

The Advertiser

Published every Friday
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Editor and Proprietor

The fine spring weather has at last arrived and the farmers of this section are making an early start with their work.

The Czar of Russia lives over a volcano; the Emperor of Germany is worrying to the verge of insanity and the Sultan of Turkey has three hundred wives and dyspepsia.

In most every vacation a rest is considered necessary. Now the Kentville churchgoers have completed their vacation and will assemble as usual on Sunday.

Our Canning correspondent in this issue brings to the attention of the public and the County Council some matters relating to a new road in that town.

If the Boers had captured General French they would not have known what to do with him. They could not take him captive to their capital, as their last one Pietersburg has been captured by the British.

Mr. John Lane, the London publisher, is about to issue a ginea book entitled "Poets of the Younger Generation." Thirty singers are included in it, and amongst the names are those of Bliss Carman, C. G. D. Roberts and Duncan Campbell Scott.

Three years ago the United States was the champion of Venezuela against Great Britain. Since then Venezuela has played fast and loose with the rights of an American company and has virtually given the U. S. minister his walking ticket.

During the six years of Liberal rule about one thousand postmasters have been dismissed from office to make room for grit partisans.

Up in Hastings, Ontario, Mr. Hurlcy, the defeated grit candidate, has been appointed a fishery officer at a salary of \$1200 a year, with a census commissionership thrown in at four dollars a day while it lasts.

If the United States government estimate of the winter wheat crop of that country is realized it will be the largest ever known, 460,000,000 bushels, against 330,000,000 bushels last year.

Buffalo, the site of the Pan-American exposition, is now the second city of New York with a population of 352,000. In 1832 it was a village and as late as 1850 its population was only 42,000.

Kings County should be well represented at Ottawa. We have Borden the leader of the opposition and Borden, Minister of Militia both natives of this county.

BLAIR DECEIVES PARLIAMENT
\$4,000,000 Contract without tender
OTTAWA, April 13th.

This week the Government has shown decisive signs that it is weak and the party behind it divided. Laurier shows more and more what a weak man he is, while Borden makes his strength manifest by the dignity and quiet force of his lead.

On Tuesday Parliament met and the first thing we had was an exhibition of the incompetency of the Minister of Agriculture, and

pretty well the last thing we had was a laughable demonstration of the absurdity of making such a man a minister of the Crown, above all minister of Agriculture. On Tuesday Sydney Fisher looking like a fatted two year old moved the third reading of his bill for the inspection of fruit packages. At the end of the week there was nothing left of the two year old steer but a small kidney and that was fizzling and contracting on a grid iron held by Monk, the leader from Quebec, and a most refined political cook, over a particularly hot fire to which his supporters added fuel while some blew the bellows. On Tuesday, he was almost stunned by a huckleberry flung at his cranium by the persistent Taylor, Opposition whip, but on Thursday his ignorance as shown up by the aforementioned gentlemen was something portentous.

During the week the mendacity of this Government has been awful. Laurier was proved to have said what was untrue in regard to the Alien Labour Bill, he having solemnly declared he had submitted it to the labour organizations and it turned out he did nothing of the kind.

Nothing contributed more to drive the late Alexander Mackenzie from power than buying vast quantities of steel rails in a falling market. Blair has now repeated the blunder or villany, according to the point of view. But Blair, to do him justice, is no fool, and cannot plead that imbecility which covers a multitude of sins. First he does the deed, then he denies it; then he has to produce the contract; then he flies from parliament for a time.

On the item of \$500,000 for steel rails and fastenings for the Intercolonial he made a very innocent statement, and the sum itself is innocent enough, for it is not large. He said they would have to get a little more money. Haggart asked for particulars. The innocent minister, in accents bland, gave them. Last year they laid some seventy odd miles and paid \$32,60 a ton. He received a proposal from the Sault Ste. Marie Power Company to supply rails, and he said—

"We made a contract with this company to deliver 25,000 tons of the quality and standard which we have been placing upon the road and we were to pay them \$32.60. . . . We have no permanent and explicit contract with them for the future. . . . We finally concluded to give them an order for 25,000 tons, and while we have no explicit contract with them for any term beyond the year in which we are now entering, we have an understanding with them under which if they furnish us, as they engage to do, with rails of the quality and standard we require, and at the current price in the English market we are prepared to continue to take our rails from them."

We here see BLAIR DECEIVING PARLIAMENT. The contract was asked for and

Mr. Blair promised to bring it down after dinner. But after dinner no Blair appeared. The next day the contract was brought down. It is dated the 9th October, 1900. It is for 125,000 tons of steel rails instead of 25,000, tons; it is for five years, a contract of \$4,000,000 worth of steel rails given without tenders, without consulting Parliament, and at a high price in a falling market. In the Yukon contract made by Sifton for the building of the Yukon Railway, there was a provision that the deal should have the sanction of Parliament—no such provision is here—and the present Government are on record as having laid down the sound doctrine that no Government can contract to spend money that has not been voted by Parliament. The Minister of Railways admitted that the rails could be bought

\$6 A TON CHEAPER NOW. The contract says: "It is agreed that Her Majesty will in each year from the year 1901 to the year 1905, both inclusive, purchase from the Company and take delivery of 25,000 tons of 2,240 pounds to the ton; that with the exception of the year 1901 for which year the price per ton is hereby fixed at \$32.60, the price of such rails per ton shall be the same as the price obtainable for the same quality of rails in the open market of Great Britain at the time when the respective orders for such rails are given under the said contract." This company will be in a great position. It gets \$3 per ton for pig iron and \$3 per ton for steel, that makes \$6, besides a bounty from the Ontario Government of \$1 and it has not a forge lit yet! The country stands to lose on this transaction \$1,543,750.

A news agency publishes a despatch from Capetown which says that General De Wet is so distracted by the hopelessness of his cause that he can truthfully be described as insane. He goes in fear of his life amidst his own troops, and keeps himself surrounded night and day by a bodyguard of chosen adherents. But from his own ranks voices are now most frequently heard calling imperatively for peace.

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THE CLERGEUE DEAL

If the Clergue contract for rails had been submitted for the sanction of parliament the Spectator would have said nothing against the deal, because we believe in encouraging Canadian industries, but we do protest against the irregular way in which the contract was made. It seems to be the policy of the new Liberalism to ignore parliament and let the cabinet run the affairs of the country. The Clergue contract was made in October last year, a month before the elections, and it was not until Tuesday that Hon. Mr. Blair condescended to tell parliament anything about it. Even then Mr. Blair tried to deceive the members by stating that only 25,000 tons of rails had been contracted for; but the opposition was on the alert and discovered that 125,000 tons of rails had been ordered at a cost of \$4,000,000. Another question that should be asked is, Was it any advantage to the government to make the deal on the eve of the elections?—Hamilton Spectator.

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