

## The St. John Standard

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ST. JOHN, N. B., TUESDAY, JANUARY 11, 1921.

## THE GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS

It is earnestly to be hoped that the rumor reported from Ottawa that there is a possibility of the Canadian Government Railways reverting to private ownership, will turn out to be true. Public ownership of the railways has some good features, but it also has many bad ones. Among the former may be mentioned the claim that the rights of the public are better safeguarded; that as the public provides the plants and physical assets, they also reap the profits that are to be obtained. Further that private ownership of public utilities creates a monopoly under which the public suffers; that under public ownership, rates can be kept down to a bare paying basis; and that generally, public ownership is more or less of a guarantee of efficiency.

On the other hand advocates of private ownership maintain that under this system greater efficiency is obtained; that while rates may in some cases be higher, there is no resort to general taxation to discharge deficits incurred in operation; that policies which cannot be kept wholly out of public ownership—have no effect on private concerns; and that if a claim arises against a privately owned concern, it can be carried to the courts and satisfaction obtained, something which can seldom be done in the case of a publicly owned utility.

The Canadian public is getting pretty well tired of the everlasting deficits which crop up year after year in the balance sheet of the Government Railways. Notwithstanding a forty per cent. increase in freight rates some few months ago, the C. N. R. is piling up a deficit of a million dollars every week, with not the slightest indication that any improvement may be looked for. This view is taken by some people that the construction of affairs is immaterial; that the prime object of the railway is to serve the people's convenience, and that the question of cost is a secondary one. The Canadian Pacific is also operated for the public convenience, but it is not so far behind at the rate of a million or so a week in the effort and no one will contend that C. P. R. efficiency is not at least as great as that of the C. N. R.

It cannot be truthfully asserted that Government ownership of railways in this country has become a howler success; in fact it is not at all difficult to prove the contrary. Whether the Intercolonial Railway, the construction and operation of which was one of the terms of Confederation, could be transferred to private ownership, we are not in a position to say; that section of the National Railways might have to remain a Government charge. But all others can very profitably be handed over to private interests to take care of, then, if a paying traffic is to be had, an efficient service must be provided.

## WEST PETERBORO

Mr. J. H. Burnham, ex-M. P., who wishes to become a candidate in West Peterboro at the forthcoming by-election, but cannot get a nomination, announces his intention of applying to the court for a mandamus to compel the Liberal Conservative party to hold a convention to select a candidate. Mr. Burnham probably it would seem, has never heard of the old saying: "You can take a horse to water, but you can't make him drink."

Mr. Burnham was until a short time ago Unionist member for W. Peterboro, but resigned his seat as a protest against the continuance of the present Parliament, which he claims was elected for war purposes only and should have been dissolved long ago. There are those who aver that Mr. Burnham was more plague than profit to his party, which should consider itself well rid of him. Apparently this is the opinion of the ruling powers in the party at any rate, for they have chosen another candidate, and left Mr. Burnham out in the cold. Hence these tears, or rather threats, on his part.

No party has any particular use for a man who, while professing to be a friend, does it more harm than an avowed enemy would do, and although he still maintains that he is a Conservative, the party is taking a wise course in putting up another candidate. A supporter who is constantly complaining that the Government has no mandate to remain in office is better thrown on the scrap heap. If Mr. Burnham thinks that a convention would give him a nomination, after the course he has followed, there is probably a rude awakening awaiting him.

## THE EXCHANGE SITUATION

One of the most satisfactory features of the money market today is the greatly improved situation regarding exchange, sterling having advanced to 25.75 yesterday. The rise

in the value of the pound has been gradual, and for this reason its stability may perhaps be regarded as more certain, than might have been the case had it risen so suddenly from some spasmodic cause. This steady advance is attributed largely to lower prices of the various commodities; for it takes in many instances less than half the amount of goods to bring the same amount of goods as was the case some months ago. But this is only one of the factors; and the fact that Europe is rapidly recovering from the chaos of the last few years and is making solid progress in the work of reconstruction, is another leading factor. Some improvement in the value of the Canadian dollar has also taken place in the last few days, last night's quotation in New York funds being \$7.53. Present conditions may favor the Canadian exporter but tell heavily against the importer, much the larger business at present. The Canadian dollar, however, may be expected to follow the British pound as it has in the past.

