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The Mail and Advocate
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JOHN J. ST. JOHN

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THE COAL SITUATION

MANY of the statements contained in the Herald's statement in reference to the coal situation published last evening are unreliable and far stretched. Someone gave P.T. a few notes of what transpired and P.T. as usual filled in the gaps with imaginations. We trust the Premier will permit no obstacles manufactured by Mr. Alex. Harvey to interfere with the decisions arrived at on Wednesday.

One day is fully sufficient to elaborate the details, and ere this we should have been informed of the finalizing of the whole transaction. There will be no drawing back by the Opposition, and no further concessions will be given them, so far as Mr. Coaker is concerned.

The Premier must insist upon the performance of the arrangement to the very letter; any other course will mean troublesome times during the next few days.

The people are determined to pay the old price for soft coal for the present stocks available, which is 3000 tons and not 1200. Any further delay or hesitation will mean the conveying of the mightiest mass meeting ever beheld at St. John's, and the people themselves.

In event of a mass meeting being held, the laborers expect Mr. M. P. Gibbs to stand by them. Needless to say that the poor of St. John's possess in Mr. Gibbs a staunch friend in this crisis. The Coal Barons will find it no easy matter to cajole Mr. Gibbs. There must be no further delay.

The present stocks of coal must be sold to the people in quarters and half ton lots at a figure not exceeding \$8.50 per ton until the "Alcocks" arrives, and what coal has been sold at \$10.80—about 20 tons—must also be reduced to the agreed selling price and the difference returned to the purchasers.

There will be no shortage in the supply, and it is possible that the whole of this winter's sale will not exceed \$8.50 per ton, for if the steamer which it was decided to charter meets with good weather her freight will not exceed \$2.50 per ton.

A serious blunder was committed by not engaging the sealing steamers to convey coal during November, December and January. The insurance "bogy" is but moonshine, where determination and business maxims are available. The Government should have arranged the risks, and if they could not be placed, to manfully shoulder the risks.

A coal famine has barely been averted and the people saved from being fleeced \$2.50 per ton on coal but such a condition of affairs should not have existed. It could have been easily remedied. The coal dealers are to blame, but so is the Government, for proper action taken in October when conditions looked serious, would have removed all chances of a shortage of advanced prices.

The price of coal was advanced chiefly to protect Crosbie's interests, for he had no coal, and when no available tonnage offered at less than \$5.00, he decided to send his steamer and arrange for 4000 tons at the \$5.00 figure, but much of this 4000 tons will be brought in his own bottoms and he will reap the benefits of the big freights. Had Crosbie 2000 tons on hand on January 1st there would in all probability been no advance until the old stocks held by Harvey and Morey had been sold out.

We contend that there should have been sufficient coal arranged for in November and December, for there was steamers open to charter in November at \$1.20 per ton, but were not accepted by some dealers here. If the people knew the whole story about this coal shortage their indignation would know no bounds.

One or two men are to blame for the whole trouble, and if a proper commission was appointed the facts would be open to all and the guilty ones distinguished. It may yet transpire that such a commission will be demanded. If there is any hesitation, nothing will stop the people from having such a commission.

We are not revealing confidential matter submitted at the conference of the Government and Opposition. We know whereof we affirm from other sources. We therefore advise all and sundry to deliver the goods as decided by Wednesday's conference or they will find the last word to be said about this cruel blunder and vile attempt to rob the poor is yet a long way off.

CONFESSED!

MOSDELL occupied four columns of Reid's Star yesterday in an attempt to justify Morris's infamous action in recommending W. D. Reid for a so-called knight-hood and justifying the grab of the Coal Barons in fleeing the poor of \$2.80 on one ton of coal. The attempt was a confession that the Coal Barons did no wrong in taking \$2.80 more for coal than their legitimate profit. The public will have observed a strong defence of Reid, while not daring to deny our statement of Reids having backed The Star with their money.

