THE HURON SIGNAL

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By general admission it has a larger circulation than any other newspaper in this part of the country, and is one of the raciest, newsiest and most reliable journals in Ontario possessing, as it does, the fore-going essentials and being in addition to the above, a first-class family and fireside paper—it is therefore a most *desirable advertising medium.*

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FRIDAY, JAN. 18TH, 1884.

THE COUNTY TREASURERSHIP.

Before the next issue of THE SIGNAL the vexed question of the Huron county treasurership will be set at rest by the action of the new county council. This is what we have contended for during the weeks that have intervened since the moribund council of 1883, at the December meeting, attempted to forestall the action of its successor. We contended at that time that the dying county council did wrong—subsequent events have proved that we were correct in our contention. Hon. A. M. Ross is still county treasurer, and cannot be removed until action is taken by the council at the January meeting, which commences on Tuesday next.

There were some who opposed our contention regarding the illegal action of the council of 1883. There were some who held that Col. Ross' term would expire on the 1st of January. There were some who were of opinion that Mr. Holmes was duly elected treasurer of Huron at the December meeting. But THE SIGNAL steadily claimed that the action of the moribund council was illegal; that Col. Ross' term would not end until Jan. 31st, the end of the fiscal year; and that Mr. Holmes had not been duly elected treasurer of Huron, by the action of the council of 1883. In the light of present events we will leave it to friends and opponents alike to say who was right THE SIGNAL or they who opposed THE SIGNAL.

We make no pretence to being infallible in our judgment on public questions, but nine times out of ten THE SIGNAL is correct, and even in the tenth instance the utterance of this journal will be found to be not far astray.

What were the facts of the case? A public servant of Huron, who had served the county faithfully as treasurer for about a quarter of a century, had honors thrust upon him by the Province of his adoption. When elected by acclamation after the acceptance of the higher place, he stated by public utterance, that, having accepted the higher position, it was his intention "at the end of his fiscal year (Feb 1) to surrender his county trust to the hands of the council, after his books had been audited and found correct, in every particular, for he had always been business-like in his habits, and he would relinquish the county treasurership in a business-like manner." The above are the words of Col. Ross delivered in the town hall, Goderich on Nov 10, 1883. Could anything more satisfactory have been desired from a public man?

But there were they who looked with covetous eyes upon the county treasurership, and who were not willing to bide the time of the retiring incumbent. The council of 1883 was largely Conservative nominally, and it was thought that, if Col. Ross could be forced from the position, or coerced into resigning before the time which he had announced, a snug berth would be obtained for a place-hunter whose only qualification for office consisted in that he had been a defeated candidate. The two aspirants who placed themselves in the hands of the majority at the council board were Mr. Thos. E. Hayes, of McKillop, and Mr. William J. R. Holmes, of Brussels, who both claimed the office on similar grounds. A caucus was held, and Mr. Holmes received the nomination of his party.

The result is known to every reader of THE SIGNAL. Mr. Holmes has haunted Goderich from that day to this. By every means known to him (and without wishing to flatter him we will admit he is a good wirepuller) he has endeavored to foist himself upon the county, but without avail. He worked the majority in the council as if it were potter's clay, and what he connived at was attempted to be put in force by his tools. An attempt was made to coerce Col. Ross into resigning, and when the attempt failed, the ukase from the majority went forth, "Ross must go." But Ross has not gone. Why? Simply because the majority, although willing to do the wrong, did not possess the ability to conceive a scheme that would prove successful. The brain power of the county council of Huron was with the minority on this occasion.

It is quite true a by-law was passed appointing Mr. W. J. R. Holmes treasurer, and that a motion was made instructing the warden's committee to obtain the books from Col. Ross on the 2nd of Jan, to be handed to the auditors appointed before for inspection; but it is also true that the by-law was illegal, the books were not obtained by the warden's committee from the treasurer, and nobody knows who the auditors will be for the year of grace 1884. The matter has been badly muddled by Mr. Holmes and his friends, and the chances are greatly against any improvement, so far as their schemes are concerned.

