

The St. John Standard

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ST. JOHN, N. B., THURSDAY, JULY 8, 1915.

"We are fighting for a worthy purpose, and we shall not lay down our arms until that purpose has been fully achieved."—H. M. The King. TO THE PEOPLE OF THE EMPIRE—Every fighting unit we can send to the front means one step nearer peace.

THE TIMES AND THE N. T. R.

Not to be outdone by his colleague of the Telegraph, the editor of the Times dips his pen in honey to pay tribute to the quality of the National Transcontinental and the heaven-born genius of Sir Wilfrid Laurier and the other Grits who, away back in 1903-04, conceived the idea of having the people build a fine railway at the public expense and then turn it over to a company largely controlled by foreign capitalists. In the Times of Tuesday evening the editor accepts the Standard's challenge to express his opinion of the N. T. R. and does it after this fashion:

"Aside from the efforts made by the Borden Government to bedevil the whole enterprise, there is nothing the matter with the National Transcontinental, and it should now have proper connection and terminal facilities at the port of St. John as designed by the Laurier government."

That is the present day, professional opinion of the editor of the Times concerning the National Transcontinental Railway and, apparently, he is prepared to be judged by it, else he would not present it. The Standard has no desire to do the slightest injustice to the talented gentleman who produces Grit music from the wind instrument of Canterbury street and, consequently, this paper is quite willing to accept his judgment on the N. T. R. at the value he appears to place on it. At the same time, merely that the record may be kept straight, we beg to submit several other opinions on the N. T. R. question expressed by the same gentleman.

In 1904, when he was paid by a different hand, the editor of the Times was not so kindly disposed toward the N. T. R. as he appears to be today; neither was he inclined to pin much faith to the promises and professions of Sir Wilfrid Laurier or "the design of the Laurier government" that St. John should benefit by the traffic from that road. On the contrary the spectre of Portland, Maine, oppressed him; he was not at all certain that the N. T. R. trade would come to St. John or that the road would achieve the pronounced success he now claims for it. On October 21st, 1904, the leading editorial in the Times was headed "St. John or Portland?" and in it the editor contended that the design of the Laurier government was to divert Canadian trade from Canadian ports to the metropolis of Maine. Space will not permit publication of that interesting article unless the editor of the Times desires it, when, of course, we will be happy to oblige.

On the following day, November 1st, 1904, the Times editor felt constrained to again warn the people against the machinations of Laurier and to point to Mr. R. L. Borden as the real saviour of the country. On that occasion, in the course of a heated appeal to his readers, he said: "Don't forget that if it had not been for Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Senator Cox and a few others who could not wait the people of Canada would not have been bound to a corporation largely foreign which has its railway terminus at a foreign port. Don't forget that Mr. R. L. Borden is the man to right the wrong and protect the country from those who would sacrifice its best interests."

On the same date, under the heading "Do Not Be Misled," he wrote an editorial criticizing the Laurier agreement on the ground that the company could not be bound by it and that no provision at all had been made for St. John. In the course of that utterance he said:

"The fact is that if the deal is endorsed by the people of Canada the portion of new Canada to be served by this railway will be at the mercy of a corporation which has no interest in Canadian winter ports but has money invested in an American port. In self defence the people must condemn the whole project."

And again on the same day: "What the people of St. John want is a provision that will route the freight to Canadian ports. To get it they must defeat the G. T. P."

On November 1st he compared the positions of Sir Wilfrid Laurier and the leader of the Conservative party, and the comparison was not at all to

the advantage of the Liberal premier. He said:

"Sir Wilfrid Laurier stands for a company which has its railway terminus at Portland, Maine. Mr. Borden stands for a policy which will cut out Portland and give Canadian trade to Canadian ports."

Numerous other quotations can be given showing the deep suspicion with which the editor of the Times regarded Sir Wilfrid Laurier's designs on St. John. Yet today he tells us that it was always the intention of the Laurier government that the N. T. R. should come to this port. That statement he knows to be untrue. Admitting that he has vaulted the party fence so often that, as a political actor, he is almost the equal of his leader, Hon. William Purvis, we confess that we cannot quite adjust our mental vision to grasp the methods he will use to reconcile his attitude in 1904 with that in 1915. Of course his conversion to the merits of the N. T. R. and the bona fides of Laurier's intentions may be sincere, even if he is, but that point is open to argument, but the rascally suspicion persists that the argument he found most convincing was that of the box office, or, in popular parlance, "the pay envelope."

