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THE EVENING TIMES AND STAR, ST. JOHN, N. B., FRIDAY, APRIL 4, 1913

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TAX REFORM

One of the arguments presented by Sir James Whitney and other opponents of the tax reform in Ontario is that the adoption of the land tax would bear heavily upon the humble owner of a modest building, while the owner of a skyscraper next door would get off very lightly. The argument was also presented by Mr. J. H. McVey, a socialist leader in Vancouver, who claimed that the single tax would result in an increase in taxation on the working man's home in the suburbs while favoring the owners of apartment houses and other large buildings. Mr. McVey cited his own property as an example. The Vancouver World, however, has given a conclusive answer to Mr. McVey's argument. By an inquiry at the city hall it discovered that under the previous system of levying a tax on a 25 per cent assessment of improvements, Mr. McVey's taxes in 1911-12 would have been higher than he paid under the single tax plan. In 1912 the taxes were a little higher than they would have been under the old system, and the World says they will undoubtedly increase from year to year. But it points out that the property is now worth \$10,000 as a result of the development of the district and the extension of car lines, whereas in 1900 the land and house were only assessed on \$2,500. Hence the World says:

"Mr. McVey may even be compelled one of these days to sell his little home for some such trifling sum as ten or fifteen thousand dollars when, but for the capacity of a tax gatherer, who insists on collecting for the community about one per cent of the value the community has created, he might have legs on living in it watching the unearned increment grow. But when that happens, Mr. McVey will not need to be a workman any longer, if he does not want to be one."

The charge was made not long ago that Vancouver was suffering from the effects of a building boom, and that many of her largest blocks and office buildings were nearly empty, or only partly occupied. The World shows that these statements are without foundation, and Ex-mayor Taylor in a recent speech pointed out that in January Vancouver occupied sixth place among the cities on the continent in the matter of building permits. Mr. Taylor said, so far as the single tax was concerned, no real opposition had been advanced, and that the assessment had been increased year by year practically without protest. "The people of the city recognizing that the unearned increment is an equitable basis on which to raise a revenue for the city's needs."

The Square Deal in its last issue directs attention to the fact that in the city of Toronto a property has recently offered to the city for a park for \$800,000. This property is only assessed on \$300,000. It is not necessary, however, to go to Toronto to discover conditions of this sort. They exist in St. John, where there is a great need for tax reform as in any city in Canada.

TOO MUCH LEGISLATION

One of the most interesting portions of Dr. Adam Shortt's address before the Canadian Club dealt with the essential difference between the Canadian and American systems of government in relation to legislation. In the Canadian parliament or a provincial legislature the government of the day is not only held responsible for the legislation which it initiates, but for all that is adopted, whereas in the American congress or state legislatures there is not the same degree of government responsibility. One of the results of this is that a great mass of legislation is introduced in state legislatures, and laws are passed in which very few people are at all interested, and which remain a dead letter. Dr. Shortt pointed out that as a result of this condition of affairs some of the state legislatures hold only biennial sessions, to protect themselves from what he describes as a "welter of legislation."

Confirmation of Shortt's statement is found in the following article which appears in the Bangor Commercial:

"Massachusetts is noting an agitation in favor of a change from the annual to a biennial session of the legislature, a system that has been adopted by nearly all the sisterhood of states. We note from Massachusetts papers that this demand is fostered by the large amount of legislation that is transacted by the Massachusetts legislature and which might be considered a point in favor of annual session but which is regarded from a contrary view. From 1888 to 1912, inclusive, the Massachusetts legislature adopted 4,100 measures, of which 3,347 were acts and the remainder resolutions. The people of Massachusetts seem to regard this as legislation with a vengeance and a disease that calls for a heroic remedy, which they would supply by cutting the sessions in halves on the proposition that with but half as much time the volume of legislation would be vastly decreased. Possibly it would, but there would be no surety incumbent upon them to pass as many laws as possible not realizing that perhaps the best test of the ability of a legislative body may be found in its ability to discriminate and to refuse unnecessary as well as obnoxious measures. Every state legislature is imported to pass scores of measures that are absolutely of a private or special nature and that are intended to fit one particular case. There is altogether too much of the private and special legislation, a vast proportion of which could be settled in five courts, in five meetings or by referees, or in some other manner. Many legislators are inclined, if a measure seems to them to be harmless, to incline toward its passage whereas if its value cannot be conclusively demonstrated it should be kept from the statute books which are lumbered by far too many laws."

So far as the Canadian provinces are concerned, there is not so much objection to the amount of legislation adopted as to the waste of time caused by members

making long speeches directed at their constituents and not necessarily bearing upon the measure which may be up for consideration. There is not enough of business method in our legislatures as a rule, although in at least two of the Canadian provinces at the present time the government has everything its own way, and is not even subjected to a healthy criticism when the legislature is in session. It is, of course, impossible to get ideal conditions, but the most desirable state of affairs would be such a division of parties as would ensure effective criticism, and such a self-restraint on the part of members as would lead them to refrain from inflicting upon the house and the country long speeches that were not warranted by the importance of the issue under discussion. At all events Canada is more fortunate in this matter than the United States, and there is no immediate danger of an agitation for biennial sessions because of the great number of measures presented for consideration.

The emergency failed to emerge at Ottawa yesterday, and the house gave its attention to such matters as relations with Japan and the West Indies.

A commercial club has been organized in Moncton and a board of trade is to be organized in Sussex. The forward movement is steadily gaining force.

The exports from St. John by the winter steamships show an increase over those of the corresponding period last season, while there has been a very large increase in the volume of imports.

