

THE SEMI-WEEKLY TELEGRAPH, ST. JOHN, N. B., WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6, 1904.

April 6, 1904

**THE SEMI-WEEKLY TELEGRAPH.**  
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**Semi-Weekly Telegraph**  
ST. JOHN, N. B., APRIL 6, 1904.

### GUARD THE PEOPLE'S INTERESTS, NOT THE GRAND TRUNK'S.

Parliament, on Tuesday next, will debate the amendments to the G. T. Pacific project which the Grand Trunk forced the government to accept and which the government is now to ask Parliament to ratify. The government is said to have its followers well in hand, and is therefore prepared to drive the railway bargain through with as little delay as possible. What the government cannot do, however, is either to convince the people of this country that its course is justifiable, or escape the judgment which the people may pass upon its concessions to the Grand Trunk and its failure to discuss the transportation question with sound railroad and business judgment, conserving the people's interests and making the new railroad soundly all-Canadian in theory and operation.

The Grand Trunk has a servant of force and cunning in Mr. Hays. It is to be regretted that his services are not controlled by the people rather than by the corporation. When he addressed the Grand Trunk shareholders in London he did not attempt to praise or condemn the Grand Trunk Pacific scheme as a whole. He did not tell them that the line would serve the purpose which is the only excuse for its construction. He did tell them that concessions could be secured from the Dominion government so important that the Grand Trunk could agree to the Eastern and Western sections because the whole agreement would be generous enough to offset the fact that the plan as a whole was neither good business nor sound railroad.

Critics in parliament will not only discuss what Mr. Hays said, but what he did not say, for, as the Montreal Witness pointed out, his silence on some points, notably the Eastern section, was most eloquent. Says the Liberal Witness in discussing Mr. Hays' speech:

It was all good and irrefragable reasoning, but it was all about the original proposal of the Grand Trunk Company before the government had agreed to its terms. The part of the scheme, concerning the trans-Canada part of the scheme, Mr. Hays said nothing about it. He could not say anything about it, for it was going to bring new business to the company's existing lines. On the contrary, it must necessarily take away some of the business that those lines would otherwise have.

What interests the public is that Mr. Hays looked so sincere on the part of the road of which the government makes the principal boast that he neither boasted of nor referred to it. We should certainly have taken much comfort had Mr. Hays, with his practical knowledge, told the shareholders of this, as of the other, that he would stake his reputation as a railway manager, that it would be a paying and profitable line. Of course he could not do so.

The moral of Mr. Hays' speech is that the Grand Trunk Pacific, as planned by the management of his company, is a business proposition of first-class quality, one that business men will welcome everywhere, and the need of which everyone at once recognizes. So good and ready-made a proposition it is, indeed, that it may well be asked whether the government is not doing a great deal too much for it. The Ontario, Quebec and New Brunswick lines of it, on the other hand, constitute what our French friends are in the habit of calling, with a shrug of their shoulders, "un chemin de fer politique."

(A political railway).

To which the Charlottetown Guardian (Ind.) adds:

"We are to build a political railway, whose costly Eastern section at least could not have been undertaken on business principles. And the amendments now to be passed upon by Parliament are simply so many new concessions to the company. But a substantial majority in Parliament will doubtless swallow the dose."

Likely enough. Still, in advance of that swallowing, there will surely be a renewed demand that the government tell the country more definitely what the route is to be, and how it expects to prevent Canadian freight from pouring out at American ports as Mr. Blair said it would. It is admitted on all hands that the scheme is even more objectionable today than it was when Mr. Blair first proposed it.

And as practically the entire discussion is to be reserved for the debate which will be of great importance. It is not to be forgotten that at the close of the last session several government supporters hinted that this and that modification was to be made, and that in the interval, also, certain gentlemen have promised this community and that one that the railroad would come to its door. The government, it must be assumed, is now prepared to take Parliament fully into its confidence.