Possibly the editor of the Times has succeeded in convincing himself that there is nothing the matter with the National Transcontinental, but, in the light of his past performances, he should not seek to impose that view. Like the opinion of the editor of the Telegraph it is merely the view of a party hack prepared to sing "Very good, Lord, most excellent Devil" as his paymaster dictates. To attempt to force it on the public is to insult the public intelligence.

IS AUSTRIA STARVING?

While it has been known that the effect of the British navy's steady patrol of the seven seas has been to sweep the German and Austrian merchant marine out of existence and to strangle the supplies of those countries, yet, if the view of a New York Post correspondent at all represents conditions, the situation in Vienna is much more serious than has been stated. In a recent issue the Post correspondent, writing from the Austrian capital, said of conditions there:

"The Austrians, and the Viennese especially, are reading with envy the announcement of the German government that the quantity of flour and potatoes available for the civil population (leaving the army out of the question), up to the time when the new harvest may be taken into account, is amply sufficient for all wants, and that the strict economy imposed in the winter, and implicitly carried out to the letter by a most reasonable population, may be somewhat relaxed. White bread, and even breakfast rolls in moderation, may again be enjoyed. Vienna, with its two million inhabitants, is, I believe, worse off than any other large community influenced by the war. The price of what are considered the necessities of life—meat, vegetables, cereals, flour, eggs and butter—are enormous. On an average, they sell at something like two to five and six times their cost as quoted during the last months before the war. In the case of bread and flour, even a long purse is of no use. No wheat or rye flour has been for sale since last December, and the Viennese have a particular aversion to yellow corn flour. Furthermore, the bakers have proved singularly inefficient, and are incapable of producing a nourishing or appetizing bread from the flour which the authorities place at their disposition, and which is a mixture of maize, barley and bean flour—officially named 'war-flour.'"

"The same weight of bread is not even one-half in volume of what it was formerly. No one in Vienna at the present time eats bread to please his palate, but only just as much as is absolutely necessary. Even so, the result is indigestion and chronic discomfort. Besides, the population is irritated by the tales of those who came from without—from Linz, Graz, Budapest, and even from small towns in the neighborhood, where they have been liberally served with excellent rye bread and even white rolls and 'sem-mels.' Naturally, there are old people and little children in Vienna by the thousands who suffer severely from this state of things. For the rich, a prescription from the family doctor gives the right to purchase a kilogram (2.2 pounds) of wheat flour at the apothecary's for three crowns (two-thirds of a dollar), but what are the delicate and sick among the poor to do?"

"It is very difficult to obtain admission in a hospital just now, when all

of them are required for the wounded and the diseased that pour in from the seats of war. Of the bread, poor as it is, there is not even enough to go round, and the children and old women of the needy classes stand in long columns waiting for their turn to purchase a loaf for their hard-earned money and in exchange of the scanty breadcrumbs allotted to them."

THE WAR SITUATION.

The news from the war theatres is distinctly brighter today. Indeed there is more evidence of success in all areas of fighting than has been the case since the Austro-Germans intercepted their drive across Galicia and Poland several weeks ago. In the east the Russians have been reinforced both with men and munitions and as a result have inflicted a severe blow on the enemy. As a result of the Russian success of the past day or two it is said that the future of the German attack on Warsaw is in grave doubt.

In the west the tide of battle seems to be running in favor of the British and French. North of Ypres the Germans have captured some trenches but elsewhere have been repulsed with heavy losses. In the St. Mihiel district the French have scored success over the enemy and it is reported from that sphere that the Germans have been beaten back with terrible effect.

Good news also comes from the Dardanelles where attacks of the Turks have been beaten back and some regiments practically annihilated by British artillery and machine gun fire. As Sir Ian Hamilton's report tells of good artillery support for infantry attacks it is presumed that the Allied forces there have temporarily overcome the shortage of munitions. It is also reported that the Allies, operating in the Dardanelles, are but six miles from their goal but as the country intervening is heavily fortified, gains must be slow and some little time must elapse before the effort is completely successful. However, there is no doubt of the issue even though it may be delayed. Altogether the situation on all sides is reported to be excellent and there is every reason now for optimism regarding it.

ALL CHARGES WILL BE PROBED.

While attempts to discredit the bona fides of Commissioner Chandler's enquiry into certain charges laid by P. J. Venout in connection with public works in Gloucester county are being made by newspapers supporting the provincial opposition such efforts are entirely without warrant. The most recent point at which attack is being made is that the investigation into Gloucester county matters should be held in that county and that the decision to hold it in Fredericton was the result of the government's hope that witnesses might find it inconvenient to take the time to go from their homes to the court. Every witness material to the charges will be brought and it will be found that whatever irregularities exist are but of minor character and mostly caused by lack of familiarity with business forms. The choice of the place where the enquiry should be held rested entirely with the commissioner and no attempt was made to influence him. The fact of the matter is that the men who made the charges now realize they cannot prove them and that only contempt and discomfiture will be their portion.