## AN OMINOUS OUTLOOK

Senator W. C. Edwards, the veteran lumberman of the Ottawa valley, in an interview in The Canadian Forestry Magazine, predicts that within 15 years Eastern Canada will be securing most of its timber from British Columbia, unless immediate and vigorous steps for strict conservation are taken. He is pessimistic as to securing any action for the reason that the Canadian public has been taught to believe that Canadian forest resources are inexhaustible. The sole remedy, he declares, is to pass legislation permitting the cutting of only matured or diseased timber. This temporarily might mean increase in timber prices, but would save disaster in the end.

The senator says: "I am quite definite when I prophesy that within five years Eastern Canada will be drawing the bulk of its sawn lumber from British Columbia and will be paying for it through the nose on an account of high freight rates. The consumer, not the lumberman or the land holder, is the man who will pay the price of forest exhaustion."

"I have almost given up considering a remedy as long as the mass of the Canadian people look upon their natural resources as the 'free gift' on earth, and the degree of exploitation to date as a mere trifling percentage of what can be undertaken in the future. I have not very much hope, therefore, in face of the nefarious convictions of the Canadian citizen, that any scheme of conservation will be put under way. To one in my position, who knows by first hand evidence the true condition of the forest resources east of the Rockies, and who sees the present ever increasing tendency to over-exploit our timber areas, it appears that we must pursue our happy way until disaster is upon us. Then we will have no alternative except to satisfy our daily timber requirements by paying the bill of the British Columbia salesmen."

"The only remedy for timber land depletion is to gauge the cut by the ability of that particular timber area to sustain production. I mean that we should only cut the mature and diseased timber."

The plain facts seem to be that there is a limit to the timber resources of Canada, and unless drastic conservation measures are taken it will not be many years before the Dominion will find an actual scarcity of good lumber.

## THINKING STRAIGHT

A good many people approach an idea like a moth attracted by an arc light. They beat their brains against it, fly all around it, and eventually go on to something else, quite convinced that with so much fuss something really important must have been accomplished. But the idea remains suspended just where it was before. With people of this nature the simplest things become complex. Their natural element is confusion, and where they do not find it they create it. They forget that success consists so largely of thinking straight, of keeping one's thoughts clamped to the subject in hand, of retaining a fine clarity of mind. The world is hungry for men and women who can be faithful to one thought at a time.

A new law going into effect in England this month requires all children up to the age of 15 years to attend night school a week at continuation schools. Provision is made that employers shall permit the attendance during daylight of all employees within the age limit, which is a necessary thing, if the health of the youngsters is not to be sacrificed.

Commercial candor is sometimes fraught with pitfalls. For example, this open letter of an automobile factory: "The demand for our machines at present exceeds the output. We are not surprised, but you will be when you use one."

## I SEE IN THE STANDARD

Lord Decies has offered to be a candidate for the new Parliament of Ireland established under the recent Home Rule legislation. Lord Decies is well known in Canada and the United States; he is a frequent visitor to the Dominion, while his marriage to Helen Vivian Giddie, daughter of the late George Jay Gould, the American millionaire, makes him a familiar figure in the cities south of the border.

He was born in 1866, the son of the third baron in the line. His pedigree is an Irish one, so there is an explanation for his offer to be a candidate for the new Commons. He has been a soldier all his life, entering the army in 1887, when he served in the Boer War. He was in the South African War he held a command in the Imperial Yeomanry, while later in the campaign in Somaliland he commanded the Irish Horse as a Lieutenant Colonel and once won honorable mention for his services.

Lord Decies is a great sportsman and is interested in cricket, polo and racing.

## WHAT OTHERS SAY

Yes, Let's See It.  
Prof. Albert A. Michelson, of the University of Chicago, who has excited the astronomical world by measuring Alpha Orionis, which he found to be 27,000,000 times as big as the sun and 30,000,000,000 times as big as the earth, would add greatly to the public interest if he would bring it around where the people can get a close look at it.—Philadelphia Ledger.

The Dregs of Bombay.  
Mahomedans in Bombay have started an anti-drinking campaign to "reform" their co-religionists. They are picketing the liquor shops, and the Moslems found coming out, they have their faces blackened and are marched through the streets.

