

The Standard



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TELEPHONE CALLS:
Business Office Main 1728
Editorial and News Main 1740

Chicago Representative:
Henry DeClerque, 701-702 Schiller Building,
New York Office:
L. Kleban, Manager, 1 West 34th Street.

SAINT JOHN, WEDNESDAY MORNING, MARCH 8, 1911

"DISRESPECT TO LEGISLATURE."

This is the glaring headline which adorned the first page of the Telegraph yesterday morning and introduced the proceedings of the Legislature. Below it was the following: "Members complain of press publishing Central Road report before House got it." Then under "Special to the Telegraph" was the following startling information:—

"Fredericton, N. B., March 6.—Great surprise was expressed here tonight among the members of the Legislature, when it was found that the report of the Central Railway commissioners had been published in tonight's Globe and Standard. As the report had not been presented to the lieutenant-governor-in-council and the legislature, its publication beforehand was considered a breach of parliamentary etiquette."

It would have been a breach of parliamentary usage to publish a report before it had been submitted to the Legislature, but unfortunately for the reputation of the Telegraph this statement like many others which have appeared in its columns is wholly false, and had the person who is responsible for it been attending to his duties he would have known that he was publishing a lie. The report of the Central Railway Commission was laid before the House on the first day of the session, and was in the clerk's hands when the Telegraph's lying statement was issued by its fool correspondent.

This untruthful statement regarding the Central Railway report is on all fours with some others which have preceded and many more which are to follow. The chief business of the Telegraph for the next five or six weeks will be to misrepresent every act of the Hazen Government. The owners of the Telegraph reap a rich reward from the Federal Government for misrepresenting Mr. Hazen, and the men they hire for this purpose are not at all particular as to the lengths they go in doing the bidding of their masters.

Such statements as that quoted above prove that they will grasp even at a shadow to make it appear that Mr. Hazen has no concern as to what is due the Legislature. Although many things have been charged against Mr. Hazen by the Telegraph, it is the first time that valued organ of public opinion has stated that Mr. Hazen was unacquainted with parliamentary usage. No premier that New Brunswick has had showed half the regard for the Legislature that Mr. Hazen has, and he would hardly be so forgetful as to hand out for publication any report or document that should be first laid before the House.

It is early in the session to commence a campaign of slander, untruth, and misrepresentation, but the Telegraph has to justify its existence, and attempts to blame the Government for the shortcomings of its own correspondent and the failure of that person to keep abreast of what is going on in the House. In this particular instance he has placed several members of the Opposition in the House in a very awkward position, as they believed the Telegraph's statement to be correct.

If the Telegraph were a decent newspaper and not a mere party hack it would withdraw its untruthful statement and explain its error, but this is too much to expect from the Telegraph. It will continue to misrepresent Mr. Hazen and his Government in all things in the future as in the past, regardless of truth or decency.

BUSINESS METHODS IN CIVIC GOVERNMENT.

The campaign to change the form of civic government in St. John to an elective commission may be said to have fairly started with the meeting addressed by several well known citizens in the North End the other evening. Much canvassing has also been accomplished, and the line of argument in support of a commission has been the same in both cases—business methods of civic government. And there is no denying that in the main this argument is very plausible. To the average citizen, who pays his taxes, votes once a year at the civic elections, if he has no other pressing business to attend to, and reads in his Telegraph or his Times, year in and year out, uncomplimentary references to the aldermen and their methods, the suggestion of a new system of government, which "treats the city's affairs the same as any well conducted business house or corporation carries on its daily work," appeals with some force. A system that will conduct the affairs of a city in the same way as the affairs of a large business corporation would naturally have much to commend it and, if the average citizen allows his commission friends to do his thinking for him, as likely as not he may accept the statement as literally true. It may be advisable therefore to examine this argument more closely. It is admittedly the strongest card the friends of commission government have to play.

"Business government on business principles" has something very telling about it. We think of our banks, and our large business corporations, all conducted with a main eye to business, and we say to ourselves, if we have found a plan that will run the civic government of St. John on those lines, it will be the best thing that ever happened.

Let us examine briefly the way in which the affairs of a large business corporation are carried on. First the shareholders subscribe the money to run the business, then, because no large business can be run without directors, the shareholders elect from their number the men best fitted to safeguard their interests. These directors generally have business of their own, but they also have a large stake in the new corporation and they cheerfully consent to give part of their time to

directing its affairs. The directors organize with a paid secretary and treasurer and, if it is a very business, they secure the very best experts obtainable to control the different departments. If it is an old business being incorporated, the men already in charge, who have the management of the business at their fingers' end, are usually reappointed.

The directors themselves meet as often as the affairs of the corporation may require. They decide all matters of policy, they consult freely with the executive heads of departments, BUT IN NO CASE DO THEY COMBINE THE LEGISLATIVE AND THE EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS. They know, as business men, that such interference with details would be a fatal mistake. THEY DECIDE WHAT SHALL BE DONE AND THE MEN WHO KNOW HOW CARRY THEIR ORDERS OUT. That, we believe, is a fair statement of the methods by which large business corporations are successfully conducted.