The men who stand up for the taxpayers at this juncture and who show themselves more concerned about the future of the

country than about the hopes of the government and the wishes of the Grand Trunk will be upheld by the people who sent them to Ottawa.

### FIGHTING IN THIBET.

It is a rare day when there are no troops in battle somewhere on the outer marches of the British Empire. Close upon Lord Curzon's significant words at Calcutta, concerning Britain's determination to check any attempt by another Power to destroy her influence in friendly states, comes news that the British force in Thibet was twice attacked and that the natives were repulsed on both occasions with serious loss.

The mission of Colonel Younghusband was to escort commissioners of the Indian government to Lhasa where they were to seek the fulfillment of a treaty admitting Indian traders to Thibet on the fair terms promised. Before the expedition had crossed more than fifty miles of Thibetan territory it was met by representatives of the Grand Lama who said no negotiations were desired. The British were warned to leave the country. Then they encamped and sent for the reinforcements which have since been pushing forward under General Macdonald. The arrival of Macdonald with 1,000 men was followed by a forward movement and some fierce fighting, in which British steadiness and courage, together with superior arms, led to the usual victory.

It was the growing ascendancy of Russian influence at Lhasa which led to the Younghusband expedition, and further news that Russian agents were actively fomenting hostility to the British caused the Indian government to make the supporting force one of considerable strength. How much the Russians have had to do with the Thibetan decision to fight is a question of great interest now when St. Petersburg is accused of being the British because of their alliance with and encouragement of Japan. Some time ago the prime minister of Nepal sent to the Lhasa a long despatch warning them against yielding to Russian influence and being led into trouble with the British by alighting their commissioners. He said in part:

"Some time ago I had occasion to inquire of you whether there was any truth in the rumors that were current regarding certain secret arrangements being made between your government and that of Russia, when I received a reassuring reply. It is laid down by treaty between the governments of Nepal and Thibet that the government will assist Thibet in case of an invasion of its territory by any foreign ruler. Consequently, when a difference of opinion arises between you and anyone else, it is incumbent on me to help you to the best of my power with my advice and guidance."

"Understand it well; for the British government does not appear to have acted in an improper or high-handed manner in the matter, but is simply trying to have the treaty conditions fulfilled, to which everybody has a right, and it is against the treaty, as well as against all morality or policy, to allow matters to drift, and to regard as enemies the officers of such a powerful government, who have come to enforce such rights."

They must arrange this matter at Lhasa even if it is necessary to fight their way into that city of mystery. The situation is full of possibilities, especially in view of the report that Russian rifles were found among the Thibetan wounded.

### THE PRICELESS FRANCHISE.

One might infer from the discussion of the St. John franchise act now being carried on that the people of this city, taxpayers and tax designers alike, must pay early and men who pay late and men who never pay, one and all prized the privilege of voting more highly than gold and precious stones. There are in this community at present some very honest men who will fly into a noble rage if it suggested that every citizen who is consumed by a devouring interest in civic affairs will surely pay his taxes before election day. There are other honest men who will tell you that something more than a more liberal franchise act is required to make more than thirty-five per cent of the voters care fifteen cents worth who is mayor or who are aldermen. There may be extremists among these honest men but they are not without excuse.

In 1902 when the civic election fever raged in St. John and the public-spirited taxpayers had their annual opportunity to change the complexion of the city council, what happened? Out of nearly 9,000 men who should have voted only 3,200 were qualified and of these the mad rush to the polls included less than 3,200. Last year, when there was much cause for criticizing a large number of the aldermen, and more cause for criticizing some of the heads of departments for whom they are responsible, only about 2,000 votes were cast. It may be said of last year that there were contests in but two wards and that this fact accounts for the small vote. But had there been anything like a proper interest in civic matters there would have been contests in almost every ward in the city.

Until there is such interest and until the civic election becomes something more than a mere matter of routine to which but few pay any attention, citizens who do not vote and who complain about the manner in which the city's business is managed, will have only themselves to blame.

