

The St. John Standard.

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ST. JOHN, N. B. WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 27, 1920.

PROHIBITION AND TEMPERANCE.

Four provinces on Monday voted against the importation of liquor within their borders, and the fact will probably be hailed with glee by the anti-liquor party. Some people affect to believe that stricter laws would eliminate drinking entirely. Well, the United States has absolutely bone dry laws, but even they have not brought prohibition as a fact. Some of the attempts to achieve the impossible are bringing ridicule on the whole scheme—such, for example, as the entirely non-enforceable order that older and other home-made beverages must not be allowed to ferment. It would be just as practical to attempt to dam Niagara as to try to prevent people who want something better than two per cent. liquor from getting it. If they mean to have such liquor, they'll get it somehow or other. Arbitrary unreasonableness must always militate against the successful enforcement of prohibitory laws and be conducive to evils rivaling those of the open bar, and when people get sufficiently fed up on such evils they may turn to something else, as the people of British Columbia have done.

Just how unreasonable some people are may be gathered from the following excerpt from a report of the meeting of the committee of the Ontario Legislature which is enquiring into the administration and effects of the O. T. A. This excerpt, which is clipped from the Ottawa Journal, indicates one of the reasons why enforcement of the prohibition law is so difficult and perhaps helps to explain why prohibition is in danger of losing ground, as it has lost it in British Columbia.

"If it were made easier to get a certain amount of liquor, but such a move were in the interests of temperance, would you support that?" asked Mr. Peter Hoeman, M. P. P.

"No; the spirit of the act is to stop liquor for beverage purposes."

The man who answered the question was Rev. Ben Spence, professional prohibitionist and secretary of the Dominion Alliance. His reply is illustrative of the attitude of prohibitionists which, when translated into law, inspires disregard for the law by those who are opposed to prohibition for personal reasons and alienates the sympathy of moderate people who have supported temperance legislation in the interests of public benefit, making them indifferent to violation of the law and the failure of the authorities to suppress it.

What is the purpose of prohibition? Is it not the suppression of intemperance and the evils resulting from intemperance? But here is a man leading the prohibition movement who is interested in prohibition only for itself and displays a disregard for the purpose of it, and this notwithstanding that there has been little indication so far that prohibition can be made to prohibit. Mr. Spence says, as every body else does, that prohibitory laws are falling short of their purpose, but he declares he would not support a measure that would assist toward the achievement of that purpose—temperance—merely because it would not be his way.

The question before Mr. Spence was not whether it would be in the interests of temperance to have it "made easier to get a certain quantity of liquor," but whether, granted that it would be, he would favor it. In short, Mr. Spence insists on prohibition whether it is best for temperance or not. He prefers the name of prohibition to the fact of temperance. Such an attitude will not win and hold popular support to prohibition, and without popular support prohibition cannot succeed.

Mr. Spence is apparently nothing if not thorough. He asks that the strength of temperance be reduced to one-half of one per cent., and the denatured barrooms of standard hotels so regulated that they will cease to be a congregating place for men. What a nice, convivial soul he must be! Mr. Spence's objection to the temperance beer and the sober bar is that they have a ghost of the old "atmosphere" about them. Men must not be permitted to even imagine they are drinking beer.

THE RAILWAY IN POLITICS.

In pursuance of the policy of keeping the National Railway out of politics, the Board of Management has made an order that no employees are to become candidates for public office. This, in the opinion of the Montreal Gazette, is a commendable action in view of the end sought. Civil servants have long been forbidden to display partisanship, or to engage in politics, whether federal, provincial or municipal, and more than one head has fallen into the basket because of disregard of the injunction; but whether the Railway Union will willingly accept a similar prohibition may be another matter.

There is no correspondence in this regard between a government owned and a private owned railway. The latter makes its regulations, which the employees are free to accept or reject, but the former is as much the property of the employees as of the directors, or for that matter, of any group of persons in the country. Ownership and control of a private railway is determined by the amount of the investment, while ownership and control of a National railway is determined by the number of votes; and in these democratic days all men are equal in the presence of the ballot box. That is a difficulty which may confront the management of the government railway in more matters than the exclusion of employees from participation in politics.