In St. John today two propositions are before the citizens—government by Common Council, and Government by a small commission. No city ever was or ever will be governed on strictly business principles, but for the sake of argument let us see which of these two propositions more closely resembles the methods employed by the large business corporation. Take the system of government by Common Council. Year by year the taxpayers, the shareholders in the business of St. John, elect aldermen as directors to manage the affairs of the city. The aldermen, as a board, have their paid secretary and treasurer, they decide all matters of policy, and consult with the heads of departments, BUT LIKE THE LARGE BUSINESS CORPORATION IN NO CASE DO THEY COMBINE THE LEGISLATIVE AND THE EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS. THEY DECIDE WHAT SHALL BE DONE AND THE MEN WHO KNOW HOW CARRY THEIR ORDERS OUT. It must be admitted by any fair-minded man that there is a close similarity between the two methods.

Turning to investigate the commission form of government, and having in mind all that our commission friends have told us that the affairs of the city are to be conducted in the same way as the affairs of a large business corporation, we make a rather startling discovery. We find that in practice the main principle of the proposition is the direct opposite to that underlying the system of the business corporation. Five men are elected by the shareholders who are NOT ONLY DIRECTORS, BUT UNDERTAKE ALSO THE DUTIES OF HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS. THEY COMBINE THE LEGISLATIVE AND EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS IN EVERY PARTICULAR. They legislate on their own acts and during their term of office are immune from any interference except through the operation of the recall which requires a vote of 25 per cent. of the electorate to make it effective. Comparing the commission plan with the system under which, for instance, the affairs of a bank are conducted, there is not the least similarity between the two, and no amount of arguing by the friends of the new system can alter that fact once the two principles are thoroughly understood.

If we want "business principles," it is clear that we must adhere to our present form of government. If we consider that we require more competent aldermen or directors it is our business as shareholders in the corporation to elect the right men. To abandon a system which we know is founded on business methods, and take a fling at the commission plan simply because it has proved useful in reorganizing bankrupt and grandfathered cities in the States is a dangerous experiment and cannot be justified by local conditions.

FLAGS AND FLAGS.

Major Beattie's recent resolution in the House of Commons requiring that foreign flags should be displayed in this country, except in official cases, only when accompanied by a Union Jack of equal size was fully warranted.

Visitors at summer resorts cannot have failed to notice the extent to which the people from the United States float their flag at these places. The Stars and Stripes appear on private residences and on river craft, with all too often a disregard of the fact that they are in Canadian territory and should as a mere matter of courtesy recognize the flag of this country.

When we remember the carelessness with which Americans insist upon the recognition of their flag in their own land, we are impelled to feel the more strongly in the matter, and it is a subject for regret that the Government should have voted down the entirely justifiable resolution of the gallant major from London, Ontario.

Current Comment

(Toronto Mail and Empire.)

It is rather shabby of the Globe to belittle the new Association of Ontario Boards of Trade. It could not be expected to like the resolution condemning the Reciprocity Agreement, but it ought not to be so resentful as to say that only 23 boards were represented at the convention when the actual number was 46.

(Montreal Gazette.)

The English suffragettes have been complaining to the Home Secretary that the police handle them roughly when they are carrying on their demonstrations. The rowdy sisters are not as advanced as they think they are. They want to be free to behave like tough men and to be treated like gentlemen.

(Vancouver, B. C., Daily Province.)

To check the exodus of Ontario teachers to the West it is proposed to issue certificates conditional on teaching a given time in the province. The certainty of a marriage certificate in the West is more attractive than a pedagogic license with a string attached in the East.

(St. Thomas Times.)

Sir Wilfrid Laurier's ship of state seems to be doomed to destruction on the reefs of reciprocity. With mutiny on board, and a rapidly weakening crew, it will require most amazing manoeuvring of the ship of state to keep her clear of complete wreck.

(Victoria Colonist.)

Man got on Boston street car; ditto lady; lady had hat-pin in hat; hat-pin scratched man's cheek; man died from blood-poisoning. Paper says lady should not have so much hat-pin. Nonsense. Moral is, man should not have so much cheek.

(Black And White.)

A description of a wedding in the Evening News explains that "the bride was charmingly though becomingly dressed." It reminds us of the reporter's note: "The patient is much better, though Dr. Brown is still in attendance."

(Chicago Record-Herald.)

Compulsory domestic service is advocated in Germany. We should like to see them trying to force a compulsory domestic service law if the cook had made up her mind to leave.

(Vancouver World.)

The easiest way to get crazy is to start worrying about something over which you have no control.