There are to be contests in several wards this year, but there is no sign that any one of them forebushes any important stir in civic politics. The men needed as candidates are practical business men who know the city's needs intimately and who are prepared to give considerable

time to their consideration. There are some good men at the head now. Some new blood would improve it. But what is needed most is a keen and critical interest in public matters such as would make every alderman and would-be alderman feel that much was demanded of him and that he must prove his worth.

While the franchise discussion rages it is just as well to keep in mind the fact that on election day even the men whose taxes are paid are apt to feel too tired to cast the votes they have.

### PUTTING ON MORE STEAM.

Halifax is initiating a "forward" movement which is not without interest to St. John. One proposal is to enlarge the board of trade there, develop more business energy and unite all active business men in a brisk and sustained effort to make the city a greater commercial centre, get more people, more trade and more life generally. It is suggested that the board of trade, once it includes among its working members all the business men who are enterprising and public spirited, shall concern itself not only with the development of the city but also with the progress of the province of which it is the heart.

It may be said here that the St. John Board of Trade is neither large enough nor active enough, and that New Brunswick needs increased co-operation and sympathy between the business men of its more important centres. In Worcester (Mass.) the board of trade has 600 members; in Portland (Me.) 610. There are fifty boards in Maine and two-thirds of them are affiliated with the state board and thus are always ready to take up at once and as one body questions of state interest.

The Halifax board has issued a report dealing with the "Forward Halifax" movement, a report which breathes a progressive spirit and which is calculated to once to increase the board's membership and apply newly awakened energy to the city's needs. The features dwelt upon in this report as immediately necessary are: (1) a large membership, (2) more assiduous application of the business capacity than is to be found among our members, (3) a young and active general. After dealing with the commercial life of the province the report speaks of Halifax as a manufacturing place and an attractive city for tourists and makes suggestions which apply to St. John as well.

"A great deal of stress would have to be laid on making Halifax a manufacturing centre. The board might use its influence to hasten the establishment of the ship-building works. In addition it might by various means encourage the establishment of a number of smaller industries for which the city is adapted."

"The Tourist Association has done a great deal of good for the city in the past, and we think its work might be taken over by the board. The same lines might be followed and others added. For instance, the board might institute an 'Home Week'; it might make plans to make Halifax a summer town; it might gradually make it a convention city, making arrangements for larger and more valuable conventions as the place comes to have more hotel accommodation."

"The attraction of Halifax at present is largely in its environs. It will become more attractive to tourists according as it is made more attractive to industry. So part of the board's work should be to control an originating scheme of beautification that might be carried out in time to the great improvement of the city, not only as a summer town but as a residential place. Internal beautification is a work that the board might very well and profitably take up, particularly in connection with its tourist branch."

The plan, in a word, is to unite and put on more steam. It is a plan which St. John might well adopt, for even if an increase of properly applied energy from Halifax is sorely here as in Halifax it is needed nevertheless.

### GETTING TOGETHER.

A conference which should have important results will be held this evening by the entertainment committee of the Champlain celebration and the executive of the Exhibition Association. The object of the meeting is to reach a satisfactory understanding regarding the city and provincial grants for which both bodies have made application. It is to be regretted that the exhibition and the exhibition should even appear to clash financially. The people of the province and the city are much interested in both and both deserve financial aid. It is possible that the exhibition directors will make concessions which will make it easier to secure money from the city and the province for both events. They may even consider that, as all classes in the city and throughout the province are keenly interested in the tercentenary celebration, it may be expedient to postpone the exhibition until next year, and so ensure beyond doubt the complete success of the Champlain festival.

Presumably the first thing to do is to take the sense of a quorum of the exhibition directors to whose industry and enterprise St. John is much indebted and in whose wisdom and public spirit it has no little confidence. If these directors, most of whom are interested in the tercentenary also, discuss the matter among themselves before conferring this evening with the Champlain entertainment committee, a definite understanding with the latter may be expected. There is a common council meeting on Monday, and both the aldermen and the local government should be informed, as soon as possible, what conclusions have been reached.

