

The Standard



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SAINT JOHN, SATURDAY MORNING, NOV. 13, 1909.

THE HESTIA INQUIRY.

The feeling of suspicion caused by the diversion of the Hestia inquiry from St. John to Montreal, has been increased by the superficial and imperfect character of the investigation itself, and by the hasty verdict. The commissioner has easily, and on what seems to be meagre evidence, concluded that the disaster was wholly due to the fault of the Hestia's officers and the defects of the ship. No fault whatever is found with the Marine Department or with the character of the light or alarm service.

This statement is made notwithstanding the admission that the carbide buoy at the Old Proprietor ledge was not in working order. If this failure did not contribute to the loss of a ship on the rock close by, what is the purpose of that expensive buoy? The fact that the finding does not mention the failure of this buoy in connection with a disaster that the buoy was intended to prevent casts grave doubts on the conclusion.

The inquiry itself was miserably inadequate. While the loss of the ship was important the sacrifice of thirty-four lives was a much more serious calamity. Had only one man been killed under circumstances suggesting wrong or neglect, an inquest would have been held to locate the blame if any were suspected. In this case there was no inquest because the department was expected to hold thorough inquiry into the whole matter. This inquiry should have been held at a convenient place near the scene of accident, or the abode of persons who had most knowledge of the facts. The survivors were at St. John where the inquiry should have begun. The officers of the department in charge of the district were here. Here also were the crew of the tug which visited the wreck, the pilots of the Bay of Fundy district, and hither the light keeper at Gannet Rock, the man in charge of the life-saving plant in the neighborhood, and those who took the survivors from the wreck could have been brought. In St. John an inquiry of this character would have been in every sense a public inquiry. The whole community would have been interested in furnishing all the evidence available.

Now what happened? The first proceeding of the department was a private inquiry, and it was intimated that a public investigation might not be found necessary. Then came the announcement that a public inquiry would be held at St. John. Next came the statement that it would take place in Montreal because the survivors of the Hestia were there. But the survivors were not then in Montreal. They were ordered afterward to go to Montreal to attend the inquiry. The next explanation was that Montreal was more central. Montreal is only more central in the sense that it is nearer the geographical centre of Canada, in which respect Winnipeg would be still more central. Montreal is less central in its relation to the matter under inquiry, or to the homes of the witnesses, or the place of the accident. The last explanation was that Montreal was chosen because of the importance of the inquiry. Those who have read the report of the hearing will conclude that this was the chief indication given by the department that the matter was considered important.

The commissioner deliberately shut out all evidence relating to the failure to rescue the men after the ship struck. He said that his instructions from Ottawa excluded that matter. He was only to find out how the ship came to be where she struck, and had nothing to do with fate of the men afterward. To most people it will appear that this is a matter of at least equal importance with the loss of the ship. But in line with these instructions the commissioner refused to hear evidence of what happened on the ship, on Gannet Rock, and Seal Island during those fatal days and nights after the ship struck. He was not concerned whether there was a suitable life boat, or whether the keeper of Gannet Rock light had done all that might be expected of him. Not only did the commissioner fail to call witnesses to testify on these matters, but he would not hear those who offered testimony. Captain Luger says that he was obeying his instructions from Ottawa, and we may assume that this is true. But what shall we think of the Department at Ottawa which passes off such a proceeding as that at Montreal for a full public inquiry into the wreck of the Hestia? It would not have been so easy to do this thing in St. John, and that may be why the venue was changed to a place more remote from the scene of the disaster.