Mr. Bonar Law has again been talking tariff reform in the British house of commons, but makes it clear that there is to be no protection for the farmer. Since the United Kingdom was never more prosperous than at the present time, no serious attention will be paid to the efforts of the Conservatives to secure a change in the fiscal system of the country.

It is said that President Wilson is having some difficulty with the Senate over the question of tariff revision, as there are Democrats in the senate not willing to go quite as far in their advocacy of sweeping changes as the members of the house.

The experience of the German military airship which landed on French territory confirms the statement of Lord Northcliffe that no satisfactory method has yet been devised of directing the movements of military aircraft. These German officers were far out of their course and were compelled to descend in French territory.

They appear to have created a good deal of excitement among the French people of the district, but the affair has no international significance.

The Conservative press is very foolish in asserting that the opposition to the navy bill at Ottawa is promoted by some ex-members of the house who are aided and abetted by Dr. Pugsley and one or two others. The Standard refers to them as the "Pugsley element." The Tory writers are pursuing a ridiculous course in this matter. The whole Liberal party at Ottawa are against the Borden naval bill, and have been against it from the first. Their attitude has not changed. They are united under the leadership of Sir Wilfrid Laurier.

The English suffragettes have replied to the sentence of three years' imprisonment on Mrs. Pankhurst by declaring that human life is now in peril, and that they will carry on a more violent campaign than ever. They threaten a reign of terror and declare that they will more than stagger humanity. The government is confronted by a serious situation, because there is a natural feeling against subjecting women to severe punishment. It becomes necessary, however, to restrain persons of unsound mind if they betray violent tendencies, and this is clearly a case for treatment of that kind.

To read the Tory version of the proceedings at Ottawa one would assume that the charge made by Hon. Mr. Lemieux regarding the contract for 350,000 new locks was a gross libel upon certain eminently deserving persons. Mr. Lemieux, however, is pressing for information, and yesterday compelled the government to admit that the new locks were patented by a Quebec railway conductor, that he and two political friends of the postmaster general had them patented, and that they assigned the patent rights to an Ottawa company which secured from the postmaster-general the contract for 350,000 locks. The whole transaction ought to be investigated, and the Liberals are endeavoring to secure a full enquiry.

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TREATMENT BY DR. MARSHALL'S CATARRH SNUFF
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BIRTHDAYS OF NOTABILITIES

FRIDAY, APRIL FOUR.
Professor A. P. Coleman, one of Canada's foremost geologists, was born on April 4, 1832, at Lacchu. He has undertaken numerous geological expeditions both in Europe and Canada and is a Fellow of the Royal Society. He holds the position of professor of geology at Toronto University.

J. G. Gaudaur, famous oarsman, was born on April 4, 1838, at the Narrows, Lake Concheing. From his earliest years he had a strong fancy for aquatic sports and developed into a remarkable oarsman, rowing in races all over the world with continuous success until 1866.

J. E. B. McCready, for many years editor of the Charlottetown Guardian, and recently appointed publicity agent for Prince Edward Island, was born on April 4, 1869, in Sussex, N. B. He became a member of the St. John Telegraph staff in the days of Livingstone and Elder, and subsequently was the Ottawa resident correspondent of the Toronto Globe, and was president of the Parliamentary Press Gallery for several terms. Later on he became editor of the Moncton Transcript, leaving that paper to become editor-in-chief of the St. John Telegraph. Mr. McCready, in addition to his newspaper work, has contributed to the Canadian Magazine and other publications. While he was a resident of St. John he was a member of the Senate of the University of New Brunswick.

LIGHTER VEIN

Lines to my furnace.
O' furnace in the cellar, whenever I descend
To where you boil so faithfully, you greet me like a friend.
Your ruddy smile and genial so warmly welcomes me,
I hail you with a brother's love, a brother's sympathy.
I found you chinking yesterday when home from lodge I came.
No word we spoke; each understood—the women were to blame.
Like you, dear furnace, now and then to women's rule I bow.
They think that they can run us both, but oh! they don't know how!
To you how many a Sunday disconsolate I lie,
And find a brief but sweet relief from galling company.
You never libel Roosevelt or scoff at Wilton's steamship show,
Of this I'm sure; your politics and mine are just the same.
O' furnace in the cellar, we two are much alike.
Unseen, unknown we labor on, nor ever think we put up with.
To make a cold world warmer, that is our humble task,
And lie to eat and radiate is all the pay we ask.
—Newark News.

THE CRITIC

My father says the paper that he reads isn't put up right.
He finds a lot of faults, he does, perum! it is at night.
He says there ain't a single thing in it worth while to read.
And that it doesn't print the kind of stuff the people need.
He tossed it aside and says it's strictly "on the bum."
But you ought to hear him holler when the paper doesn't come.
He reads about the wedding and he moans like all git out.
He reads the social doin's with a most derisive clear through.
He says they make the papers for the women folks alone.
He'll read about the parties and he'll fume and fret and groan;
He says of information it don't contain a crumb.
But you ought to hear him holler when the paper doesn't come.
He's always first to grab it, and he reads it plumb clear through.
He doesn't miss an item or a want ad—that is true, don't know what he want, them darn newspaper guys;
I'm goin' to take a day some time and go and put 'em wise.
Sometimes it seems as though they must be deaf and blind and dumb,
But you ought to hear him holler when the paper doesn't come.

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The most gladsome thing in the world is that few of us fall very low; the saddest that, with such capabilities, we seldom rise high.—J. B. Baxter.