

The St. John Standard

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ST. JOHN, N. B., FRIDAY, JANUARY 13, 1922.

TODAY.

Just in passing we might draw attention to the fact that today is Friday, the thirteenth. Superstitious persons therefore would do well to go right back to bed and stay there till tomorrow, lest anything they do should turn out wrong.

Probably no superstition is more deeply implanted in the minds of a majority of the people than that Friday is unlucky. Many are so impressed with this belief that they will do nothing on a Friday unless it is absolutely necessary, fearing ill results. Many others will not conduct business deals on that day, or start journeys, or make any plans for the future, so convinced are they that Friday is unlucky and that everything started on that day will surely come to naught. But if all these dire results are to be anticipated as a consequence of acts done on an ordinary Friday, what must the consequences be expected to be when in addition to being Friday, that day also happens to be the thirteenth day of the month?

However, neither history nor fact seems to bear out the belief that Friday is an unlucky day. People recall the bad things that occur in connection with the day, but never remember the times when good fortune came to them. There are some people in fact who insist that Friday has always been one of their luckiest days.

We have not had an opportunity to look into this matter very closely, but here a few incidents which rather tend to show that Friday is not really so unlucky as it is made out to be.

Shakespeare was born on a Friday, certainly one of the luckiest events in history for the literature of the world.

George Washington was also born on a Friday, and history does not give any grounds for believing that ill luck followed him. Quite the contrary in fact.

In the case of Napoleon Bonaparte, however, who was also born on Friday, there may arise a grave difference of opinion as to whether this was lucky or not, either for himself or for the world at large. But on the other hand, the Battle of Waterloo was fought on Friday, and there can be no doubt but that the result of the great engagement was a wonderful piece of good luck for the world.

Furthermore, America was discovered on a Friday, and no one can deny that this was a piece of real good luck for the Old World; for of course had there been no America to win the war, Europe would now be writhing under the heel of the German conqueror.

Then, last, but not least, Queen Victoria was married on Friday, and it was in the years following that the crowning features of her wonderful reign took place.

No doubt there are very many other instances of events which have happened on Friday, which have proved to be of real and lasting good to the world at large, but we have not had any opportunity to look them up. But sufficient has been adduced to show that there very properly may be a wide difference of opinion in regard to the popular superstition concerning Friday, and that there is every reason to believe that the day is just as lucky as any other in the week, and possibly more so when viewed from the standpoint of history and the record of great events which have occurred on it.

QUIETING FRANCE'S FEARS.

Great Britain's agreement to come to the aid of France in case of aggression by Germany means much more than the mere fact of a defensive alliance between the two nations. In view of France's fears of her ancient enemy and what the latter might do if the German militaristic party should become dominant again, it was an essential step toward the financial and economic rehabilitation of Europe, which the International Conference, soon to be held in Geneva will meet to consider.

Whether France's fears of Germany are well founded or not may be a question; but it has been made fully apparent, both at the Arms Conference in Washington and upon other occasions, that they are real fears, and that she will never consent to any considerable measure of disarmament either on land or sea so long as who has to depend solely upon her own military and naval establishments for her protection.

But it is equally true that if France and the other States of Europe are to recover economically, and if normal monetary conditions are to be restored there must be an end of the immense armies that many of them are now maintaining. The productive capacity of the European nations is

not now and may never be equal to the burden of supporting the armies which they maintain and all the conferences that might be held could never make this condition any different. Two and two never have made and never can make more than four, and the financial situation in Europe, today in a sense is hardly less simple than that.

But if France's expression of its fear of Germany is in good faith, and that is the real reason for France's insistence upon a big army, the promise of Great Britain should remove these fears and pave the way for disarmament.

The approaching conference at Geneva has been called an economic and financial conference, but militarism is so closely linked with both economics and finances that the one cannot be considered apart from the other.

If France and other nations can send to this conference delegates empowered to promise a cutting down of the national budgets, it may accomplish much. Otherwise it will be futile or well nigh so.

THE ARBUCKLE CASE.

The preliminary proceedings in connection with the second trial of Roscoe Arbuckle for his alleged share in the incidents which caused the death of Miss Virginia Rappe a few months ago, were taken on Wednesday, and will probably be followed with much the same degree of interest as were those of the former trial. Mr. Arbuckle is said to have chafed considerably over the delay that has taken place since the disagreement of the jury at the first hearing, though he himself feels certain that "God in His own good time will inform him why he was ever placed in such a cruel position."

Whatever may be the result of this second trial, it must strike most thinking people that Arbuckle's career as a public entertainer is at an end, unless the taste of those who delight in the movies is even lower than we suspect, which seems almost impossible. A second jury may decide that Miss Rappe did not come to her death as a result of injuries inflicted by Arbuckle, but if the evidence does not convict him of manslaughter, it seems to place him in a class somewhat distant outside the pale of civilization. The publicity which has poured down upon him and the Hollywood smart set generally, might not be enough to cost him his position if he followed some such secluded occupation as that of diamond cutter or tea waiter, but if it would disqualify him as a candidate for public office it should also disqualify him as a public entertainer without the need of a formal censorship.