Consider again the matter of the buoy. This is one of those costly machines obtained from Contractor Wilson of Ottawa, in a deal which was discussed in vigorous language by the civil service commissioners. The contractor sold these carbide buoys at prices of \$2,000

to \$15,000 each, and made a profit of about one hundred per cent. on his outlay. The Old Proprietor buoy is, we believe, one of the \$8,000 variety. These buoys were represented by the Government as giving a constant light of remarkable brilliancy. Mr. Fyfe reported that the department had fallen under control of the contractor and took orders from him as to the number that should be bought, as well as the size and price. It is pertinent to this case that Mr. Fyfe quoted the protest of local agents and captains who objected to the purchase of the larger and more costly kind, pointing out that they were in many positions no better than the smaller buoys, while they were extremely difficult to handle, and when they got out of order it was almost impossible to move them, so that they could be repaired. According to Commissioner Fyfe these protests were ruled out by the influence of the contractor himself. Now in the Hestia inquiry it was shown that the Old Proprietor buoy was reported out of order months ago. Navigators were told that the trouble would be remedied immediately. But it was never done, and it was only after the disaster that the buoy was brought to St. John for repairs. If the case is like that those mentioned by the civil service commissioners as occurring on the Atlantic coast of Nova Scotia, it is not likely that the fault is with the local officers. It is no simple matter to overhaul these larger buoys, and it appeared in the Nova Scotia case that the department at Ottawa had to deal with the affair.

But whether the fault is with the local authorities or the department at Ottawa, it goes without saying that when a buoy of this costly kind is not doing its work, and when a ship is wrecked at the place where the buoy should be showing its warning light, and when thirty-four men perish, an investigation followed by a report that makes no mention of the buoy is not a sufficient inquiry. Mr. Brodeur's department has not at the present time so high a reputation that it can afford to pass off such inquiries as a complete investigation. On the strength of such an investigation the public will hesitate to condemn the captain and officers who are no longer here to tell their own story.

A DISORGANIZED PARTY.

The Government organs explain the loss of North Essex by saying that the party was not united. This seems to mean that some Liberals voted against the Government candidate. As the riding had not elected a Conservative since 1887, and always gave large Liberal majorities, this may be the case. But it is a little remarkable that while the Government press and political leaders are having so much to say about Conservative division this striking evidence of disorder in their own ranks should have come upon them.

It is also interesting to notice that after all that has been said of Conservative revolts, divisions and impending disasters in British Columbia, a list of nominations comes, showing that in half a dozen constituencies the Liberals have no candidates, while the Government is contesting every seat. Even Hawthornthwaite, the Socialist leader, who has steadily supported the McBride Government, and has spoken in favor of the Government railway policy, is allowed to appear as the only candidate other than the regular Conservative nominee in Nanaimo.

A CIVILIZING INFLUENCE.

The Canadian Pacific Company is doing its share to make the country blossom as the rose. Wherever this corporation has a railway station, it has a flower garden. Not only on the Pacific coast, where vegetation abounds, and in eastern Canada, which delights in bloom, but amid the Rocky Mountains, on the highest and driest prairie, amid the fire swept desolations of the region north of Lake Superior, the places where the C. P. R. train stops are bright with blossom from early spring until late autumn. Thus the rancher, who might forget, the wheat grower, who is in danger of neglecting the charms and graces of life, the lumberman, the prospector, the nature lover in some cheerless spot is reminded that nature has something to offer him to make his life brighter, gay and more various. Who knows how many flower beds are found as the result of this example? The Canadian Pacific is a great civilizer.

THE OPPOSITION AND THE NAVY MEASURES.

It is understood that there was a free and candid discussion at the conference of Conservative members as to the course to be taken on the Government's navy programme. The greatest difficulty in dealing with the case is that the opposition does not know what the Government programme is. Nor is it certain that the ministers themselves have settled the question and prepared their measure. In these circumstances, it is all right for Conservative members to have a frank interchange of opinion among themselves, but they are not called upon individually or collectively to inform the Government what they will do in all possible contingencies of Government action. If Sir Wilfrid Laurier will recall a famous Torres Vedras illustration of his own he will appreciate the position.

MR. BOURASSA GAINS ONE.

