

# The St. John Standard

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ST. JOHN, N. B., WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 12, 1916.

"We are fighting for a worthy purpose, and we shall not lay down our arms until that purpose has been fully achieved."—H.M. The King TO THE PEOPLE OF THE EMPIRE—Every fighting unit we can send to the front means one step nearer peace.

## THE PROVINCIAL OPPOSITION AND THE CROWN LANDS.

It is generally supposed that the function of a government is to govern and to assume full responsibility for the administration of public affairs. Viewed in this light the proposal of the Provincial Opposition to relegate the administration and control of the Crown Lands of the Province to what their own platform says shall be "a non-partisan commission specially appointed for the purpose," is either an admission that the party is incompetent to formulate a policy and carry it into execution, or else, realizing their past experiences, they feel that a government controlled by them could not be trusted not to waste the public domain.

The Crown Lands are the property of the people who have a right to directly control their administration. To put this control in the hands of an independent and, possibly, autocratic commission, might bring about many causes of complaint which the government might not be able to effectively remedy.

Of course, such a commission, composed of some friends of the opposition, whose names it is not at all necessary to specify as they will readily suggest themselves to the public, might be an exceedingly useful adjunct for collection purposes when the "Abolish the Bag" policy is supposed to be in full operation. There is an innocent air of detachment about the whole proposition which will bear the most careful inspection, especially when we consider the sources from which it emanates. The casual mind will naturally wonder what opposition lumberman, or group of lumbermen suggested it.

In marked contrast to this is the clear and resolute policy of Premier Clarke who brought to the office of Minister of Lands and Mines a determination to carry into practice what previous administrations advocated only in theory on the pages of the statute books. The Tweedie administration passed what is known as "The Public Domain Act," which was intended to provide for obtaining an accurate knowledge of the resources of the province, but they carefully avoided bringing the measure into operation.

Premier Clarke is now engaged in the work of securing an accurate and scientific knowledge of the location, extent and value of the public domain. For this purpose he will employ a capable and highly trained staff, but he and his Government will retain the administration of and responsibility for this asset of the province. Upon the information thus obtained a wise and far-seeing policy will be based which, we venture to predict, will commend itself much more largely to the public mind than the appointment of a commission, perhaps to conserve, but more likely to exploit our forest resources.

The sudden interest which the Opposition party as at present constituted takes in the Crown Lands of the province may be regarded as somewhat peculiar, to say the least of it. During their twenty-five years of power they never had anything saving of a plan for this important department of provincial administration. Now, after only eight years of opposition, they have suddenly acquired wisdom and venture to put forward the idea already referred to. It is but natural that a party which was mixed up in the nefarious Northumberland deal should have strong ideas on Crown Lands but the great accessions to the revenues derived from that department since Mr. Robinson's government went out of power shows how shamefully they neglected it during their period of responsibility.

Whatever may be said of the Crown Lands administration since Mr. Robinson's defeat the most bitter oppositionist is forced to the admission that every dollar due to the province has been immeasurably increased, and that no man has taken his life as the result of the acts he had to perform for members of the administration. Can we say that the period prior to 1907

## THE OPPOSITION AND THE ROADS

The announced platform of the provincial opposition in regard to the roads of the province will hardly stand careful analysis. The last policy of the Tweedie government was to centralize the administration of roads, recognizing that the ways of communication could not be kept up by the detached efforts of the several municipalities. By the appointment of a Provincial Road Engineer, Hon. John Morrissey has already shown his determination to grapple with this important problem and he will be in a position to work out the details of his policy long before the leaders of the provincial opposition can secure the opportunity of carrying out their experiments.

Apparently all the money that, under this policy, is to be expended on the great roads of the province is such an amount of capital expenditure as can be produced by the investment of the receipts derived from motor vehicles plus an equal amount to be taken from the revenues of the province.

Let us see what this means. The revenue derived last year from the taxation of motor vehicles was approximately \$23,000, and with an equal amount from the provincial treasury would give \$46,000 per year as the investment on which to secure road appropriations. At the present rates money will cost at least six per cent, so we see that, making no provision for sinking funds, all that could be secured on capital account in this way would be in the vicinity of \$750,000, or an average of \$50,000 for each county. This would mean an ability to construct about twenty miles of road for each county. In considering this brilliant scheme, however, it is well to remember that under the present administration all the money received from motor vehicles is being spent on the roads and the adoption of this plan would withdraw that money from the annual road upkeep.

The Opposition's pronouncement in this matter is peculiar also for the fact that it proposes a large increase in the capital expenditure which entails an addition to the bonded indebtedness of the province. This, in one breath, the opposition complains that the bonded debt is too large and in another, proposes to increase it. It is not unusual, however, for the platform of a party out of power to present inconsistencies as the several catches are chosen merely as vote catchers and with no regard to their feasibility in practice.