It appears that he would have been acquitted at his former trial had it not been for the attitude of one of the jurors, a woman. As soon as the jury retired she announced that she would vote guilty, and would continue voting that way "till hell freezes over." Ten of the others voted consistently for his acquittal. One of them switched feebly, sometimes casting a blank ballot, sometimes voting for acquittal, and sometimes for a conviction. The foreman of the jury issued a statement in which he asserted that the case presented for the prosecution was an insult to intelligence, since the jury was invited to accept inferences and theories for facts. There was absolutely no doubt that there was considerable perjury in the case. Persons who made damaging statements against Arbuckle later on recanted or pleaded loss of memory. He enlisted powerful support because the film producers saw that while Arbuckle was charged with a specific crime the whole Hollywood colony was under an indictment for general lawlessness and immorality. The moving picture influence is great, and this was thrown into the scale for Arbuckle. It is not likely that it will further challenge public opinion by reinstating him as a popular entertainer, but it may easily enough obtain a court verdict acquitting him of a grave crime, and then permit him to slink into deserved obscurity.

It is said that film companies have in storage Arbuckle "releases" worth \$11,000,000. One can therefore understand the fight which will be put up to save these from being a total loss which they must be if he is convicted.

Interviewed, apparently, by The Globe with reference to the circumstances attending the purchase of the Queen Hotel, Fredericton, Premier Foster is reported by that newspaper as saying that "The hotel would be used in part for the purposes for which it was purchased, and in part as offices for the Government." If this is really

the case, will the Premier explain just how and why it comes about that Mr. Tweeddale came down to St. John as an ambassador from the Government, to interest certain businessmen here and make an effort to induce them to take over the property and continue it as an hotel?

The Progressive members of Parliament have announced that they will support and co-operate with the Government in the putting into effect such reforms as have been advocated by the Progressive party, while maintaining, however, their separate identity. In other words, the Progressives will take care that as long as they can draw their \$4000 a year indemnity, they won't help to vote the Government out of office.

Notwithstanding their announced intention of supporting and co-operating with the Government, the Progressive party has decided to oppose Hon. Geo. P. Graham when he seeks reelection in South Essex. They are also proposing to try to prevent the election of Hon. James Murdoch in Kent, (Ont.). Such apparently is Progressive idea of "support and co-operation."

WHAT OTHERS SAY

Redistribution of Seats.
(Montreal Gazette.)

It will fall to the lot of the Liberal Government to make the redistribution of seats in the House of Commons in accordance with the new census of population. Final figures of the count are not yet available, but enough is known to conclude that upon the strict basis of representation by population the Maritime Provinces and Ontario will lose a seat or two, while membership west of Lake Superior will increase. The gain in population during the decade has been less than expected, although not wholly disappointing when the adverse influences of the war period are considered, and as a consequence there will not be the drastic change in relative provincial representation that was at one time anticipated.

In the days of yore the privilege of making the redistribution of seats was reckoned a great party advantage. The boundaries of constituencies were carved according to the political complexion of the component parts of the country. From this method of gerrymandering neither party was exempt. It may be doubted, however, whether any advantage could be gained by the Liberal Government in this respect. The people at large have a fashion or proving that they are more than pawns on the political chess board, and that a government carries its votes in a portfolio. A fair method of redistricting was adopted in connection with the redistribution of seats following the census of 1911, namely that of delegating the work to a committee of the Commons composed of both parties, and it will accord with public opinion if a similar course is now taken.

Upon general grounds it is desirable that the redistribution should not be delayed, for while it is true that the redistricting has to be based upon the disintegration of the present Parliament, no one can, theoretically, know when such event will occur, and it is well to be prepared for contingencies. A more important aspect of the subject is the basis upon which the redistribution should be made. As between provinces, there is no difficulty upon this score; as 25 members are to be added to the Commons, so will be the population of Quebec, so will be the membership of each province in relation to its population. The balance will be preserved as between the provinces; but what about the balance within a province? The unit of representation may be 40,000 or less, which means that in the House of Commons there will be at least 25 additional seats, if representation is strictly based on population. To Ontario, also, will have increased membership. The Toronto Globe points out that:

"The disparity between the urban constituencies and some of the rural ones has become so wide that redress can no longer be postponed on any reasonable plea. For example, the single electoral division of South York, with a population of 29,896, contains nearly 10,000 more than these five constituencies:—
North Ontario.....15,437
Protonas.....20,416
Greenfield.....16,692
Peterboro East.....13,797
Prince Edward.....16,319
Total.....82,381
On what ground do 59,396 people elect one member of the House of Commons and 23,881 elect five?"