The outlook now is favorable for both

a civic and a provincial grant in furtherment of the Champlain affair. It is now widely recognized that both the city and the province will benefit by it, and that the people generally believe the celebration must be made successful. The amount of money required is really small in view of the importance of the event and the public would like to see it guaranteed during the next few days.

St. John is pledged to make the tercentenary festival a "go." It has never undertaken anything so picturesque or which so strongly appealed to all New Brunswickers and Canadians.

### A FEARFUL REVELATION.

Seven persons—some insane, some bed-ridden from age and illness, some helpless children—emerge from a shack near Macan (N.S.), where they have spent a winter of frightful wretchedness, to indict the authorities of Cumberland county for neglect so gross as to constitute a starting example of man's inhumanity to man. It is almost inconceivable that the county officials could have permitted and encouraged—as they did by a miserably contributed public money—the existence of this frightful colony of imbecile and diseased and helpless waifs in the heart of a rich farming region which has been noted for its progress, comfort and enlightenment. Cumberland county paid \$1.75 per week for the "support" of four of these unfortunates—that is, less than fifty cents for each one—in a hotel where none was capable of caring for himself or herself much less able to assist the others.

To the miserable refuge where four were thus imprisoned in misery by the county, three others, a tramp and a lunatic and another waif, were somehow attracted, and during the most severe winter Canada has experienced in a generation the seven lived like the beasts that perish.

Had this awful company hidden themselves away so that no one knew their condition, the public might understand it. But the fact that public money was expended to support some of the party makes it plain that some official should have known of their awful plight, perhaps even did know of it and was content to allow helplessness to suffer in silence.

A resident of the county notified the Halifax S. P. C. A. and an investigation was made. It may be assumed now that the imbeciles, bed-ridden old folks and miserable children will be cared for. The S. P. C. A. should go farther and should have the active assistance of the best people in Cumberland in doing so. It should institute proceedings which will fix the responsibility for this occurrence, which is a flagrant disgrace to the county. An entire community should not permit the blame for such an incident to rest upon the shoulders of the individuals whose neglect or cruelty permitted such conditions to arise and continue in a section where few are so poor in pocket or so mean in spirit as to permit child and helpless and mental darkness to starve and freeze together in a land of plenty and of mercy.

### WHAT IS THE TRUTH?

What is the truth about the Eastern section of the G. T. P.? Is there a secret understanding that, after the Western portion of the road is assured, after eastern communities have been fed upon statements about what the new railway would do for them, the government will find a way to drop the business and unprofitable Eastern division?

The Toronto News intimates that some such intention may exist, for it cannot understand why the government is determined to bind itself to build from Winnipeg to Montreal no matter how heavy may be the grades encountered. The News asserts, what is known, that the government has no evidence that the grades will be such as to make this part of the line a successful freight carrier. Under these circumstances "the simple and business-like course is to make it understood that if suitable grades are secured the line will be built, and that if they cannot be secured, the project will be abandoned as unworkable. It would be so simple, so straightforward and so sensible for the government to lay that down as its policy that its refusal to do so must provoke suspicion and wonder."

The refusal to make known its determination not to build unless favorable grades are obtainable, when such a decision is natural and necessary, causes the News to ask: "Is the promise to build the whole trunk line from Winnipeg to Montreal absolutely sincere? It may be that yet another part of the Eastern Division is designed mainly to gain Eastern support for the financing of the Western Division. Is there a chance that the government, once it has the Western Division of the Grand Trunk Pacific assured, may find some means of withdrawing from the building of part of the Eastern Division? Does it contemplate taking fortively and unwisely the ordinary, commonsense business precautions which it should take honestly and straightforwardly? The surmise is unpleasant, but it is suggested by the extraordinary absence of the most necessary stipulation."