The Reids and the Coal Barons who could so unmercifully grab \$2.80 on a ton of coal are to be congratulated upon their defender in chief, Mosdell done what no other graball paper would dream of doing, i.e. replying to our very strong statement of facts regarding the Reid knight-hood. The people may now place Mosdell in his proper place and accept any of his statements for what they are worth.

We challenge Mosdell to deny the money to establish The Star was given him by J. C. Crosbie, R. A. Squires and W. D. Reid through R. A. Squires—the largest slice being given by the Reids.

We challenge him to deny that Sir Edgar Bowring was approached for money to aid the project, but he refused to have anything to do with such a mad proposal; but that Mr. J. S. Munn came to his rescue and threw in a couple of hundred dollars.

We challenge him to deny that he was prohibited from speaking of the coal situation by his Coal Baron masters and had to keep silent.

Enough for the present. What fools those mortals be! Who ever thought Mosdell would be fool enough to publicly confess who his masters were or be drawn by the bait we placed for him recently? It makes little difference to the public whether those large-hearted men presented him with 20,000 to establish The Star or whether it was loaned, for his confession of yesterday was but a confirmation of what most people expected ever since The Star appeared.

The next surprise will be a confession showing what connection P.P. has with The Star's unique game of pooling behind the scenes.

It is not a difficult matter, in view of Mosdell's confession, to understand why he insulted the fishermen in September by stating in his paper that Soft Labrador fish was selling at \$5.40, which was far more than it was worth, or which he was called down by a correspondent—P.G.B.—in The News. Soft Labrador however advanced as high as \$6.45 within a month after Mosdell hurled his infamous insult in the teeth of the fishermen. Time however has recalled the whetstones, and the people won't easily forget them.

As Mosdell has taken up the cudgel in defence of W. D. Reid, perhaps he will proceed to enu-

erate W. D. Reid's virtues; if he will, we guarantee that we will hasten to enumerate his vices in order to paint his picture properly.

SELF CONDEMNED

IN his interview with The Herald on Tuesday last, the Hon. member for Bay-de-Verde with a toss of his curly head, remarked, that "the same conditions, i.e. shortage of freights, would confront the Colony as regards the getting of cargoes of fish to foreign markets as now confronts the Colony in the coal shortage." This coming from Mr. Crosbie, a member of the Morris Executive, and a representative of a fishing district, is we think the best proof yet given to the public of how utterly unfit the present gathering of party odds and ends are to meet the requirements of the Colony.

We have pointed out as early as September last the need of the Government moving in the matter of providing bottoms to freight our fish to markets. Nothing, as far as the public are aware of at any rate, was done by the Government to meet this pressing need; and, all we know of the matter, as far as the Morris Executive are concerned, is that the "buck that sold dem spars" says we are up against this shortage of freight bottoms in connection with the exporting of our national staple, just as we are in regard to the coal trade.

Here then is a nice condition of things. Mr. Crosbie, an Executive member of a Government who posed, as a "Peoples Party," admits that the Government are now face to face with the fact, that, though their inaction in the matter of securing bottoms to freight our staple article to market the Colony may be hit, and hit very hard as a result. They have simply sat down idly and waited for this crisis to come upon us, where as if they had been alive to their duties, Morris would have had by now secured sufficient bottoms to secure the export of all fishery produce to the outside markets.

If there was a few thousand dollars to be grabbed by sending some one to purchase or charter these necessary bottoms we would have had in all probability a fleet of such freighters her now; but as only the fishermen and the laborer is directly concerned the policy of the present Government must be followed out and that is to h— with the fishermen, the farmer, the laborer and the mechanic.

Hasn't Morris made an awful muddle of things. It seems that everything he puts his "brains" too is doomed to failure. Not one solitary measure has been passed by the Legislature by the Morris Party that is in any way beneficial to the country in general. All the legislation enacted during the past three sessions of the House have originated from the Union Party. It was the Union Party who introduced the Sealing Bill, the Loggers' Bill, the Local Affairs Act and the other measures which will certainly prove beneficial to the people in general.

