

The Toronto World

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SATURDAY MORNING, OCT. 18.

LOCK, STOCK AND BARREL.

The Globe thinks it well to smile at the confidence of those who would interpret the agreement by which the city would buy back the railway. That agreement of course does not yet exist, so that any attempt at interpretation would be premature. Indeed only the opponents of the purchase have made any attempt at such interpretation.

The agreement is entirely in the hands of the city's lawyers. It is not a contract, the terms of which must be carried out afterwards. It is a plain case of purchase and sale. We should know what we want to buy and we must say so, and it must include all powers delegated by the city to the company, or any subsidiary company, without any reservations. This is what Mayor Hocken has said he wanted, and if he could not get it he has stated, even this week, that there would be no purchase.

We sympathize with The Globe's zeal in the interests of the citizens, but we think the city's lawyers should be equal to the task of indicating that if we buy out the street railway we buy the whole of it, lock, stock and barrel.

HOW THE PEOPLE ARE ROBBED.

The Mail and Empire hits the mark in saying: "The jumbling of dwellings together and the piling of tier upon tier of apartments will not be necessary with a first-class street railway service."

The opposition to the purchase of the street railway service is centred in those who represent the interests which desire to maintain conditions of congestion. This unduly increases the value of central property at the expense of those who are compelled to use it. The high rents of Toronto are due to a limited street car service which confines traffic within a certain area. The purchase of the street railway would mean the indefinite expansion of this present area of congestion, the equalizing of rents, and prevention of the growth of forced values in the congested area.

Another source of opposition to the street railway purchase is to be found in certain interests which would find it to their advantage to preserve the double and triple fare chargeable in certain parts of the city. It is obvious that a district with single fare access has an advantage over a district in which double fares obtain.

Incidentally we may remark that The Telegram represents the forces of congestion, high rents and double fares in its opposition to Mayor Hocken's proposals. Not being willing to admit this it endeavors by all manner of slander, insinuation and black hand methods to try to make it appear that Mayor Hocken, if not a knave, is the dupes of knaves who wish to rob the city.

We believe the people have their common sense, and will be able to judge once we get the commercial report on the question, which is being prepared by Mr. John MacKay, whether the real robbery is not going on at present, and The Telegram only concerned that it shall not be stopped.

URBAN PASSENGER TRANSPORT.

At the twelfth annual conference of the Municipal Tramways (Street Railways) Association of the United Kingdom, a remarkable and instructive paper was read by Mr. J. R. Hamilton, general manager of the Leeds city council system, and is reported in a recent number of The Municipal Journal of London, England. He took as his subject, "Urban Passenger Transport," and his method of treatment is interesting at the moment, because it illustrates the point of view from which the problem is regarded by municipal service officials. Mr. Hamilton was a member of the street railway staff of Glasgow at the period when the lines were taken over in 1894, at the expiry of the lease to the private company, which operated them between 1871 and that year, and his experience is thus of exceptional value.

Speaking of the results that have followed in British cities, from the adoption of electric traction, Mr. Hamilton said a large proportion of the success attending this is attributable to the fact that its economy of operation has enabled fares to be reduced from time to time, lower and lower, and, he added, it is marvelous to note the response in increased travel which each reduction in fare has produced. Referring to the situation in Glasgow, Mr. Hamilton observed that the ordinary fare charged by the company was the parliamentary penny (two cents) per mile, and in many cases a fare of two pence was charged. The city council immediately introduced one-cent stages of approximately half a mile in length,

while very shortly the two-cent distance was increased from one mile to two miles. In each case the receipts were at once increased.