On Friday last the warden's committee made another abortive attempt to get possession of the books. In the time that had intervened between the two meetings of the warden's committee, two of Mr. Holmes' friends on the committee—Messrs. Corbett, of Clinton, and Weir, of Howick—had lost the confidence of the ratepayers of their respective municipalities, and were no longer members of the county council. Yet these irresponsible men wished to obtain possession of the treasurer's books with the intention of handing them over to an irresponsible person, who had not been legally appointed, and who had given no security for the discharge of the duties pertaining to the office.

The services of a solicitor were called for, and the legal opinion given did not tend to bring shape out of chaos. From their own legal adviser it was learned that the proceedings at the December meeting were irregular.

(1) Because Col. Ross not having been dismissed, and not having resigned, no new treasurer could be appointed in his stead.

(2) Because the duties of the auditors for 1883 ended with the close of their labors in the audit of that year, and the auditors for 1884 could not be appointed until the January meeting; and for these reasons there were no auditors to whom the books could be handed for special audit.

(3) Because the by-law appointing Mr. Holmes treasurer was so worded that his securities could not be approved of unless by a meeting of the council, which would not take place until the 22nd of January; and, until his securities were approved of, Mr. Holmes would not be regularly appointed, and should not be entrusted with the finances of the county.

The above is the text of a lengthy opinion from the county solicitor, bearing upon the case, and fully endorses the contentions of THE SIGNAL against the high-handed action of the county council of 1883, at the instance of Mr. W. J. R. Holmes, and we leave the question to all rightminded persons to decide whether the course pursued by this journal has not been on the side of right and justice. Personally we had no axe to grind, and no favors to seek, but we had the rights of the people to guard, and we watched carefully and closely that a conspiracy against the law and against the welfare of the county was not consummated without due warning from us. That that warning was heeded by the people of Huron, the results at the municipal elections have clearly shown. Of sixteen members who voted for Mr. Holmes at the December meeting, and who went to the polls on the 7th of January, six were made to feel the people's displeasure by suffering defeat. Of those who voted against the illegal election of Mr. Holmes, only one failed to secure re-election, and he was beaten in a municipality where Mr. Holmes exercises a strong personal influence, as a practitioner and otherwise. Of the three members who turned with loathing from the conspiracy at the caucus and threw in their weight with the minority when the vote took place, all were elected by acclamation in the townships for which they sat, although a large adverse majority would otherwise have been against them—thus showing that their course in voting against Holmes and the tricksters was approved of by their constituents.

These facts speak louder than thunder tones, and demonstrate beyond a peradventure that the people of Huron have no sympathy with cabals, cliques or rings formed to bring disgrace upon an honorable public servant. It shows that right must prevail, and justice must be done on all occasions.

And now we confidently look for the sequel to the story, and it is this: It has been clearly shown that the wire-puller and trickster must go, so far as the county treasurership is concerned. Mr. Holmes has, by his efforts to obtain the position, proved that he is a man who will not always be guided by the straight lines that should govern the conduct of an honorable man. Then, if such be the case, is he a fit man to appoint to the most responsible position in the gift of the representatives of the county of Huron? This is a pertinent question, gentlemen of the county council, and we pray you, weigh it carefully before you decide.

To those of you who voted against Mr. Holmes at the December meeting, we say, vote against him again. Mr. Holmes has not changed an iota, and will not change to the end. The attempt to heap insult and disgrace upon your tried and trusted treasurer, Hon. A. M. Ross, is none the less an indignity that it has proved abortive. Remember that fact, and do not deal lightly with the man at whose instance the attempt was made. VOTE AGAINST W. J. R. HOLMES, as we said before.

To the new members, who have defeated at the polls the accomplices of Mr. Holmes in the disgraceful public attack on Hon. A. M. Ross, we need only say: Don't rest till the good work is done. Say by your vote that trickery in county matters shall not be tolerated with your consent.

And if, as we believe will be the case, the honorable, honest-minded, square dealing, upright men of the Huron county council of 1884 stand solidly together and vote for honesty and integrity in a position of trust, we shall have the privilege of recording in the next issue of THE SIGNAL that in Huron county, at all events no countenance is given to municipal tricksters, and that integrity and ability is esteemed more highly than log-rolling and axe-grinding.