FISTS IN THE TRENCHES.

(C. E. B. in London Evening News.) We 'ad got a bit mixed in the trenches. There wasn't no room for to spare, and the terrible crush in the mud and the slush. Was more than a party could bear. I 'ad two or three middling-sized Bosches. A-standing a top 'o' my toes, And when one made too free with 'is baynit with me I lands 'im a dunt on the nose. There's persuasion, I know in a baynit, Which same it is 'ard to resist; But w'en mixed with a Bosche in a regular squash You can't beat a smack with the fist. The German's no use as a boxer, Not 'andy enough with 'is paw; While 'e's messin' about he'll be fair down and out To a thunderin' smack on the jaw. They say we are fallers at shootin', Which isn't for me to deny; But R's far better fun to be droppin' your gun And givin' the Bosche a fat eye. Yes, that's how the thing would be settled. If men wasn't idjits and fools, And we'd alter the map by a nice little scrap Fought out under Queensberry rules!

Current Comment

BRITAIN'S VIRTUES REVIVED. (London Free Press.) Great Britain finds the war bringing to her virtues and attitudes of mind and action of which she stood in some real need. Not without difficulty has

Little Benny's Note Book.

By LEE PAPE

I calm beam from skool today and there was a lady talking to me, being a skilful lady with a fat face, and as soon as she saw me she sed, O, and can this be littel Benny, my goodniss how big hee grown, you rememb'r me, don't you, Benny. No, mam, I sed. Wich I dident, and ma sed, Thats Mrs. Fribbee, Benny, you surely rememb'r Mrs. Fribbee. Surely hee dux, sed the lady. No mam, I sed. O, Mrs. Fribbee, I found the luvliet picture of him wen he was a baby, sed ma. Its just the cutest th' things wen I was cleening up today. Ing, I found it among a lot of old O, I'd luv to see it, sed the lady. Benny, run up to the setting room and you'll see a picture awn the tabl, so and get it for Mrs. Fribbee, thats a good boy, sed ma. Wich I went up in the setting room and wat was awn the tabl but a picture of a baby without any cloze awn and looking as if it was proud of it, being a farse picture. G wizz, I thawt, that aint me. And I looked at it an wat was ritten undirneath but Benny at the age of 7 months.

I dont believe it, thats a heck of a looking kid, I thawt. Wich it was, being fat as anything especially eround the stummock, wich its a wun-dir er whoddy with a baby like that woodent make it put sum cloze awn wen it went to have its picture taken, properly being lucky they was-ent arretted for taking it throo the streets that way. G, now ma will show this to evrybody that comes heer and tell them its me, I sed. And I looked at it agen and it dident even have any teeth in its mouth, and I thawt, I gess it wood be rong to tare it up. Wich it properly wood of, so I took it and put it in the waist papir basket undir a lot of old papirs, and then I called down stares, Thare aint any picture awn the setting room tabl, Wich thare wasn't, then. O, I suppose I'll have to go up and find it myself, as usual, yure as bad as yure farthir, sed ma. And she started to come up stares and I went down the back way and out by the gate, and awl I hope is they empty the waist papir basket without looking to see wats in it.

the lethargy into which Great Britain was lapsing been shaken off. It has been a struggle for England to discover that the best in life and character is not developed by foxhunting and beer-drinking. Play may and does have its place, but the duties of life are not met by overdoes of play. England's mannerisms and customs were gradually tending to the effeminate. The war is brushing aside every such characteristic, and in its room and stead there is reviving the old British spirit of dogged courage, invincible persistence, unimpeachable honor and the other civilizing influences that have in the past made Britain powerful and have enabled her to effect an influence for good that is universal.

"SEND MEN!" (Boston Transcript) It seems a little curious that a leading Canadian journal should find patriotic inspiration in something Artemus Ward wrote more than half a century ago. Yet that is what the Toronto Mail and Empire is doing when it quotes the following passage from "The Draft in Baldwinville":

"It isn't money we want. But we do want men, and we must have them. We must carry a whirlwind of fire among the foe. We must crush the ungrateful of rebels who are poundin' the Goddess of Liberty over the head with slung shots, and stabbin' her with stolen knives. We are all in the same boat—if the boat goes down, we go down with her. Hence

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