Glasgow recently introduced a one-cent fare for a mile, and within a year the number of passengers increased by twenty per cent, while the gross revenue increased by \$100,000. In Leeds, since 1903, Mr. Hamilton commented, the same phenomena have been noted. Every reduction of fare has produced an increased gross revenue, as a result of improved transportation facilities. In 1902 the number of times the population was carried was 132; in 1912-13, it amounted to 170 times. Mr. Hamilton looks upon low fares as essential in fully satisfying and developing the traveling requirements of great cities and towns, but it must be accompanied by frequency of service, comfort and speed of conveyance. All this is far removed from the condition that appeals to private companies. They object to extending their service beyond the congested and profitable areas, and are rather interested in maintaining over-crowding, than in remedying or preventing it. In Leeds the average fare has been reduced from 2-10 cents a mile, to one cent, and this has completely changed the distribution of the residential parts of the city.

HE GIVES TWICE WHO GIVES QUICKLY.

Sir R. P. Roblin, interviewed the other day in Minneapolis, said that nothing could be done by Canada to ward removing the duty on wheat and flour until January, and he was unable to say whether or not anything would be done at that time. What the Manitoba knight probably had in mind was that the government has postponed the assembling of parliament until after New Year's, and tariff changes, broadly speaking, are within the exclusive scope of parliamentary action. But the crown can always remit any duty, forgive any debt, or pardon any offence, and by order-in-council we have frequently had the duty upon bituminous coal suspended sometimes all over the country and at others only at certain ports of entry. In June, 1912, the cement duty was cut in two by order-in-council, and properly so because an emergency condition existed in the west.

By suspending the duties upon American wheat and flour, the government can gain immediate access for Canadian wheat to the American market. If it be desirable to give the Canadian farmer this benefit, then it were well that it were done quickly. "Eis dat qui cito dat," which being freely translated means, "a dollar right now is worth more to a hungry man than two dollars after Christmas."

The ordinary farmer in the west wants to get the money for his wheat. The British market is sluggish; perhaps it is hogish and wants to beat down the price. However that may be, there is little demand for October sea-board delivery, and much of the bargaining now going on is for delivery next February. The wheat is piling up in elevators, and the transmutation of golden grain into golden dollars does not proceed apace. The western farmer has a lot of wheat on hand on which he must realize right away, and the British miller, his ultimate customer, and the middleman, including the transportation companies, are beginning to squeeze him.

Will it help the western grain grower to have his wheat given free access to the American market? He says it will and undoubtedly the price of wheat is generally higher on the American side than it is on the Canadian side. One need not distract his mind with figures made up by the bulls and bears on this or that wheat pit. People will tell you in Southern Saskatchewan that their neighbors a few miles away in North Dakota give higher prices for their wheat. At any

rate if the western farmer wants this concession, why should he not have it? And if he is to have it, why should he not be given it quickly? If it is thought best to summon parliament, parliament could meet for a day or two next month, and then adjourn until the middle of January.

Mr. Arthur Hawkes discusses the question interestingly in this week's Canadian. He believes to agree with us, that the first effect of free wheat will be to give lower freight rates and therefore better prices to the Canadian farmer. No one, he opines, would possibly object to the removal of the duties upon wheat and flour, except the Canadian millers, and we are told:

It is said that it will injure the western miller. Well, the millers have never answered the statement that they sell their Manitoba flour wholesale at Winnipeg as a considerably higher price than they get for it at Liverpool. No amount of influence or argument or figures can justify such a state of things to the Winnipeg consumer. Neither the western farmer nor the eastern citizen who cares for the goodwill of his brethren in the west will have any consideration for the miller if they export more from the people in the price judgment for their flour is produced than they take from purchasers more than four thousand miles away.

The Philosopher of Folly

By Sherwood Hays

DISILLUSIONED.

In some section of this hamlet does that son of darkness dwell who but recently succeeded with his hand-new umbrella, and I hope these words may reach him, wherever he may be, for I want to tell the villain what his act has meant to me. Ere he took my broom from me I was full of faith in men—I esteemed my neighbors honest, with exceptions now and then; and I greeted every person with a frank and cheerful smile; but I've found the world is riddled with dishonesty and guile, for some duffer whom I trusted went and swiped my whole wardrobe of \$30 worth of goods. Service of notice to be on A. G. Slaght, plaintiff's solicitor, and conduct money may be paid to him.

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