On the other hand it was the Morris Party who passed the Products Corporation Act which enabled the Reid Newfoundland Co. to secure for ever enormous concessions from the Crown for nothing. The Products Corporations are no other than the Reids and their Solicitor—Mr. Martin Furlong. Mr. Furlong is the Law Clerk of the House and he is at the same time a Director of the Reid Newfoundland Company which are in turn the principal Directors of the Products Corporation.

In this connection we would remind our readers that there is no sign of the big boom which the

Premier was so sure would be seen at Bay of Islands in connection with this Company.

If reports are true, and it seems that there is a degree of truth in them, the Reids have Agents touring Canada and the States trying to induce Capitalists to invest their money in this wild cat scheme, of drawing a fortune from the air. Nothing has been done by the Products Corporation in the way of building or construction work and there is likely nothing to be done until the eve of a general election, when an effort will be made to again fool the electorate.

The Reids, alias, the Products Corporation, alias the Morris Government, shortly before the late general election offered or gave several consumptive hospitals; but as yet we have to see one of them constructed. All that was done by the Government in the matter was to buy some ground in at Mount Pearl from a supporter of their party at a price far in excess of that offered by another for ground just as suitable for the proposed site.

Morris would not have moved in the matter of the coal shortage unless forced to do so as he was by The Mail and Advocate. Will he yet wait to deal with the securing of freighters to convey our fish to market until such time as the F.P.U. make him set to work and do his duty to the fishermen of the country.

Hon. Mr. Crosbie is a fish exporter. He is an Executive member of the Morris Government, yet we have his own words for it that he fears a serious condition faces the trade in this respect. Yet the Government sits idly and lets the vital interests of the trade take care of itself. Well—may we ask—"Whither are we and whither tending?"

Commanders Who Have Failed

THE retirement of Field-Marshal French from the chief command of the British forces on the western front leaves Joffre the only survivor of the generalissimos at the outbreak of the war. Von Moltke is gone, the Grand Duke Nicholas is gone, the Austrian generals Auffenberg and Dank were among the first to go. A war lasting nearly a year and a half is bound to make and unmake leaders. A war so full of technical surprises as the present war is bound to facilitate the process. It is only the military genius who lasts through changes and surprises. Men of inferior talent go down and are succeeded by men who need not be of superior talent, but who profit by the mistakes of their predecessors. Kitchener and French made their great reputations in the Boer War. But if either of the men had first been in command in South Africa instead of Sir Redvers Buller, it is not impossible that theirs would have been the mistakes.

Below the rank of commander-in-chief there has been a drastic weeding out of generals in all the armies. The hand of Joffre has been particularly heavy. He made wholesale changes before the war, on the showing of corps and division commanders in the great manoeuvres. During the first weeks of actual fighting he cut right and left. Of the men at the head of the five French armies which took the field, Dubail, Castellan, Ruffey, Langie de Cary, and Lanrezac, two were removed as soon as the retreat began to the Marne. Ruffey, who failed on the Meuse, gave way to Sarrail, and Lanrezac, who failed on the Sambre, made way for Franchet d'Esperey. It is true that Castleman failed in the invasion of Lorraine, but his influence was apparently strong enough to keep

him in place until he got the chance to redeem himself magnificently around Nancy.

Since the first week of actual fighting new French armies have been created and new men have come up. The Sixth Army, which D'Amade organized out of territorial forces and new levies in Flanders, was brought to Paris and under Gen. Maunoury won the battle of the Ourcq as part of the battle of the Marne. A Seventh Army, under Gen. Foch, held the centre in that battle, and is believed by many to have decided its outcome. New men have come up since then. At the head of some of the French armies are men like D'Urbal, who was a general of division at the outbreak of the war; Maud'huy, who was a general of brigade, and the most remarkable case of rapid advancement, Petain, who at the beginning of the war was colonel of infantry and who within a year rose through the ranks of brigadier, division commander, and corps commander to his present post.