As a result of yesterday's elections for the Quebec Legislature, Mr. Bourassa will have one more supporter next session. He has not been able to transfer to Mr. Lafamme the St. James division of Montreal where he beat Premier Gouin last year. Mr. Bourassa was returned for two ridings, and resigned St. James, retaining St. Hyacinthe. Mr. Lafamme, who is a Liberal, but not a supporter of Mr. Gouin, would have been a valuable member of the Legislature if he could have polled Mr. Bourassa's vote. Mr. Bourassa made an attempt to capture the other two vacant seats for associates of his own, and in the case of St. Saviour he was successful.

A queer situation has arisen in British Columbia. Last winter the Provincial Legislature revised the judicial system, creating a supreme court. Then it became the duty of the Dominion Government to appoint the judges. The Government has delayed this proceeding for six months. A court without judges is not of much service, but Sir Wilfrid is waiting for a number of his friends to contest the provincial election. Some of them will be defeated, and a judgeship will be satisfying to them.

The Bangor and Aroostook Railway estimates the potato crop of Aroostook County and contiguous districts in the territory to be 22,000,000 bushels. The value is given at \$12,000,000, which is represented to be the best crop ever grown in that region. Nothing is said of the disease, but the rains of New Brunswick did not stop at the boundary.

The Moncton Transcript had eight editorial articles and paragraphs concerning the West Middlesex election in which the Government held a seat that it had before. The North Essex overturn in which a seat was lost that the Government has carried ever since it took office, gets less notice.

It is hoped that one result of political reform in Turkey may be the discovery of valuable ancient manuscripts. The Eastern scholars have not had much opportunity to examine the documents and records that may be about Constantinople.

THE HEAT FEELS GOOD.
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PITHY PARAGRAPHS OF LOCAL INTEREST

County Court Chambers.
In the County Court Chambers yesterday morning judgment was signed in the case of the Toronto Lithographing Co., Ltd., vs. Harry A. Palmer, for \$60. Messrs. Hanington and Hanington for the plaintiff.

Arrested at Amherst.
Martha Mountain, who decamped on Monday morning last with several articles of wearing apparel from the home of Mr. A. C. L. Tapley on Douglas Avenue, has been apprehended at Amherst by the police of that town. Chief Clark received word from Amherst yesterday morning that the girl had been arrested. Detective Killen left the noon train to bring the accused back to this city.

In the Police Court.
In the police court yesterday morning Henry Jones, reported by the police for washing windows between 10:30 and 11 o'clock on Thursday morning, pleaded guilty. A fine of \$2 was imposed. Gilbert Lauchner, who was remanded a week ago on a charge of shooting Joshua Taylor, was further remanded. F. E. Porter, druggist, 303 Union street, is reported by Officer Charles Marshall for selling cigarettes to a minor on the 11th inst. Sergeant Campbell reported Robert A. Montague for doing business as manager and salesman of the W. H. Johnson Co., Ltd., on Market Square, without a license; also H. C. Johnson for acting as clerk for the same firm without a license as required by the city's by-law. Mr. S. E. Morrell appeared for the defendants. The case against the defendants is dismissed as it was known that he was a commercial traveller. Mr. Montague was ordered to procure a license.

Far The Canadian Bible Society.
Hon. J. G. Forbes and Rev. Gordon Dickie, of St. John, will spend Sunday on the border in the interests of the Canadian Bible Society. In the morning Judge Forbes will preach in the Methodist church at Milltown, and Rev. Gordon Dickie in the Congregational church at Milltown. In the evening Judge Forbes will preach in the Methodist church, St. Stephen, and Rev. Mr. Dickie in the Union street Baptist church.

Grain Inspector Here.
Owing to the large amount of grain that has passed out of St. John, and in anticipation of a still greater amount as a result of the farmers holding back a considerable amount of their wheat, an inspector will be placed here for a month. Mr. A. G. McBean, grain inspector, has advised all grain exporters that this inspector will remain at St. John for at least a month, and for a longer period should the volume of grain inspected here justify such a course.