## CONCERNING PROHIBITION

Despite the efforts of some of the leaders to misrepresent, the proceedings of yesterday's session of the opposition convention show that the Standard's statements regarding the invitation from the convention to the Dominion Alliance were absolutely correct. The net result of the opposition's efforts to grapple with the prohibition question is that they have merely copied the Government's action, and it should be remembered that the pledge given by the Government to the temperance people was the promise of a party in power and in a position of responsibility. The Government will deal with the prohibition question in the interests of the entire province and will accept full responsibility for its action. The opposition's imitation stand is merely what one might expect from a party seeking every device that may help them into power.

It is also worthy of note that one of the gentlemen prominent as a "hand-shaker" at yesterday's convention was busily engaged, not long ago, in assuring certain large liquor interests in St. John that his party would not touch prohibition as they regarded it as radically unsound but would favor a high license system. The party has apparently had a change of expediency though not of heart and this has resulted in a frantic endeavor to drag the temperance forces of the province to the support of a party which might be better engaged in the attempt to provide itself with a leader. The temperance people are hardly to be deceived by any such puerile action.

## MR. C. W. ROBINSON.

Hon. C. W. Robinson has determined no longer to associate with the motley crew dignified by the name of the Provincial Opposition and yesterday his resignation was accepted by that organization. It is a matter for regret for a good and well led opposition is always a thing of value to any government. While Mr. Robinson as premier of this province was under the handicap of insufficient time to prepare himself for the duties of his office, while he was forced to accept intolerable burdens as the result of the activities of the pirates who had preceded him and while he often was deprived even of the necessary information to enable him to make the best of a bad job yet he was always a gentleman, and his retirement from public life is a matter for sincere regret.

While it has been necessary for The Standard to criticize the acts of the administration led by him we are prepared to believe that he personally was not to blame and we sincerely trust that nothing that has been said will be regarded as reflecting personally upon a man whose private character and demeanor in public life was always above reproach.

## ST. JOHN AND THE N. T. R.

Referring to the great growth of trade through the port of St. John in the month of December the Times remarks, "There would have been much greater increase if the National Transcontinental had proper connection with St. John." Correct, and the business would have been still greater if St. John had been in the main line of the N. T. R. Instead of, in the classic words of President Lincoln, "treated like a way station."

The responsibility for whatever trade is lost through the fact that the N. T. R. does not come here must rest on the shoulders of professional politicians who obeyed when Mr. Fielding cracked the whip and ordered the railway away from this port. The editor of the Times was correct in recording his own opinion that the record his own party made for this effect if he cares to pursue the subject further. The Standard will cheerfully furnish them for him.

## The Public Library

To the Editor of The Standard, Sir:—There is no objection to the wretched inefficient lighting of the reading room in our public library. The members of the common council and of the library board vote and expend the annual sum needed to make the library efficient, and they should be glad that readers are given the very best artificial light possible.

Near the ceiling, fully sixteen feet above the reading table level, are several groups of electric lights. At two or three o'clock, when men were injuring their sight reading by light fifteen feet above their heads. I hear that the board cannot spare the money to have proper light fixtures on the tables, but that the present fixtures are dangerous. The group of lights now about five feet from the ceiling should be taken down and placed near the readers. People do not go to libraries at night to see the cornices—they go to read the books.

Visit the library reading room in any United States city. The lights are not near the ceiling, they are on the tables, about twenty inches above the table level, with a green glass shade over each light. There you will see the youth reading comfortably by a clear, well shaded light. In St. John, at night, to see the cornices—they go to read the books.

To say that we cannot afford proper efficient lighting is not true. The boy's eyes are worth much, and the council and library board are bound in honor to consider the readers. We talk about medical examination of schools and then we lay a trap to injure school children's eyes by not giving sufficient reading light. The tables are there, the fixtures are on the tables, but they are not lighted. These fixtures are ten inches too high from the table level, a new system is to be installed, the actual light should not be more than sixteen inches above the table level.

Let the council or the Library board, at different times, call in at the reading room and examine the conditions. They will decide at once to put in up-to-date, thorough lighting and thus save the eyesight of the readers.

Very truly yours, W. FRANK HATHEWAY.

## ANNUAL MEETING OF QUEEN SQUARE SCHOOL

The annual meeting of the Queen Square Methodist Sunday school was held last evening with the president, Rev. Hammond Johnston, in the chair. Reports for the year showed most encouraging results, and it was shown that the Sunday school had a total membership of 235, all actively connected with the school. Rotine business was largely dealt with.