The moral to the above is obvious Holmes must be sent about his business, and the choice of treasurer for Huron must fall upon a straightforward, honorable man.

OPINIONS ON THE TARIFF

The report of Dr. Orton's Tariff committee has appeared. It is a volume of nearly 800 pages, and although utterly useless as a guide to the Government in tariff framing, furnishes very amusing illustrations of the political bigotry or lack of ordinary good judgment on the part of some of the old-fashioned Tories who have felt constrained to send answers to the committee. The Chatham *Banner* gives a number of the Tory opinions, with comments thereon, and among them we find statements made by Mr. James Johnston ("Steel Rails" of Wawanosh, and Mr. James Patton, one of the auditors for Huron in 1883. The opinions given don't reflect much credit upon the intelligence of either of the gentlemen. We quote below three Tory and three Reform opinions from the answers to the committee, and four of the six are from men well known in Huron county. Our readers will thereby have an opportunity of passing judgment upon the intelligence of the authors of the opinions.

TORY.

James Patton, of Goderich Tp. says the duty has raised the price of fall wheat 20 cents and spring wheat 30 cents per bushel, and that the continuance in power of the present Government will give increased impetus, permanence and stability, etc., etc. The above illustrates the fact that there is one thing the Government cannot do, and that is to increase either Mr. Patton's bigotry or stupidity in matters political. That, indeed, would argue omnipotence.

James Johnston, of Auburn, County of Huron, says the tariff has raised the price of spring wheat so that the increase in the price of that product alone would pay all the duties levied on the farmer; also, that it increased the price of oats so *that if there had not been a big crop* the price would have risen to 50 cents per bushel. Comment is unnecessary. Perhaps by this time the mallet and chisel of experience have morticed through the knotty planking of James' understanding.

Alex. Lucas, Reeve of Alvinston, apparently regardless of his personal safety, says the N. P. has so blessed the country that the prodigals are coming home to eat the calf. In classical terms he discourses: "You can't better it, stick to the N. P., keep a stiff upper lip, and we'll get along bully," and he concludes his rhapsody by "Yes, gentlemen, our children and our children's children shall rise up and say blessed be the names of Macdonald, Tilley and Tupper, and all supporters of that glorious N. P." Mr. Lucas, perhaps, would not express himself very differently to-day.

REFORM.

Wm. Burns, of Rawdon, Co. Montcalm, does not see such a roseate future for the manufacturers who are being so heavily bonused at the expense of the farmers and laborers. He appreciates the fact that a manufacturing people must be able to go out and hold their own in markets of the world, and this pap-fed ones never can do. He says: "Unless we have channels of outlet, our markets will soon become glutted, manufactures stagnant, if not closed, and our laboring classes out of employment eventually. This is what I foresee in the Tariff duty." And he was right.

Thos. Strachan, Reeve, Grey, county Huron, says, "We (farmers) want to impose no burden on anyone, but we do object to be taxed for every other interest. The number of manufacturers who are being benefitted at our expense is not only a political wrong, but a crime against God and humanity, and how farmers will submit to this imposture by your pretending to benefit them is beyond my comprehension." A good many thousands of Canadian farmers are pretty much of Mr. Strachan's opinion to-day.

James Torrance, Porter Hill, County Huron, deems the tariff injurious to farmers on the theory that it prevents them, as is their natural inclination, from buying in the cheapest and selling in the dearest market.

THE Sarnia *Observer* hits the nail on the head in the following brief style: "The Tory press are just now much exercised because the depression is being noticed by the Liberal newspapers and commented upon to the disadvantage of the Dominion Government and the N. P. Our Tory cotemps. conveniently forget that prior to 1878 the depression in trade was the burden of their daily and weekly song, and was made the groundwork of attack upon the Mackenzie Government and for bringing into existence the so-called National Policy. Now that they are required to swallow their own medicine they look upon it with aversion, and denounce those who are offering it to them for crying down the country".