The Cuban Trade.
Large quantities of potatoes are now being received and stored in the city warehouse on the Pettigill wharf. The potatoes are for shipment by the St. John, Boston and Cuba steamship line and the Munson line. The cargo, of the Boston line, will sail from St. John on the 25th while the Borna, of the Elder-Dempster Line, will sail from here on the 22nd for Havana and Mexican ports.

NEWS OF A DAY

Sent Up.
Philadelphia, Nov. 12.—Because he gave the "distress signal" of the Odd-fellows in court here Adolph Moskovitz, plaintiff in litigation, involving a small sum of money, was sent to prison for contempt of court.

Remanded.
Perth, Nov. 12.—Tony Baskerville, the Italian prisoner, who shot and wounded a companion, Signorino, arrived here at noon today, and was brought before the magistrate and remanded until Monday.

A New Nickle.
Philadelphia, Nov. 12.—Dies for a proposed five-cent piece bearing the head of George Washington, to take the place of the coin now in circulation, have been prepared by the engravers of the United States Mint in this city.

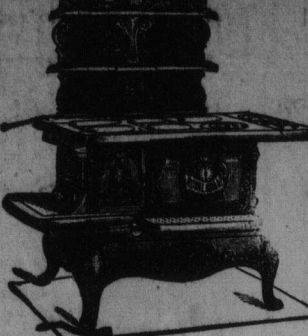
Must Demolish.
Quebec, Nov. 12.—As a result of the ruling of the railway commission, the Canadian Northern must demolish several miles of a branch line running from the main line to the municipality of Limoulin to a point on the Montmorency river.

Have To Die.
Albany, N. Y., Nov. 12.—The court of appeals today set the week beginning January 3rd next as the time when four men, whose judgments of conviction of murder in the first degree were affirmed by the court this week, must die in the electric chair.

Imposing Ceremony.
Toronto, Ont., Nov. 12.—An imposing ceremony took place in St. Anne's Cathedral last night, when two newly appointed archdeacons and twelve canons were installed by Bishop Sweeney. Rev. Canon H. J. Cody, rector of St. John's Church, Toronto, was installed as the Archdeacon of York, and Rev. Canon C. L. Ingles, Simcoe, was installed Archdeacon of Simcoe. The rector of St. James' Cathedral, Rev. Canon H. P. Plimtree, was installed subdeacon.

Coming Mergers.
Montreal, Nov. 12.—Negotiations looking to the merger of the Dominion Steel and Coal are stated in the street to have been advanced materially in the past day or two and the negotiators are said to be very close together. James Ross will leave the city before Sunday for the south and the other party is expected to arrive before. The North Essex overturn in which a seat was lost that the Government has carried ever since it took office, gets less notice.

Lord Roberts' Act.
Ottawa, Nov. 12.—The thoughtfulness of Field Marshal Earl Roberts is evidenced in the receipt of a letter from the field marshal, asking the Militia Department to forward to Cadet C. Mackenzie, of Prince Edward Island, a framed and autographed



