in business has continued along nearly all lines, so that we are approaching more nearly a stable equilibrium. As this process continues, the burdens of certain parts of our population will be lightened, and it will be true no longer that the prices of some commodities will have reached a pre-war level, while others remain unduly high. Thus especially our agricultural products will find their way to a more satisfactory situation than is true at the present moment, for the worst of the situation for them has been the fact that the prices of products of our soil have been very low, while the things which the farmer had to purchase had still to be paid for at war prices. The price of labor is also tending to become normal again, and in this connection the recent reduction in the wages of the steel industry, though nearly all lines, so that we are approaching more nearly a stable equilibrium. 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