When the railroad debate is continued tomorrow the government may give the House some definite information as to the grades along the projected route of the Eastern section, or it may be unable to do so and may ask parliament to complete the bargain and leave the route in the air. The House will not even know whether a successful grain route, having low gradients and consequently low freights, can be built, as is proposed. Certainly the government should say that unless complete surveys show that a high-class road sufficiently level to permit of low freight

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Norfolk Suits, 2 50 to 5 50  
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Overcoats, 5 00 5 50, 6 00, 7 00  
Rain Coats, 5 00, 5 50, 6 00, 7 00

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charges can be constructed, this part of the G. T. P. contract must become void. Two amendments at least, the News insists, should be insisted upon by Parliament:

"A minimum price should be named for the common stock. The rate at which the first issue of bonds is floated should be subjected to some measure of control by the government. It is intolerable that any railway corporation or any body of private capitalists should be allowed to determine what is to be the extent of the public liability in relation to a private enterprise which the government lends its support. It is intolerable that the government should pass over to outside parties a trust which can be safely vested only in the Cabinet and in Parliament."

It is intolerable that private capitalists should be able to force ministers to make such a surrender of their own rights and duties in contempt of the first authority of parliament, and doubly intolerable that ministers should accept so weakly and complacently the humiliating position which upon careful investigation they are shown to occupy under the amended Grand Trunk Pacific contract."

### AFTER THE KILLING.

London, which gives its newspapers great liberty and which should be the loudest when the Empire is threatened at any point, has now many frank and bitter critics of the British course in Thibet.

The cry goes up that Younghusband and Macdonald have butchered some hundreds of hill-folk in pursuance of the useless and inhuman policy of the Indian government. The critics who most fiercely decry the British success are the same men who would have most savagely indicted the government had Younghusband been permitted to control the country Lord Curzon described a few days ago as a glacial just outside the British fortress India, a glacial which Britain did not intend to seize, but which she could not permit another power to control.

It is not easy to foretell what may follow this scuffle in the hills and the driving of the Indian wedge into the forbidden city of Lhasa. But we know that in the Eastern mind there is a too long patience is regarded as born of cowardice or impotence. The sending of commissioners to the Thibetan capital was undertaken long before the smouldering fire in the Far East burst into the flame of war. It was undertaken for reasons which were sufficient then and which are even weightier now. The Thibetans broke a treaty and dealt harshly with British agents. Such an example was calculated to have an evil effect along the entire northern border of India. There was too much reason to believe Russia was secretly priming the Thibetans for trouble with the British, and promising them assistance when the pinch came. What Russia could do along these lines in Thibet she could do in other quarters, in Persia and Afghanistan in the west, and in China and Siam in the north and east. It is necessary that Britain look sharply to her outposts and that her ascendancy shall not be diminished by any course which might be mistaken for faltering.

It is easy to say of the fight at Gura

that the Sikhs butchered a lot of hillmen who had only bows and matchlocks. On the other hand it is to be kept in mind that the expedition, of whose terrible journey through the mountains we heard so recently, was a small one, far from reinforcements, and likely to be surrounded and starved out by thousands of fighting men ready to obey the curious authorities they recognize. The Sikhs were in the position of men whose hands must keep their heads. It would be expected of them that when a fight was forced upon them they would strike hard that the people in the heart of whose country they now are might not take heart too quickly and rally to their extermination.

### VACANCIES.

Disposed to discuss the vacancies in the New Brunswick cabinet the Sun prints among other improbable rumors one to the effect that Mr. James Barnes desires to become attorney general. It may be seen that the Sun does some injustice to Mr. Barnes' ambition in this instance as the office of attorney general is now very much occupied by Hon. Mr. Pugsley, who, as far as is known, will continue to fill it. Moreover Mr. Barnes is not a lawyer, and the Richmond Review, in stating the claims of Kent county says it is the surveyor-generalship Mr. Barnes wants and asserts that he is the man best qualified for that important office.