## Little Benny's Note Book

Last night I was dreaming I was taking a shower bath with all my close awn just for the sensation of it, and I woke up and saw it was raining like anything outside and the rain was blowing into my face and I was shivering with cold. G, my face is awl wet, I thawt.

Wich it was, and I kept awn laying there listening to the wind blowing about a mile a minnit and pritty soon I went to sleep agin and started to dream sun firemen came up and set me awn fire and then started to squirt a hose awn me, and I woke up agin and the rain was blowing in awn my face worse than ever.

G, I better get up and close that, I thawt. Meeting the window, and I laid there thinking about getting up and closing it, and the wind kept awl blowing and the rain kept awn coming in and I kept awn thinking about closing the window insted of doing it, and pritty soon just as I was going to get up and do it I fell asleep agin and dreamed sun kind of a big minnit with a wet ting was licking my face with it, and I woke up agin, thinking, G, I havent closed that window yet.

And I was still laying there thinking about it and the door opened and it was pop in his nite rown, and he started to wawk over to the window, and I sed, is that you, pop.

Wat, you dont mean to say yure awake, sed pop. Yes sir, I sed.

Then awl I can say is that you take the cake and a haff a dushun bunns, sed pop, the ideer of being such a goop as to lie there with the rain streaming in the room and not having the gumphin to close the window, wy, its a wundir yure not awl wet.

I am, I sed. Then wy the perpl biases didnt you get up and close the window, sed pop.

I was going to, I sed. Thats wat Napoleon sed wen they asked him wy he didnt win the battle of Waterloo, sed pop. And he came over and felt my face and the covers and made me go down stares and finish sleeping awn the sofer in the setting room.

Walker and LeRoy King, librarians; Miss S. J. Betts, superintendent of some department; Miss M. Thompson, assistant; Mrs. E. J. Smith, superintendent cradle department; Miss Ethel Hawker, superintendent I. B. R. A. The teachers for the year were re-elected with the addition of Miss Elsie Wilson and Louis Porter.

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## Season

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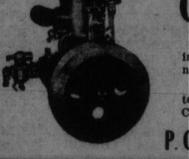
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## OBITUARY.

Luther Jordan A prominent leader in the lumbering and milling industry passed away yesterday when Luther Jordan died.

His home, 90 Main street, at 1 o'clock in the afternoon, death being attributed to angina pectoris. Mr. Jordan was a native of St. John and many in the province and the neighboring public will learn with surprise at deep regret of the sad event.

Mr. Jordan, who would have been seventy years of age had he survived until next month, was in comparatively good health until yesterday. He was able to be about as usual on Monday. He leaves, besides his wife, Mrs. Ellen Jordan, two sons, two brothers, two sisters and one grandchild.

The children are Messrs. Frank and Peary Jordan of this city; the sisters, Mrs. Eva Jordan and Mrs. Charles Buzell of Oldtown, Maine, and the brothers, Moses and Harvey, also of Oldtown.

The late Mr. Jordan was a native of Marlow, Maine, and was engaged in lumbering and milling throughout his business career. He was partner in the Jordan mill at Pleasant Point. He was a member of the Masonic order and of the Odd Fellows. He deceased was an attendant at the Main street Baptist church.

The funeral will take place on Thursday afternoon at 2.30 o'clock.

Miss Samantha Eaton The death took place yesterday morning at her home, No. 87 Melrose street, of Miss Samantha Eaton. She was a daughter of the late Aaron Eaton, a successful merchant and shipbuilder. She was for many years active in Centennial church and took great interest in all questions affecting the welfare of the community. Miss Eaton is survived by three sisters, Mrs. Ansteth of this city, widow of the late H. G. Ansteth; Mrs. King, Ottawa, widow of Hon. Mr. Justice King of the Supreme Court of Canada, and Mrs. Breckenridge of Toronto, widow of Rev. Ralph Breckenridge.

Leonard McDaw Friends of Mr. and Mrs. George T. Gamble of 64 Spring street, will be with regret of the death of their infant son, Leonard McDaw, which occurred early yesterday morning after a short illness. Mr. Gamble was called home on Friday from Partridge Island, where he is stationed with the Siege Battery No. 4. The funeral will be at 2.30 tomorrow afternoon.

James Grattan James Grattan, in early life an employee of the European and North American railroad, between St. John and Shediac, died recently at the home of his son, John Grattan, I. C. R. engineer at Pictou. Mr. Grattan was born in Ireland 80 years ago. After retiring from railroading he conducted hotels in Shediac, Bucoche and Point du Chene.

Ada Rehan Dead. The death is announced in New