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THE NEW CITY HALL

To the Editor of The Standard:
Sir:—St. John has one of the finest sites imaginable for a combined Court House, City Hall, Municipal Offices &c., to be built arching over King St. East and fronting on King Square, extending one or two hundred feet each way and set back sufficiently so that grass terraces could cover any disadvantage from the slope of the ground in front.
It could extend back towards Wentworth street or as far as required. Only a few graves would have to be moved in the corner of the Burying Ground, and that side can be kept open for all time.
To guard against the building being crowded or dwarfed by the sky scrapers that will come in ten or twenty years in this locality if an adequate building is erected, all the lots south of the court and engine houses should be acquired by the Government or municipality and the buildings thereon removed when deemed advisable. The property can now be acquired at moderate prices. In ten or twenty years hence it may be worth ten or twenty times the value. Until required, it will bring in fair interest on the investment and any way it will be a good bonded investment for posterity.
A high triple archway should carry the street through the centre of the building with a large barrel hall above. This central part might be topped with a truncated pediment surmounted by a monumental group of Loyalists defending and swearing allegiance to the British Crown. Arms, set on high above them and with a central flagstaff behind, swivelling with the wind and carrying a mammoth British-Canadian Jack.
The crest and slopes of the pediment should be formed of battlements or flamboyant cresting with embattled roof of similar design. At the back a concrete roof garden should be provided capable of carrying trees planted and growing thereon should the skyline of the building ever be interfered with by buildings on the high ground behind it.
The pediment could be filled in with historic or allegorical figures moulded or carved as, and when, they could be afforded.
At first it might not be well to go to the expense of all the desired carvings, but if it is decided to have these of stone they should be blocked out in the rough to be completed in the future. In this way an adequate monument would be erected to our Loyalist founders to breed patriotism in their successors and acclaim the brave and confident motto:
O fortunate quorum jam mania surgerunt—Oh fortunate they whose walls are rising.
Brave words when the Loyalists had given up nearly everything for King and British institutions and were building amid unaccustomed hardships and privations, but with undaunted courage and confidence in their future.
ISA a British citizen.
St. John, N. B., Nov. 12, 1909.

photo of Lord Roberts, together with a water color sketch of the Lord Roberts Boys' Bungalow at Blisley. These Lord Roberts is sending as an evidence of his sympathy for Cadet Mackenzie, who last August had the misfortune to break his leg in jumping off an electric car at the rifle range at Rockfield during the competition for the Lord Roberts trophy for cadets.

Attempted Escape.
Moncton, Nov. 12.—With the Maritime express speeding along at 35 miles an hour, an Indian named Bernard made a thrilling dash for liberty by jumping through the car window at Gloucester Junction this morning. He was in charge of Sheriff Stewart, of Dalhousie, who was taking him to Dorchester, for a two year term for stealing money from a fellow Indian. The man was securely handcuffed and had asked permission to go to the closet which was given. Nothing was thought of the matter until the train slowed up, and the fireman came hurrying back saying he saw a man fall through the window and roll down the embankment. So far the Indian has not been captured.

WEDDINGS.
Armstrong—Rosemond.
Mr. Thomas Godart Armstrong, of this city, and Miss Katharine Rosemond of Lorneville, were united in marriage on Thursday evening at the residence of Rev. L. A. McLean, 109 Paradise Row. Rev. Mr. McLean was the officiating clergyman, and the couple were unattended. Mr. and Mrs. Armstrong left yesterday for Boston where they will reside.

Captain Weldon McLean, son of Col. H. H. McLean, arrived in the city this week for a two months furlough. Mr. Percy Thompson returned from Montreal on Friday.

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FUNERAL OF MRS. MASSEY AT FREDERICTON
Fredericton, Nov. 12.—The funeral of the late Mrs. Massey, wife of Major G. W. H. Massey, manager of the Bank of Montreal, took place this afternoon from her residence. At Christ Church Cathedral the Church of England burial service was conducted by Dean Schofield. Interment was at the Rural Cemetery. The mourners were Major Massey, his son William, and the staff of the Bank of Montreal. The pall-bearers were V. H. Norton Taylor, D. Lee Babbitt, Lt. Col. T. G. Leggie, Lt. Col. Surgeon J. W. Bridges, Capt. E. L. duDonalde and Ald. J. F. Winslow.

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FUNERALS.
Mrs. Katherine Purdie.
The funeral of the late Mrs. Katherine Purdie took place from the Mater Misericordiae Home at 2:30 o'clock yesterday afternoon. Rev. Dr. O'Reilly read the burial service. Interment was made in the new Catholic cemetery.

Teacher:—"Now, tomorrow, what would a small boy say?" "She Shop Assistant (try it on before the customer)." "No, (London Opinion.)"