The over-representation of rural people is derived from the notion that they are a more stable class, less subject to the influence of demagogues, and less apt to be carried away by passion; but recent events do not give support to this theory. We have now universal franchise in Canada. Not only is one man as good as another in the eyes of electoral law, but one woman as good as another; and when votes are counted, it may be difficult and assuredly is inconvenient, to continue over-representation of rural and under-representation of urban population.

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Benny's Note Book

BY LEE PAGE

Last night we was eating supper and my sister Gladie sed, O by the way, Mr. Parkins will have supper with us to-morrow, and it would be perfectly terrible if he saw all you people cutting your snouts with your knife the way you're doing now, he'd think he was in a den of savages.

The dinner he would, how does he eat his own salad, does he pick it up in his hands like a rabbit? He looks something like a rabbit anyway, sed pop.

Now father, don't indulge in personalities, the only correct way to eat salad is with your fork, and every other way is a social error, sed Gladie, and pop sed, Life is getting too complicated for me, I wish I was living back in the good old stone age when they cut their salad with a hatchet.

And he started to practice cutting his salad with his fork with one hand, and his salad slipped half ways off the plate twice and all the ways off once, pop saying, Confound it, this is about as sensible as trying to eat soup with a coffee strainer, or, I ever learn to do this I'll be able to eat peas with the back of my spoon.

Now father its perfectly simple, sed Gladie. Single just expresses it, sed pop. And tonight Mr. Parkins came for supper. Being a long skinned man with a little mustash pointy on both ends, and pop started to try to cut his salad with his fork and it slid all around and wouldn't cut, and pop made faces faces at it and looked at Mr. Parkins and then started to try again, and all of a sudden did Mr. Parkins do, but pick up his knife and cut a big chunk off the end of his salad and sed it, pop saying, Well I'll be gosh hanged, well for the love of mud.

Wait rung? sed Mr. Parkins, and Gladie sed, O you must send mind him, he makes noises like that every once in a while without any reason.

Yes, im funny that way, sed pop. And he picked up his own knife and cut his salad up in little pieces as fast as anything looking at Gladie all the time he was doing it, and Gladie quick started to hawk about different subjects.

A BIT OF VERSE

LINEN COVERS.

In the home where we were born
Fashions mid-Victorian
Were the rule.
Artificial, prim and proper,
Stilted, stiff, respectable.
Freedom was vulgar,
Twas ill-bred to be natural,
And manners must conform
To a rigorous decorum.

Linen covers, neatly sewn
With braid and tape and gussets firm,
Covered all the chairs and sofas
In the lofty drawing-room.
Holding the rich carved silk
Bright with heaven's own hue,
Bared only on state occasions
For polite and privileged few.
Dressed children might not see,
The dull-papered nursery
Was good enough for them.

Years pass on, and linen covers
Serving still their cautious care,
Of keeping dust from silken soft,
Human touch from stiff-backed chair.
On an annual spring cleaning
They were to be banished—
Lo! the silk was all in tears,
Worn and faded was the blue,
Gone the sheen that might have gladdened
Many a heart with the bright hue;
Sorrow sight they stood around,
A shabby, shamed crew.
Prim and proper now no longer,
Naked, torn and old to view,
Rags and tatters at the last
Of a snobbish selfish past.

—Madeline E. Campbell.

THE LAUGH LINE

But Not Also.

"Strange!"
"What's strange?"
"Why, year before last was 1920, and now here comes this new year and it's 1922."

Interpretative Dancing.
"What is the name of this dance?"
"According to the programme, it is called 'The Politician!'"
"I see. The lady is supposed to be representing in cheesecloth and sashes."

Her Generous Husband.
"My husband is so good to his employees," said Mrs. Youngwood, proudly. "He came home last night, all tired out, poor boy, and I heard him mutter in his sleep, 'Jim, I'll raise you ten.' And business is so dull, too."

Safety.
"Bobby—Daddy, look! There's an airplane."

"Absorbed Daddy—"Yes, dear—don't touch it!"—Til-Bits (London).

An Annual Affair.
It is again necessary to hunt up another calendar to cover the place on the wall where the baby jabbed holes with the toe pick.

Risky Proposition.
Sillicus—"I suppose a man can't acquire wealth without taking certain chances."
Cynicus—"Especially when he marries for money."

Somebody Must.
Native—"I've sell them pictures in London?"
Artist—"No, I'm only doing them for Art's sake."
Native—"Well, what does he sell them for?"—London Mail.

He Always Has An Umbrella.
Every one had his likes or dislikes. Finally we asked one rather portly man which he preferred, snow or rain.
"Well," he slowly answered, "I guess I prefer rain because you don't have to shovel it."

