

The Evening Times and Star

ST. JOHN, N. B., OCTOBER 28, 1913.

The St. John Evening Times is printed at 17 and 19 Waterbury Street every evening (Sunday excepted) by the St. John Times Printing and Publishing Co., Ltd., a company incorporated under the Joint Stock Companies Act.

Telephone—Private branch exchange connecting all departments, Main 2117.

Subscription prices—Delivered by carrier \$3.00 per year, by mail \$3.00 per year in advance.

The Times has the largest afternoon circulation in the Maritime Provinces.

Special Representatives—Frank R. Northrup, Brunswick Building, New York; Advertising Building, Chicago.

British and European representatives—The Clougher Publishing Syndicate, Grand Trunk Building, Trafalgar Square, England, where copies of this journal may be seen and to which subscribers intending to visit England may have their mail addressed.

Authorized Agents—The following agents are authorized to canvass and collect for The Evening Times: H. Cecil, ex-12, S. K. Smith, Miss Helen W. Hallett, and J. E. Cogswell.

A LEADER NEEDED

If St. John gets its rights in this matter of the mail steamships, it will be in spite of the apathy of some who should be leaders in the struggle. The question was discussed by the city council yesterday, but no resolution was adopted nor any step taken to give expression to public feeling in a matter which vitally affects the future of this port. Mayor Frink apparently sees nothing for us to do but to hasten as much as possible the work of wharf building. Commissioner Agar has long entertained the idea that Halifax would get the mail business. Commissioner Wigmore agrees with the view of Mayor Frink that the city can do nothing. Commissioner McLellan regards the C. P. R. as masters of the situation and of the government, and therefore the city of St. John is quite helpless. Not one member of the city council gave expression to the feelings of the citizens at large. On the other hand they won the high praise of the Standard, which is more eager to save the credit of the government at Ottawa than it is to assert the rights of the city of St. John. It may be hoped that the members of the city council will yet see the error of their ways, and realize that it is to them the city should look for actual leadership in this crisis.

But there was another meeting in the city yesterday. Mr. L. P. D. Tilley, M. P., addressed the North End Conservative Club. He told them that Mr. Hazen did not know what was going on when the mail steamships were being switched from St. John to Halifax. This is equivalent to saying that Mr. Hazen is an utterly useless representative of this city at Ottawa. The situation is therefore all the more serious. We have a city council which fails to take the leadership in a fight for the rights of the city. We have a representative in the government who is not consulted when a deadly blow is being struck at his constituency. And we have political leaders in this city who are so grossly partisan that they betray the city's interests in their efforts to divert public attention from the actual state of affairs.

It is not time for business men of St. John who have a large stake in the city, and who are not concerned about the welfare of politicians or trimmers, to get together and find a practical and forceful medium of presenting, not only to the government, but to the people of Canada, the rightful claims of the port of St. John in this matter? All this talk about the need of more wharves, which will be raised upon with joy by the representatives of a rival port, should have been heard early last spring, when an effort was being made to get public sentiment, regardless of politics, behind an effort to rush the construction of needed harbor works. It is grossly unfair to St. John to lay the emphasis now upon the lack of facilities, as if that were responsible for the switching of the mail steamships to Halifax, since the facilities at Halifax for handling the mail steamships are not as good as those at West St. John. This fact is beyond dispute.

What St. John needs at the present time is not a leader who will sit down and say that nothing can be done, or a leader who is thinking more about partisanship than of the welfare of St. John. The need is for a leadership which will boldly assert the rights of this port, declare to the people of Canada that these rights have been violated, and fight for St. John until justice is done.

LIBERALS INSULTED

At Ottawa yesterday Sir Richard McBride so far forgot the courtesy which is due to others, and the rule which keeps political discussion out of the Canadian Clubs, as to denounce the senate and tell the members of the Ottawa Canadian Club that Canada should send the thirty-five million dollars of naval tribute money to the Admiralty. Sir Richard also said again what would, no doubt, be denied by a majority of the people of his province, that British Columbia is behind him in making this assertion. Sir Richard said that this great question should not be taken into politics, but should be discussed on a higher plane. That is quite true. The question was taken out of politics in 1909, when Sir Wilfrid Laurier and Mr. Borden and the followers of each unanimously agreed upon a naval policy for Canada. Mr. Borden, two years later, repudiated his former attitude in order to gain the support of the Nationalists of Quebec, who were utterly opposed to any naval expenditure. Later he adopted the policy of tribute. The senate, representing far more truly than the government the spirit of the Canadian people, has held up the bill, until such time as the people may declare themselves at the polls. If Sir Richard McBride wants the naval question taken out of politics, let him urge Mr. Borden to go to the country and the matter will very quickly be settled.

Eighteen days more until November 15. After that date, if nothing is done meanwhile, St. John may bid good-bye to the mail steamships. Only eighteen days.

AFFAIRS IN BRITAIN

Public ownership is steadily growing in favor in Great Britain. A London cable says that a movement is now afoot for the nationalization of the canals as well as the railways. A royal commission has reported in favor of such action, and incidentally it has been discovered that the railway companies own half of the canals and are therefore in a position to reduce competition to a minimum. The Land Inquiry Committee in its report on conditions in rural England shows the crying need of a complete change in the system, not only in regard to wages and hours of labor, but housing. The conditions are utterly bad, both from the social and national point of view. The revelations made in this respect justify the land reform scheme proposed by Mr. Lloyd George. It is pointed out that rural England has been changing, and becoming a great sporting reserve, instead of being more and more the centre of a prosperous agricultural industry. If Mr. Lloyd George can bring about such a change as will restore the rural population and give it decent housing and fair wages, he will have proved himself England's greatest benefactor of modern times.