There have been similar failures and promotions in all the other armies. Of the Germans the first to go was von Hausen, who left the Saxon army at the battle of the Marne. Von Deimling, who commanded in Alsace, has disappeared from the news. The great von Kluck is now convalescent from what gives every sign of being a diplomatic illness. Of British commanders, Ian Hamilton failed in Gallipoli. The Russians, Rennenkampf and Sievers are gone, for obvious reasons. Radko Dimitrieff, who felt the brunt of the Teutonic attack in Galicia, is out of the news. Neither is there mention of Brusiloff, who helped to win the battle of Rawarusska and Lemberg. But Gens. Ruzsky and Ivanoff have survived, and apparently with credit. We know of no definite changes in the Turkish command, but instead of Liman von Sanders, who was prominent during the first phase of the fighting in the Dardanelles, we now hear of von der Goltz. Names in the Austrian bulletins are new—Bothmer, Koevess, Baltin, Planzer, Archdukes and Crown Princes, of course, never fail.

When we look for specific reasons in the case of Field-Marshal French, it is hard to speak definitely. The outstanding reason, of course, is his failure to show results commensurate with the present size of the British army. The specific charges are the failure at Neuve Chapelle in March, and the disappoinment of Loos in September. The same accusations have been made in both instances—lack of preparation by the Staff and unaccountable delay in bringing up reserves. Sir John French confesses to some confusion in part of the operations around Loos. But it would be unjust to overlook the peculiar handicap under which the British army had labored. It had not had the advantage of veteran staff officers and intimate acquaintance with the ground. The British army has had to create its officers as well as its men. Furthermore, it is unjust to speak of the British "failure" around Loos as compared with the French success in Champagne. From the German point of view, both attacks failed. Considering the superior resources Joffre had at his command, the relative gains may not have been so disproportionate. Nevertheless, the fact remains that in Joffre the French have a man of proved ability.

Sir John French's going emphasizes the changed aspect of the war since last spring. It concerns the question of men and munitions. At the beginning of the war events were decided by leadership and numbers. With the commencement of trench warfare it became a question of munitions,

and even now people speak of a war to be won in the armament factories. But it would really appear that the problem of munitions has been solved and that it is once more a question of leadership. At Neuve Chapelle the British ammunition gave out in a short time. It was on this issue that Lord Northcliffe conducted his drive against Lord Kitchener. There was no shortage of ammunition around Loos. Britain first had to find her men. Then she had to find guns and ammunition. Now she must find a great leader.

THE GENUS TRAMPUS.

Lady—I'm afraid you don't like work, my good man.
 Tramp—How kin I, mum? Work's wot killed my pore wife.—Boston Transcript.

GLEANINGS OF GONE BY DAYS

January 7th
LADIES of St. Anderw's Church presented Rev. Dr. McRea with pulpit-gown and cassock, 1859.
 Thomas O'Reilly, M.H.A., married, 1866.
 John Downey, keeper of poor asylum, died, 1870.
 Mrs. Stephen March died, 1881.
 Patrick Daly (Daly's hotel), died at Topsail, aged 81, 1892.

Tramp—I'd like to borrow a medical almanac, mum.
 Housekeeper—What for?
 Tramp—I wants ter see wot th' doctors recommend for an 'empty feelin' in th' stummick.—New York Weekly.

Notice!

THE Third Annual Meeting of Harbor Grace District Council will be held at BAY ROBERTS on the 18th instant at 11 a.m. Prior to the Meetings of the Convention all Local Councils will please send Delegates.

A. MORGAN,
 Chairman.

Notice!

THE Fourth Annual Meeting of Port-de-Grave District Council will be held on the AFTERNOON of MONDAY, the 17th instant, at 2.30 p.m., at Brigus. All Local Councils will please send Delegates and prepare any resolutions to be submitted to the Meeting or the Convention which meets at Bay Roberts the following day.

GEO. GRIMES,
 Dis. Chairman.

Notice!

THE Fourth Annual Meeting of Bay-de-Verde District Council of the F.P.U. will be held at JOB'S COVE on the 18th instant, after the arrival of the train from Carbonear. All Councils will please send Delegates and prepare any resolutions to be submitted to the meeting.

A. G. HUDSON,
 Chairman.

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