MR. SWEENEY IS BRING SQUINN OUT

Like Other Members of Opposition He Repudiates, in House Statements Made While Barnstorming in Westmorland

Fredericton, Mar. 6.—The opinion was expressed some days ago that the members for Westmorland would not repeat in the legislature the allegations and slanders against the government which they hurled so promiscuously, maliciously and defiantly at their audiences in the eastern end of the county while on their recent barnstorming jaunt.

That opinion was well founded and the prediction well placed. Scarcely had the members begun to warm their seats in the House before the Westmorland contingent began to repudiate their utterances and deny having made statements they were reported to have made. Mr. Sweeney is the most consistent and conspicuous repudiator, even as he was the most vehement and most reckless trader of the quartette, when on tour. Mr. Sweeney is a practised hand at such repudiation. He has the habit of making statements in public about his political opponents that he cannot substantiate or defend when called to book and the convenient way for him is to deny having spoken as reported. He did this a couple of sessions ago regarding the official report of the legislature and about a matter every member was familiar with. He has done so again about his speeches before public meetings and in neither case has he enhanced his reputation for veracity or honor.

It is to be stated in the first place that the press representative who reported Mr. Sweeney's recent speeches in Westmorland county, is a newspaper man of long and honorable experience, has a standing and reputation in his profession and has the integrity and honor of his paper to maintain. It is his reported the addresses of many public men, for newspapers, for official documents, and for the courts, and Mr. J. Sweeney is the first and only man to deny the accuracy and question the reliability of such reports, and his denial comes only as the most convenient method of extricating himself from an awkward and dishonorable predicament.

Reports Were Accurate.

In the legislature a member is bound by custom and procedure to accept without question the word of another member given across the floor of the House. The newspaper representative is not hedged about by parliamentary etiquette, and when Mr. Sweeney says the reporter lies, the latter has the privilege of returning the compliment. Your correspondent states emphatically that the reports of addresses by Messrs. Robinson, Copp, Sweeney and Leger, before public meetings recently, as reported in the Moncton Times are substantially correct, and accurate transcriptions.

They do not pretend to be verbatim reports, but an accurate synopsis.

A Reckless Address.

There were two score or more reputable, intelligent citizens at the Port Elgin meeting referred to at which Mr. Sweeney spoke. They know that he occupied nearly half an hour at the commencement of his harangue talking of the struggles and disappointments of the poor boy, the farmer's son, and coming to his present opportunities and status with the days when Tory aristocracy, star chambers, property qualifications and the wealthy classes were in the ascendancy. He denounced the terrible Tories for every ill that ever befell a farmer, from freckled faced babies to potato blight, and lauded the great Liberal party for all blessings of this life and the life hereafter.

He did not specifically name Hon. Mr. Hazen as one of the "classes" arrayed against the "masses," but the whole trend and purport of his remarks was to convey that impression, and to influence his hearers against the leader of the government because he did not happen to be born on a farm nor earn his bread by manual toil. If Mr. Sweeney did not wish his address to convey that idea then it was utterly meaningless. Every person at that meeting knows this to be true, and Mr. Sweeney's belated denial does not alter the fact. It is his reputation that has suffered, not the reporter's.

FROM EVERY CORNER OF THE DOMINION

COME REPORTS OF CURES MADE BY DODD'S KIDNEY PILLS.

Magdalen Islands, Quebec, tell of Mrs. Cormier, a sufferer for six years, who was made a new woman by Dodd's Kidney Pills.

Amherst Island, Havre Aubert, Magdalen Islands, Que., March 7.—(Special).—That suffering women in all corners of Canada are being restored to health by Dodd's Kidney Pills is shown in the press every day, and this island is not without its striking example. Mrs. Peter C. Cormier, a well known and estimable resident, tells the following story of her cure:—

"For six years I suffered with Rheumatism, Backache and Nervousness. I could not sleep nor eat, and I was always tired. My limbs were heavy and I had a dragging sensation across the loins. "Heavens of cures by Dodd's Kidney Pills I decided to try them. Seven boxes made a new woman of me."

For a score of years Dodd's Kidney Pills have been in use in Canada. They have been tried in thousands of cases and there is not on record a single case where they have failed to cure diseased kidneys. Thousands of Canadian men and women will tell you they owe their good health to Dodd's Kidney Pills.

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BELLEISLE CREEK.

Belleisle Creek, March 7.—Almon Gillies, wife and child of the United States are visiting relatives here. The ladies' aid intend holding a bean supper at the home of T. Farmer this evening.

The pie social which was held at Scotch Settlement for the benefit of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Erwing, was largely attended. A good sum was realized. Rev. Mr. Young proposes holding special services commencing Thursday of this week. Wilfrid Northrop, who has been in Belleisle for the past few days, left for his home in Boston today. The Ladies' Auxiliary were entertained very pleasantly last week by Mrs. R. D. Goggin and mother, Mrs. Northrop. The Central R. R. is giving good satisfaction and a good service is given to the public, trains are on standard time and good accommodations are provided.

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