Another year is drawing toward a close, and the town planning commission is still in the womb of the future.

So the Hon. J. D. Hazen did not know that his constituency was getting a black eye, and is now quite helpless to provide a remedy. How sad.

Some Conservatives are seeking to divert attention from the loss of the mail steamships by predicting great things for St. John next winter. What assurance have they that St. John will not get a more severe blow next winter than it has received this season? The C. P. R. will still have the whip hand, and Mr. Hazen will not know what is going on.

St. John is greatly in need of somebody to take up the question of harbor improvements on the east and west sides, the provision of terminals for the Grand Trunk Pacific and Canadian Northern, the completion of the St. John Valley Railway, and some other very important matters, and keep them constantly, not only before the federal and provincial authorities, but before the people of Canada, who are all interested in the rapid development of this national port.

The federal government is losing no time, now that it has settled down to the business of equipping the port of Halifax for trade, of which some at least is to be secured by Halifax at the expense of St. John. We are told that the minister of railways and canals, having received the tenders, will at once close the contract for the construction of 6,000 feet of quay wall, and for considerable dredging, the total cost to be in the vicinity of \$3,000,000.

An Ottawa syndicate are proposing to acquire building lots on a car line outside the present limits of the city and erect thereon six-room two-story cottages suitable for residence all the year round. Each house would have a cellar and would be of modern construction. The company estimate that the houses could be sold at \$2,500 each, a small sum being paid down and the balance remaining on mortgage at five per cent, to be reduced by monthly payments. The interesting feature of the plan is that those who propose to organize the company are workmen, and they desire to interest at least as many as one hundred shareholders in the proposition.

Mr. Borden last week narrowly escaped being an accessory to an act which would have made the old flag a byword among the nations. It occurred at Quebec. The premier was about to lay the corner stone of the new River St. Charles locks. The band had played "Hail to the Chief." The people had bravely cheered, and the premier was about to deposit certain newspapers and coins and the like in a crevice of the structure. Just at the critical moment the horrible discovery was made that among the coins was a fifty cent piece of the currency of the United States. The attention of the premier was immediately called to the embarrassing situation, and he quickly drew back while one of the officials substituted a Canadian coin. It may be hoped that a photographer got the expression on the patriotic countenance of Mr. Borden when the awful discovery was made. Posterity will want to know exactly how the great Empire saver looked at this critical moment in his career.

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BIRTHDAYS OF NOTABILITIES

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 28

Alphonse Verville, M. P., labor party leader in the House of Commons, was born in Cote St. Paul, P. Q., on Oct. 28, 1864. He is a plumber and steamfitter by trade and is now business agent for the plumbers' union of Montreal. He was elected for Maisonneuve in 1906 and still represents this seat.

The Hon. Arthur Globensky, who was brought into prominence during the Thaw incident, and who has been judge of the Supreme Court of Quebec since 1910, is sixty-three years of age today. He was born in St. Eustache, Que.

John Stuart Buchan, one of Montreal's prominent lawyers, was born in St. Andrews, Que., on Oct. 28, 1852.

LIGHTER VEIN

The Woman—Here's a wonderful thing. I've been reading of a man who reached the age of 40 without learning how to read or write. He met a woman, and for her sake he made a scholar of himself in two years.

The man—That's nothing. I know a man who was a profound scholar at 40. Then he met a woman, and for her sake he made a fool of himself in two days.

It was a summer hotel and the baby, being warm and fretful, cried.

"Tut tut! We can't disturb our neighbors this way," the wond father said, taking the child in his arms. "Let me sing him to sleep."

He sang and straightway came a knock at the door and these words:—

"There's a sick lady next door, and if it's all the same to you, would you mind letting the baby cry instead of singing to it?"

A certain little girl in East Cleveland has been ill for some time. Not so terribly ill, but enough so that she couldn't go to school and had to get a great deal of petting and indulgence.

The other day she said to her mother:—

"Mama, I want papa to buy me a dog. Not a little dog but a great, big bulldog."

"Well, dearie," smiled the mother, "we have to see about that after a while."

"No, I want it right now."

"Don't you think you'd better wait till you're well?"

"No, mama, I don't. The sicker I am the more likely papa will be to buy it for me."

"I'm going to start an anti-noise association," said the man who is always promoting something.

"How will you go about it?"

"Well, the first thing is to get the public interested. I have already engaged half a dozen speakers and a brass band."

A physician was driving through a village when he saw a man amusing a crowd with the antics of his trick dog. The doctor pulled up and said: "My dear man, how do you manage to train your dog that way? I can't teach mine a single trick."

The man glanced up with a simple rustic look and replied:—"Well, you see, it's this way: You have to know more'n the dog or you can't learn him nothin'."

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THE COST OF BAD ROADS
Montreal Financial Times—Montreal and Quebec lost easily a million dollars this summer owing to the roads of this province being such as to prevent all but the most courageous of American motorists from coming up here. Not in hard cash, of course, but in the inestimable value of getting rich Americans familiarized with our country and its possibilities.

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