The question has its perplexities. Some people have argued that civil servants should be deprived of the franchise on the ground that they serve the country and not a party; that their loyalty and service is owed to the Government of the day, whatever its political complexion, and that as disfranchisement would voluntarily be undertaken under such a law, no franchise could be felt. This view, however, has not prevailed, and when political interference on the part of public servants has been made passive by confinement to the vote, a prudent middle course was thought to be taken. The National Railway having been taken out of politics, as we are constantly reminded by such episodes as the recent order to the employees, it is probable the matter will be compounded by drawing the line at candidature for office. If a railway man prefers to devote his time and talent to public affairs, that is his business, but it may fairly be reasoned that he cannot serve two masters, and must make his choice accordingly. As for the thousands of National Railway employees, it will be futile to attempt to curb the expression of their political preferences, or to restrain them from mild activity in political affairs that does not interfere with the efficient and regular performance of their duties.

SUGAR GLUTTONS.

Partly as a result of prohibition, people on this Continent have taken to consuming immense quantities of candies and other sweets. Consumption is stated to be on an average of 116 pounds per head per annum, or nearly a third of a pound per day for every man, woman and child. Sugar candy costs the people of the United States a billion dollars a year. The fondness for sugar products is one of the reasons why profiteers found it so easy to shove up prices. Canadians and Americans eat from two to three times as much candy, preserves, etc., as do Europeans. They are rankly extravagant. In Britain, for instance, consumption of sugar in 1913 was 1,962,000 tons. In 1918 it was only 1,109,900 tons. It is not much larger now. This is partly because of sugar rationing, but the Briton has not been accustomed to eating sugar as we do. Consumption of only one-half as much per capita indicates thrift. If people in the United States and Canada would begin a little sugar conservation, the price situation would be modified, for while Europe is eating less than before the war, demands from this Continent have increased by 1,200,000 tons for the present year alone. These statistics show what the underlying situation is. Profiteering may have been rampant, hoarding general, and producers may have been holding up the public, but in the last analysis, the root trouble simply is that we are gluttons on sugar products. The rise in wages of female labor is one factor in the increase price of sugar.

What to do with the Hon. James Fletcher Tweeddale, not now a member of the Legislature, but still holding on to the portfolio of Agriculture, is a question which is causing Premier Foster considerable worry and anxiety just at present. Mr. Tweeddale labors under the impression that he is the only man qualified to properly administer the Department, and does not want to leave it. He wants to finish his work, apparently oblivious of the fact that the way he has been carrying on has, politically speaking, finished him. The suggestion that has been made that he should take the vacant post of Deputy Minister would not work at all, with a Minister of any spirit of his own, and the idea of trying to find another seat for Mr. Tweeddale is impracticable, for no one will make way for him. Mr. Foster's position just at the present time is, like the policeman's, not a particularly happy one.

The result of the recount in Charlotte, while it changes the personnel of the members, does not alter the standing of the parties. Mr. Polard,

who on the sheriff's return was fourth man, now loses by two votes, and Mr. Fleming, who was declared not elected, takes second place. This was the result given on the night of the polling, and but for the carelessness of one of the deputy returning officers, in making up his official return, there would not have been any need for a recount at all.

The jury which sat to enquire into the cause of the death of Woodford Close, the young man who was shot while sitting on a log at the edge of some woods near Fredericton, found that his death was due to an accident. Such a verdict is deliberately putting a premium on carelessness. A man who goes into the woods these days should, if he has anyone dependent upon him, take out a heavy insurance policy before starting. He is just as liable to come out killed as not.

When we hear a man say that he understands the Irish situation, we know that he has not the nearest approach to Baron Munchausen that the modern world holds.

WHAT OTHERS SAY

Automobile Fatalities.

(The Springfield Republican.)
 Automobile fatalities in the United States in 1919 occurred at the rate of 100 to a million of population and have increased this year to about 110 to a million. This is equivalent to one death every 31 minutes of the 16 commonly allotted waking hours of the day.

The Flag End.

(London Daily Herald.)
 The decision of the Norfolk County Football Association that a player who receives a gift of a cigarette case from his club must forfeit amateur status is as welcome as it is silly. For it finally demonstrates the logical absurdity of drawing snobbish distinctions in sport.

What Africa Thinks of Bolsheviks.
 (Bulawayo Chronicle.)
 All the tyrants who ever ruled, from the bloodthirsty monarchs of ancient Asia down to the milk-and-water Romanoffs, might turn in their graves with envy at the programme and practice of the modern Bolshevik, who has one heel on the throat of Russia and seeks to plant his other wherever the windpipe of Western Europe.

The Old Order Changeth.