TORY MUNICIPAL MISRULE

OUR Tory friends are continually telling us that in municipal matters towns and townships ruled by Tory councils are always more economically supervised than those under Reform governance. Last week we pointed out where a saving could be effected in Goderich town, by having the salary of the town clerk reduced. We set out by giving the statements of our opponents concerning municipality government and to combat the erroneous contention of the Tories, will give a few cases in point, taken from the public returns made to the Legislature and published as an authority on such matters. The township of Howick is notoriously Tory, and we find by the figures given in the "Abstract of Returns of the municipalities of the Province of Ontario," page 36, twenty-three lines from the top of the page, that Howick pays out in salaries and commissions for running the municipal machine, the sum of $1,201 55. The Reform townships of the county, for the same service, pay, according to the same return, as follows: Ashfield, $693; Colborne, $417; Grey, $604.50; Tuckersmith, $600; Hullett, $629.85; Turnberry, $536 26; East Wawanosh, $417.38; West Wawanosh, $324. Howick under Tory rule, pays about twice as much to grease the municipal wheels as the highest of the Reform townships which we have named, and nearly twice as much as the aggregated salaries and commissions of the two Wawanoshes. The office-holders of Howick ought to be happy in their day and generation. But while there is a heavy leak at the township bung-hole, an attempt is made to spare at the spigot, and the township council of Howick are not prodigal in their expenditure for charity. Some months ago we had an article on this question and showed that, although some eight or ten indigents were alleged to be supported at the township expense, the sum total of the amount paid in charity, including the charge made by councillor Johnston for the keep of Widow Douglas' cow, was $137.98. Verily the Howick paupers must have been constrained to partake of thin porridge. In contrast to the penurious giving of Howick towards charitable purposes, is the conduct of a number of the Reform townships. Ashfield paid $176.27; Grey, $211.63; Hullett, $331.10; and Colborne, $449.90. It will be seen by the above that Howick has been very economical in giving to the poor and needy. But Howick rejoices in a township paper—a journal with a township reputation—the *Howick Enterprise*,—and that organ has always championed the doings of the township council, through thick and thin. Until we began our present researches we never could understand why the little organ was so loyal to the council, but now we have it. It is paid for its support. While Grey pays for its yearly printing, $85.50; Ashfield, $78; Colborne, $76; Hullett, $68.38; Turnberry, $78.75; and Stephen, $40.85, the good old Tory township of Howick pours grease on its local organ to make it "skeerl" to the tune of $135.16 per annum. The foregoing are facts that cannot be gainsaid, and we give them so that when any Tory out in the townships raises the cry of economy in municipal matters, our friends will be able to give them a Roland for their Oliver. The *Howick Enterprise* will now have an opportunity to rise and explain on behalf of its masters, the council of Howick.

THE *Mail* pretends to be a first-class newspaper, but if the functions of a newspaper consist in giving reliable and important news for the edification and instruction of its readers, the *Mail* will have to get off the pedestal, and step behind its Reform *confreres*. We will give a couple of items of news that *Mail* has not yet found out. It has not yet discovered that Hon. G. W. Ross' majority in West Middlesex was 157 instead of 71, as it wrongfully stated; and that Sir Richard Cartwright was elected by acclamation in South Huron. These are news items that affect all classes—both Grit and Tory—but possibly the labored efforts of the editor of the *Mail*, caused by the endeavor to give thorough establishment to the mythical Bull Pup and Slugger, have sapped the news-getting energies of the self-styled "great newspaper," and facts must perforce give place to fiction. The tall chimney column of the *Mail* has also gone to "pot" the loud huzzas on account of the large crops and high prices caused by the N. P. have also died away, and the lying platitudes about the "cheap breakfast table," and "plenty of labor for the working man" have disappeared from its pages. The day of reckoning for the *Mail* and the Tory party has almost arrived.

THE London *Free Press* is continually crowing about Hon. D. Mills paying the cost of the protest against James Stephens but it is dumb on the question of J. J. Hawkins, the rejected, paying the costs of his protest against Mr. Mills. The *Free Press* is a lop-sided newspaper.

THE talk about J. J. Hawkins still sitting for Bothwell after Judge Galt's decision in favor of Hon. D. Mills is rubbish. Mills has been grinding J. J. slowly, but exceedingly fine.

"THE MAN FOR GALWAY."