Contemplating another aching void in the cabinet the Carleton Sentinel, speaking in behalf of Mr. W. F. Jones, says there is a strong feeling that Carleton county, "which has not had a portfolio since the days of Hon. William Lindsay, will be given substantial recognition in the appointments to be made." Kent county, as the Review points out, has not had a portfolio since Confederation.

The Sun, in its cabinet making, gives St. John one position in the cabinet, but without office. Its programme would give St. John a forecast member in place of the two portfolios recently held by this city and county, an arrangement to which the Sun would subscribe as likely to create dissatisfaction with the government here. Premier Tweedie has had considerable gratuitous advice in regard to these vacancies. He intends to appoint no one until after the session. When he gets along to it he will find some capable applicants to choose from. The opposition newspapers would find it somewhat difficult to name a brilliant cabinet from Mr. Hazen's little band. Fortunately it will be a long time before Mr. Hazen and his editorial councillors will have that opportunity.

**NOTE AND COMMENT.**  
The International Peace Society is to meet in Boston in October, by which time the trouble in the Far East is likely to be acute enough to lend some point to the society's efforts.

"What of it?" says Alderman Christie when he is informed that Champlain discovered this region 300 years ago. It's cheaper to forget it, the alderman thinks, and for him that appears to settle it.

As a rule about 5,000 men are qualified to vote at the civic election. About 9,000

should pay taxes. It is likely that if those who owe one year's taxes are permitted to vote, some 7,000 in all will be qualified. If we had 7,000 men keenly interested in civic affairs we should get along very well.

The Russians may have retired "in perfect order" after their repulse at Chong-ju but it now appears that they kept on retreating and went both fast and far. The Japanese pursued them for thirteen miles and the Russians did not stop for any considerable period until they were twenty-three miles from the scene of the fighting.

The Ottawa Board of Trade asks the government to remove the duty of fifty-three cents per ton on limonite ore imported into Canada. Ontario's case in this instance is a strong one, but the government, if it takes off the duty, might reasonably be asked to make similar concessions to other provinces in regard to oil and other articles.

The vice-regal household has been peculiarly unfortunate of late. Following the announcement of the severe accident sustained by Lady Minto comes the fire which nearly destroyed Rideau Hall and imperiled the lives of its occupants. The story of the fire indicates that it may have been caused by the carelessness of one of the men of the Governor General's suite.

The Sun and the Star should accept Premier Tweedie's rebuke quietly, as merited, or should prove that it is unwarranted by securing from Rev. Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Everett open confirmation of the editorial assertion that the temperance delegation was "turned down." Otherwise the public must believe that there was deliberate and foolish misrepresentation.

Mr. Hearst, who is trying to buy a presidential nomination, has discovered one American citizen who is not for sale. The exception, like Mr. Hearst, is a newspaper man. He is Col. Henry Watterson, of the Louisville Courier-Journal. The Colonel is a Democrat and an editor and he occasionally writes some pretty lively contributions to the controversial literature of the day. But he is not yellow. Mr. Hearst offered Colonel Watterson \$25,000 to spend the winter in Washington and write occasional letters for the Hearst newspapers. The Colonel declined, politely. Mr. Hearst could not believe he was in earnest. He renewed the offer and became pressing. Then Colonel Watterson wrote this reply:—

"Dear Sir: You haven't enough money in your family, and never will have, to induce me to write one line for you."

### Spring.

The young lambs sport in the sunlight's gleam.  
And people hire the truckman's team.  
The switch for the carpets comes into play,  
And the good-man fasts through the liveliest day.

The green grass peeps from beneath the snow.  
And the dust drifts out through the noon-time glow.  
For instead of toiling the mid-day fare,  
They are cleaning the grime from the kitchen chair.

—BOBS.  
Moncton, March 20.