The Right Word.
"Poor Brown! You should have seen his face when three girls entered his office and boned him for a subscription."
"Was he embarrassed?"
"Embarrassed? He was staggered!"—Boston Transcript.

During January, February and March our stores will close at 1 p.m. on Saturday.

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Three Committed For Trial Charged With Murdering Officer

Would be Thieves Alleged to Have Shot Constable When Discovered by Him.

Napawee, Ont., Jan. 12.—Frederick Bryant, Sherwood Upton and Edward Upton, of Kingston, were this afternoon committed for trial by Magistrate Rankin, on the charge of murdering Night Constable Richard A. Beard, of Napawee, on Aug. 20 last.

Vincent Bova, proprietor of the store behind which the constable was shot, testifying, recalled the murder and told of seeing three men in the yard behind Smith's jewelry store. He told Constable Beard, who was in front of the Royal Hotel across the street. The constable entered the alley behind Bova's stable and in the darkness a shot rang out. An instant later three young men ran out of an adjacent lane. The proprietor of the Royal Hotel, told of seeing the young men running up the street after the murder.

Police Sergeant Armstrong, of the Kingston police force, gave evidence about finding a Remington pump gun, owned by the Uptons, and which W. B. Dalton, Kingston, identified as stolen from his hardware store. E. J. Raney, K. C., counsel for Bryant, said there was no evidence to show that Bryant was even within a thousand miles of Napawee the day of the murder. Other witnesses were present but were not called.

A Natural Dilemma.
Many poor correspondents would like to make the excuse given by a lad who was spending his first year at a boarding school.

The first letter, anxiously awaited by his parents, was not received for more than a week, and it was short and to the point.
"Dear People—I don't believe I shall be able to send you many letters while I'm here. You see when things are happening I haven't time to write, and when they aren't happening I haven't anything to write. With love to all."
Harry.

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ACTION ON BIG L
SEEMS C

Australian Prime Minister
at New Hebrides Plan as pany.

Melbourne, Jan. 12.—While the offer of the French New Hebrides Company to sell 600,000 hectares of land to the group to the Commonwealth Government for £250,000 is still before the federal Parliament in the form of an official motion for the printing of the paper read by the Prime Minister, W. M. Hughes, the step has been taken to enable Parliament to discuss the offer. It is an open secret that Mr. Hughes' antagonism to the proposal will probably solve the question for a time at least.

Since the Prime Minister read the French offer in the House of Representatives and declared himself opposed to the handing over of the New Hebrides to the French, he has been under a great deal of criticism. He has been accused of being a French agent, and of having been bribed by the French to support the offer. He has also been accused of being a French agent, and of having been bribed by the French to support the offer.

Conflicting Reasons.
Australia's chief reason for taking the offer seriously has been the suggestion that Japanese or American interests would secure the territory. On the other hand the very doubtful rights of the company to some of the land proposed to be sold, and the fact that the detested Condominium, or Anglo-French dual system of government, the New Hebrides, would not be affected by the transfer of ownership of the company's land, constituted somewhat formidable objections to paying over half a million sterling.

Some students of the Pacific regret that the Prime Minister did not submit the offer to Parliament until some time after it had been made, and that he ignored the desires of the French company for a definite reply. They also point out that he has not given the House of Representatives opportunity to discuss the immediate measures of the offer, as he promised. The New Hebrides lie within two or three days' steam of Australia, and the sacrifice of £250,000 would be a trifling sum against the immediate measures of the offer, as he promised.

An excellent illustration of this point of view was the address made before the Presbyterian Assembly Committee in this city by the Rev. M. Prater, who has been a missionary in the New Hebrides for 21 years. He threw grave doubts on the true value of the title held by the French company in much of the land offered for sale, and showed that even if the titles were valid the company has greatly lessened the value of the land by parting earlier with the best and most accessible areas to Frenchmen who have established plantations on land in and around the principal harbors and boat passages. Yet when the logical deduction from his analysis seemed to be the uncompromising rejection of the offer, Mr. Prater declared that the offer should be seriously considered.

A Prospective Menace.
Referring to the Prime Minister's statement that there was a possibility of American or Japanese interests purchasing Mr. Prater pointed out that in that case the motive must be political, and Australia could not afford to have a foreign power in possession of the New Hebrides, which were really the outer defenses of the Commonwealth. Port Havanah in the islands was a land-locked harbor, seven miles long and able to accommodate a big fleet which would be able to use it as a base and dominate the east coast of Australia.

The critic declared that if Australia had adopted a friendly attitude toward the islands in the past and had encouraged trade with them she would have been in such a commercial position that she would have been their natural owner and protector. Yet the true position was that today France had two-thirds of the trade, and two-thirds of the population were French; French prestige was steadily increasing.

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