Now that a new county council has been elected, it is to be hoped a right action will be taken in the appointment of a successor to Hon. Mr. Ross, when that gentleman hands in his resignation of the county treasurership.

The proper way to do is to ignore the applicants who were in the field in 1883, and to choose a new man who will be acceptable to all parties.

Mr Adamson has voluntarily relinquished his candidature.

Mr Holmes should be forced to leave the field, for he has proved himself to be a bird of ill omen and a bill of expense to the county, as well as a source of very very great annoyance to his friends in the county council of 1883.

Such being the case, a new man should be chosen; and we believe the man best qualified for the position is Mr. Horace Horton, mayor of Goderich.

If a more suitable candidate is brought forward, we will not stand in the way of his election, but until it is clearly shown that some other man has greater fitness for the office, THE SIGNAL will support the candidature of Horace Horton for the treasurership of Huron.

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD, member of Parliament, in a recent speech, declared that English commerce is at the mercy of any power who chooses to attack it; that any nation who could send out a few fast cruisers could paralyze our shipping trade. As a captain in the Royal Navy, he assumes to know something of the service.

REV. D. LEACH, chaplain of New York State Senate, gave a prayer brief enough to satisfy the witty Irish Dean, yet as comprehensive as the longer forms approved of by our parliamentary committee. He simply asked that when the senators concluded their labors they might be as pure as when they began.

THE London *Advertiser* pointedly remarks: "The Crooks Act stands, and Sir John is held up before the Dominion stripped of the lion's hide he donned in making his Yorkville speech, his pretensions to being an infallible constitutional lawyer are cast to the winds, and he stands a confessed humbug.

UNDER the heading "A Liberal Boom" the Toronto *World*, an independent paper of strong protection proclivities, thus speaks: "The seating of Mr. Mills for Bothwell by Judge Galt's decision on Saturday, shows that the liberal boom is still in force. It began with the redemption of Lennox, the redemption of West Middlesex in the local and its retention in the federal legislature, the election of Sir Richard Cartwright for South Huron by acclamation, the decision in the Hodge case; and now the award of the seat for Bothwell to Mr. Mills."

THE reeve of Brussels has been made a butt of by some of his friends, if we take his own words for it. He is reported by the Brussels newspaper to have said at the nomination:—

"Last year he had been counted out and was counted in at Goderich. He had been promised the Wardenship last year, but by being late another was appointed. He expected to be Warden next year, and thought it would be an honor to Brussels."

This will be news to the members of the county council. Mr Rogers should give the names of those who said he would have been warden last year but for his late arrival. Who has been imposing upon the credulity of our old friend? Echo answers, "Who?"

THE Ottawa *Free Press* thus opines: "Mr. Mowat will meet the legislature not only with a good majority at his back, but also with the prestige of success arising from recent decisions of the Privy Council in the Escheat and License cases. His action in the Boundary dispute has placed the question in a fair way of settlement with strong reasons to expect that the decision of the Privy Council will be to sustain the award of the arbitrators of whom the British Ambassador at Washington was one. Altogether the Liberal government is very happily situated in comparison to the Tory government at Quebec."

MR ROSS, however, quietly retained his position, thinking to do so till after the municipal elections, when he expected that the new Council would be of a different political complexion, and would, therefore, elect a Reform treasurer. The old Council nipped this little plan in the bud by summarily dismissing him, and as a proof that their action was favourably regarded by the people of the county, they have nearly all been re-elected. Mr Ross will be puzzled to know whether he was too clever or not clever enough.

The above from the Toronto *Mail* is just as inaccurate as the usual atterances of that journal. Col. Ross wished to wash his fiscal year, which ended on the 1st of February, so that his books might be audited in the regular way. He was not dismissed by the council of 1883, and the county solicitor now says the whole proceedings were irregular. Nearly all the men who voted against Mr. Ross' continuance in office were not re-elected. Sixteen went to the polls, and six of that number were defeated;—a goodly percentage, truly. With the corrections here made, the item in the *Mail* will pass muster,—not otherwise. We know a little more about the Huron county treasurership embroglio than does the *Mail* dude.

COL. MORIN, Reformer, of Vellan1, was on Wednesday confirmed in his seat by the Judge.