(Edinburgh Scotsman.)
 "The Unchanging East" has become the scene of changes which, in mere extent and character, throw those that Europe has been witnessing into the shade. While we have been so engrossed with events nearer home as scarcely to take note of the fact, "impassive Asia" has been in violent ferment of revolution from the Levant to Behring Strait.

Just Utilizing a Waste.

(Minneapolis Daily News.)
 Minnesota people will spend more than sixty-five million dollars this year in just operating and maintaining the upkeep of their automobiles. How much of that staggering amount is wasted because roads are unfit for motor travel? And for the same reason, how much is lost by the people of the state because the freight which now overburdens the railroads cannot be diverted to motor trucks?

A BIT OF VERSE

TO THE "GREAT SILENT NAVY."
 When the Navy finds its mark you can hear the sea dogs bark
 On the tossing waves they're always on the prowl
 On duty stern and stark, they are watching in the dark,
 With their guns around and listening, and just about to growl.
 Oh! the Navy's very silent—but effective.
 And it doesn't waste its time in mere investigation.
 But when England says she's ready
 The Tars will all be steady,
 The Bulldog's very silent—but he grips.
 It's a long and weary vigil that they keep upon the sea,
 But the Motherland remembers every Son,
 And though many of the Navy were wanted by old Davey
 They are England's heroes now the fighting days are done.
 Oh! the Navy's very silent—but effective.
 And when England calls it won't be found defective.
 For Jack is always ready,
 And we trust him to be steady,
 The Bulldog's very silent—but he grips.
 —Ethel M. Richardson Rice.

THE LAUGH LINE

Old and New Models.
 "Happiness," said Jud Tunkins, "has to be cranked up, but trouble always has a self-starter."—Washington Star.
 The Truth.
 Sybil—"Did you tell him the truth when he asked you how old you were?"
 Sophie—"Oh, yes!"
 "What did you say?"
 "That it was none of his business!"
 The One Master.
 "He's boasting that he is master in his own house."
 "Must be a widower without children."
 Suspicious.
 Maud Miller was making the hay.
 "I wonder if he is paying me attention for a farmer's vote or a woman's vote?" she mused.—Sun and New York Herald.
 Or a "Situation."
 When a stationer runs into a brick wall and sees no way to get over, or under, he emits a few sharp yelps and calls it a crisis.—Baltimore Sun.

Benny's Note Book

BY LEE PAPE

This afternoon ma was up in her room crowhaying, and I was looking out the window wondering whether to go out or just keep on looking out, and ma sed, "O deary O shab, Benny, run around to the store and get me a spool of red silk."
 Aw G, ma, I was jest going out, I sed.
 Well, you're going out, aren't you? sed ma, and I sed, Yes, ma, but I ment jest out.
 Heers a peec of thred toATCH, and please kindly remember im heer waiting for you, sed ma. Meening not to take too much longer than I had to, and wen I got down to the corner a man started to climb up the telegraph pole to fix the wires, me stopping to watch him in case he mite fall off or anything, wich after a while Puds Sinkins came along and stood there and help ed me watch him, and after a while I remembered I was on a errand, saying, Hay Puds, come with us while I get a spool of silk, will you?
 I will if you come with me ferret, I got to go about 5 places, sed Puds. Wich I went with him, and then he went with me, and wen I got home it was pritty neer dark, ma saying, Didnt I tell you I was waiting for that silk, now I cant finish the tie, you jest wait till your father gets home.
 Wich pritty soon pop did, and ma showed him the start of the tie, being red and green as anything, ma saying, It was to be bin a surprise so you could wear it tonight wen we go to the show.
 The doose I could, sed pop, and ma sed, Yes, I could of had it all finished and the only reason I didnt was because Benny stayed out about 2 hours wen I sent him for more red silk, and I want you to scold him for it, t.e.
 I carenty will, sed pop, Benny, that was a miffy queer thing for you to do.
 O my goodness, scold him, scold him, sed ma, and pop sed, Benny, dont you ever let that happen agin, im very very much pleased, I meen offendid. And he winked at me, saying, Now run along, I cant bare to look at you.
 Sutch a scolding, sed ma. Me quick going out of the room for safe keeping.

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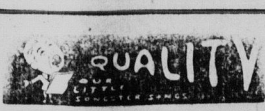
Daily Fashion Hint

Prepared Especially For This Newspaper



WISDOM IN TAFETTA.
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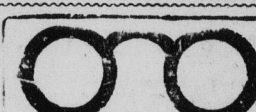
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