

THE ACADIAN.

WOLFVILLE, N. S., NOV. 29, 1914.

Editorial Brevities.

While hallow's was unusually quiet in town a large amount of vandalism is reported in some sections. Fences were demolished and a large amount of property destroyed. The school house at Lower Wolfville had over thirty lights of glass broken. We should like very much to see the culprits detected and punished as they richly deserve.

The Acadian is very glad this week to be able to give to its readers a most delightfully written little poem—"The Hermit Thrush"—from the pen of Mrs. Robie W. Tutts, of this town. The writer has evidently unusual talent and we shall be very much pleased—as we know our readers will be—if at some future time our columns may be again favored with another contribution from her pen.

A large amount of our space this week is taken up by an exceedingly interesting article from the pen of Mr. Burpee L. Bishop. Mr. Bishop discusses conditions in which all our readers must be interested. We speak for his letter a careful perusal and trust that it may result in a better condition of affairs than apparently exists at the present time, not only at the Horton Poor Farm but in the whole public affairs of the county.

Citizens have been wondering why the flag that has been flying over the town hall since the war began has not been in evidence this week. The ACADIAN has learned that it was taken down by order of one of the "city fathers" because the edges were fraying and it was feared the flag would wear out. If this is true it displays a brand of economy that will not be appreciated by Wolfville people. Keep the flag flying. When it wears out we will economize in some other direction and purchase another.

Letters to the Editor.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ACADIAN:
SIR,—The subjoined extract from a diary found on the body of a German officer speaks for itself. It appears in a recent issue of the London Observer. Yours truly,
K. F. DIXON.

SEPTEMBER 3.—Still at Rethel, on guard over prisoners. The houses in the greater part of the village, as they could have prevented the looting and destruction. The damage amounts to millions of marks; even the safes have been attacked. In a solicitor's house, in which, as luck would have it, everything was in excellent taste, including a collection of old lace and Eastern works of art, everything was smashed to bits.

I couldn't resist taking a little memento myself here and there. . . . One house was particularly elegant, everything in the best taste. The hall was of light oak; near the staircase I found a splendid aqueduct and a camera for Felix.

The Boy Scouts.

All the boys who are to take part in the "March of the Allies" must be at the club room in uniform at 7 o'clock this evening. After this there will be a rehearsal of the play. On Saturday evening the senior scouts will meet at the club room for basketball and rehearsal of the play. With regard to this year's entertainment, which will be held on Monday, Nov. 16th, those in charge wish to say that a very attractive program has been prepared and it is hoped that the full number of tickets (500) will be sold out before the evening of the performance.

This is the fourth annual entertainment and as heretofore the scouts themselves carry out the entire program, which means a lot of hard and unselfish work. All that is needed to make the "show" is an unqualified success is a helping hand by the Wolfville people to the extent of 25 cents each while the supply of tickets lasts—and ample funds will be provided for the year's work.

The play for this year, which is the most ambitious yet undertaken, is highly amusing and is guaranteed to drive dull care away. A novel feature, "The March of the Allies," with the Belgian, Russian, French and British national anthems, will be introduced.

Among the songs is the latest favorite among the British soldiers at the front, "D'ye Ken John French?" The program (tickets) will be on sale by the boys on Tuesday next.

A Good Medicine for the Baby.

Baby's Own Tablets are the very best medicine a mother can give her little ones. They soothe the stomach, regulate the bowels, break up colds, promote healthy sleep—in fact, remove all the minor ills of little ones. The mother may feel absolutely safe in giving them to her children for they are guaranteed by a government analyst to be entirely free from all injurious drugs. The Tablets are sold by medicine dealers or by mail order—write a box from The Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont.

Barbarians Within Our Gates.

To the Editors of Horton.
During the recent outbreak of typhoid fever at Horton Poor Farm I have, from frequent visits there in response to a call for help, become interested in that Institution, the manner in which it is conducted, and the attitude of the public towards such things in general.

I am no soft sentimentalist on the care of those unfortunate enough to become public charges, but I confess that the conditions I have seen at our Poor House are far from satisfactory to me. On the public side of the house the barnlike simplicity affords but little description matter until one comes to the wooden bedsteads with their unlimited opportunities for vermin. The dirty tin and wood bath tub, filled by hand from the stove, empties its waste on the ground, right by the back steps. There are no screens on doors or windows, and flies, bred by tens of thousands in the open closets about 100 feet from the house, have free access to the food and drink of the inmates. Anyone who knows the manner of propagation of typhoid need not be told that if there is a case of typhoid about, it is absolutely sure that the germ will be found in the privy.

About 200 feet from the house is the most interesting exhibit of all—the notorious poor house spring, their only supply of water, condensed years ago and every year by doctors and health officers (County and Provincial) and shunned by those of us who were acquainted with the health record of the place. This spring is nothing but a cesspool, which smells and tastes every summer (when the flow is small) of the horse barn and pig pen, situated conveniently near the uphill side. In fact, foremen in the past have been compelled to make drains to take off the surplus manure water, so that the spring could have a chance to this out a little. The typhoid record of this place is long and bad, but as no death had occurred, public attention was not aroused by the keeping of a dangerous pest hole in our midst. For good reasons the sanitary equipment which answers for all to many private homes is not safe for an institution of this kind with its many rough class transient guests.