ON Saturday last Judge Galt gave judgment in the Bothwell election case, and decided in favor of the petitioner, Hon. David Mills. Mr. J. J. Hawkins is by this decision relegated to private life, from which he should never have emerged. Mr. Hawkins, however, succeeded in sitting in parliament for one session, and in securing a sessional indemnity of $1,000, which rightfully belonged to Hon. David Mills. We would like to see a way opened up so that J. J. would be forced to disgorge the sessional allowance thus wrongfully obtained. Hawkins had no more right to it than the man in the moon.

THE *Star* ought to print another statement, of the political status of the county council for 1884, and then quit. We were given to understand that it was a straight statement, but when we examined it carefully it was found to be very like Paddy's wall, which was built so straight that it leaned over. The *Star* says the political complexion stands: 26 Tories, 22 Grits, but to get things in that shape the organ had to place Mr. Beattie of Seaforth, on the Tory list, and leave Messrs. Walker and Smillie of Tuckersmith, off altogether. Tuesday next will give our Tory friends a surprise party.

THE hard times are upon us, and we must face them as prudently and wisely as possible. The Toronto *Telegram* puts the case in a nutshell when it says:—"That commercial failures will continue to occur is inevitable. The best plan is not to attempt to smother up the facts concerning them, but to deal with them as they are, and make the best of them. There will be more before the winter is over. They are not without a lesson, for they teach the necessity of studying economy and paying close attention to all the minor details of business. The commercial men who carry on their business in a happy-go-lucky style, and take their chances by giving credit to everybody who asks for it, run a good chance of coming out of the small end of the horn by the time that gentle spring puts in an appearance."

THE editor of the Forest *Free Press* is evidently a man who likes to see the boys "whoop it up" on election day. The village treasury must be very full, or candidates for public positions must be unusually modest in Forest, if the editor is justified in writing the following uncommon paragraph:—"The indications are that the time has arrived when it is necessary for the village of Forest to pay something for the services of a Reeve and Councillors. When only two men, out of nine nominated, can be prevailed upon to accept office there must be something wrong. Our citizens do not care for honor. They want money, so they refuse to serve the town twelve months for nothing but, perhaps, abuse. Let a by-law be passed to remunerate each Councillor for time actually taken from his business, and we will not have such a raine election next year."

VERY IRREGULAR.

Mr Holmes not Legally Appointed.

Meeting of Warden's Committee. What Mr Garrow says.

The Warden's committee met in the clerk's office on Friday last, pursuant to adjournment. Present—the Warden and Messrs. Strachan, Weir, Johnston, Currie, G. Elliott, Hannah and Corbett.

The minutes of last meeting were read and approved.

The securities of Mr. Holmes were submitted to the committee.

The opinion of Mr. Garrow was also submitted. The opinion was adverse to the legality of Mr. Holmes' appointment, the existence of auditors without a special by-law being passed; and stated distinctly that, according to the wording of the by-law passed at the December meeting, the securities of Mr. Holmes must be approved of by the council in session before he could be duly appointed treasurer. The opinion further stated that, as Mr. Ross had not resigned and had not been dismissed by the council of 1883, at the December meeting, there was no vacancy, and the by-law appointing Mr. Holmes treasurer when there was no vacancy in the office was irregular in the extreme.

Moved by Mr. Johnston, seconded by Mr. Elliott, that the bonds of Mr. Holmes be accepted and approved, and recommended for adoption to the council. Carried.

Moved by Mr. Johnston; seconded by Mr. Elliott, that James Patton and Archibald Dickson be appointed to audit the accounts of the treasurer, and proceed at once with the audit, and report to the council at its first January meeting. Carried by the votes of Johnston, Elliott, Corbett and Weir.

Moved in amendment by Mr. Strachan, seconded by Mr. Currie, that the committee do not appoint any auditors, as the council gave no instructions to the committee to do so. Lost, Messrs. Strachan, Currie and Hannah voting yea.

Moved by Mr. Johnston, seconded by Mr. Corbett, that Mr. Garrow's opinion be accepted and laid before the council at its next meeting, and that the bonds of Mr. Holmes be left in the clerk's hands. Carried.

The meeting then adjourned.