Our pest house has now claimed its first victim in the person of a foreman, a young man of thirty, strong, sober, industrious, and I believe honest. He has been violently taken through your negligence and mine, leaving behind him two small boys and a wife who keenly feels the needlessness of her loss, and must now face a world hard for a man but harder for a woman. As I write, one of her boys, nine years old, lies ill after four weeks of fever, very nearly the second victim in the same family in a few short weeks.

All this means large bills for nurses and doctors and undertakers, and we have no working machinery by which these may be paid for by the public, as they should be.

I have neither time nor money to make investigations which would warrant definite charges against any one, but I have satisfied myself that there are people who could do better if they wished to do so, and after this public exposure of conditions I shall feel no further responsibility for what may happen to any man foolish enough to take charge of Horton Poor Farm in its present state.

Our farm is supposed to be run by a foreman under the immediate direction of three overseers, appointed from time immemorial by the Councilors of Horton township. Last year a new County Council was elected, having, I believe, a majority of six Liberals. The members for Horton stood three Conservatives to two Liberals, a combination totally unfit, from a machine standpoint, to elect overseers for our splendid institution for the poor. A proposal by Mr. Reid to agree on overseers was turned down by Eagles and Gertrude and the latter moved that Freeman Coldwell, Frank Fuller, and A. N. Griffin be overseers, and called upon the party majority of the whole Council to vote it through. The only time such action had previously been taken by our Council was in the notorious reviver case of Wards 1 and 2 a few years ago. Legally they have the right to do this, but we have the right to criticize their motives. There are many who believe that a large part of the County business is similarly decided upon outside, in order to lighten the work of the poorly paid councilors.

What can you expect of men appointed by machine methods? To be sure, they get only \$5 a year, but they seem anxious for the job just the same. I do not believe they try to give our Farm the personal attention to details necessary to make it a creditable institution, free from graft. As far as I have been able to ascertain supplies are bought without tender in various places, but mainly at an independent store, and the prices paid I would not consider at all satisfactory for my own much smaller purchases. In fact, I have good reasons for thinking that prices charged are about what the clerks see fit to make them. The overseers were able to obtain the previous foreman (who died on the job) at the magnificent salary of \$100 and bond, in an unfurnished house, with not over a proper range provided upon which to do the public cooking. The late Mr. Andrew, not knowing why he was being paid, was somehow induced to accept the job at \$100 and bond per year. The Horton foreman has always been expected to find all help needed on the farm, though I believe this rule has been very generally broken in an emergency.

How would you like to work at a job, let alone the one under discussion, for such pay? Think of it! 41 cents per day, and the same for your wife if you divide evenly with the job who has the hardest work! Would you grant, to even up? The opportunity is there, and you would be a rare man to resist.

I by no means place all the blame on the overseers, but they had been warned last June by the proper authorities, and they scoffed at the danger. Mr. Griffin told me the water must be good, because it was spring water and looked good; just as if typhoid germs were in the habit of swimming around with their fins and tails sticking out for all to see. Mr. Griffin also says we cannot prove that the typhoid came from the spring. He evidently knows our other public institutions, for a sample of the water sent to the public analyst at Halifax is not yet heard from, and different doctors tell me that their last winter's samples of blood and diphtheria swabs have not yet been reported upon. The Halifax institution is run by the same machine which makes the rain and the sunshine in Kings county, and is thus spoken of by the report of the Carnegie Foundation on Medical Education: "It possesses an utterly wretched laboratory for pathology, bacteriology, etc." And again, "The staff appointments are made by the government for its own reasons."

We have in N. S. a beautiful Public Health Act. The various health officers are invested with the powers of a Czar or a Kaiser in every conceivable thing which touches the public health. But nothing is done. Dr. Hattie, the head of the provincial department, knows of the conditions here and is intensely disgusted. But he does nothing. Dr. Balcom, the County Health Officer, has condemned the spring time and again. But he does nothing. Finally, it has just come to my knowledge that there is in each ward a local health board and a sanitary inspector. It would be ungenerous even to mention their names, for it is a safe bet that they are not in the least aware of their appointment, much less do they dream of the sovereign power conferred upon their august boards.

In all our public business, responsibility is so divided and sub-divided that real responsibility fades away, and I have found no one unprovided with a good legal goat. On the other hand, we ourselves are but little better than barbarians, for public opinion will support neither the law nor the officers of the law.

I have for years contended that the people of Kings county were no worse morally and politically than those of other counties. I am beginning to reluctantly recede from that stand, and I am now asking why we are worse than others. The whole country must be equally affected by the practical failure of our political system (with its ever increasing centralization) to give expression to the will of the people, thus putting public spirit at a discount. The lack of moral teaching in our homes and schools, and the failure of our centre of social, educational and moral life is not particular to Kings county, but rests as a bright upon all practically alike. If we enjoy a disreputable superiority over other counties in our criminal indifference to the public good, there must somewhere be a reason. I can think of only two respects in which Kings county has been particularly unfortunate. In the first place, we have been for at least a generation without political leaders who were capable of rising above the commonest level of public ideals. In the second place, we have felt the lack of business men of wealth and influence who might, by combining their opportunities with the best

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