One man found drunk was decked with a "garland" of old shoes and taken round the city by an escort bearing empty oil tins.—London Daily Mail.

A Surprise For Her.

Ex-President Taft told at a recent literary dinner, a story about a colored man. "A colored man," he said, "was picked at Mrs. Brown asked for and asked for a job of work. 'What's your name?' Mrs. Brown asked, for the liked the fellow's looks. 'Mah named as P. O. Anderson,' he answered, eh?" said Mrs. Brown. "I suppose some of your family once worked for Edgar Allan Poe—did they?" The colored man's eyes bulged, and he stared at himself a resounding whack on the chest. "Why, ma'am," he said, "Ah is Edgar Allan Poe."—Argonaut.

Something New.

We note in the news that a couple of beings from Ottawa who are known as agronomists, are on their way to Edmonton to attend a meeting of agronomists in that city. We are not sure just what kind of an animal an agronomist is, but it reminds us of the story of the minister down east, who inquired of the wife of an old settler if there were any Episcopalians in the country, and was informed that the skins of a lot of animals shot by her husband were nailed up on the south side of the barn, and he could go out and see for himself if there were the pelts of any Episcopalians among them.—Winnipeg Free Press.

## A BIT OF VERSE

## THE CHILDREN.

Martha Haskell Clark.

For sake of the child I dream of now  
I will set the board with my best  
Clotted cream from the Jersey cow,  
Eggs from the white hen's nest;  
Strawberries, scarlet and dew-dew,  
Piled in a cool green leaf.

When the years have kept so clear  
Such little things as these.

To smile in a golden sheaf.

Long ago, and long ago, I mind my  
berries tasted  
Sweeter for a cool green leaf from  
off the maple trees?  
Now I follow life's journey through,  
naught of love has I forgot.  
When the years have kept so clear  
Such little things as these.

For sake of the child that once was I,  
I will open the curtains white,  
That her eyes may gaze on the woods  
and sky  
In the glow of the sunset light,  
I will set the kitten beside her chair  
Asleep on a cushion red,  
And pray that a robin be singing  
In the apple boughs overhead.

Long ago, and long ago, naught I  
knew of drooping,  
Never haven could compare with  
one small country farm.  
Bless the little city feet down the  
green lane trailing,  
Keep the pathway smooth for  
them, and shelter them from  
harm.

For sake of the child I knew of old  
I set the board with my best.  
Sweet brown biscuits and butter gold,  
Eggs from the white hen's nest.  
The robin sang in the apple tree  
In the gold of the sunset skies,  
And the child that was I looked out  
at me  
Through the joy in the other's eyes.

Long ago, and long ago, I mind the  
eager coming,  
And how the small red station  
glowed against the woodland  
wild,  
The scent of sun-warmed clover  
fields, the dark bees' lazy hum,  
And the wonder, breathless glad-  
ness in the heart-beats of a child.

## Benny's Note Book

BY LEE PATZ

Pop was smoking and thinking and ma was crowshaying her crowshaying and my sister Gladis was setting there listening to her rist watch not going, and I sed, Hay pop, hay ma, hay Gladis.

Hay yourself and make it unanimous, sed pop.  
Who wants to contribute to buy a New Years dinner for poor boys? I sed.

Well well, at last he's thinking of somebody's stomach besides his own, sed pop, accept my congratulations.

Yes, sir, how much do you want to contribute pop? I sed.  
Put me down for a dollar, sed pop, who all are working for this charity?

Me and Puds Simkins and Leroy Shooster and Skinny Martin and Sid Hunt and Ed Wernick, I sed.

Well it does you all grate credit, I'll contribute 50 cents, sed ma.

I'll cheerfully donate a quarter to the cause, sed Gladis, and pop sed, Who are to be the recipients of this New Year dinner, if I may make so bold as to inquire?

Sir? I sed, and pop sed, Who are these poor boys?

Do you mean you want to know their names? I sed and pop sed, I want to know in a general way who they are, well, who are they?

Me and Puds Simkins and Leroy Shooster and Skinny Martin and Sid Hunt and Ed Wernick, I sed.

Well I'll be shot to peeces, sed pop, and ma sed, Well who ever herd of such a thing, and Gladis sed, You poor little fish, wats the matter, dont you expect to get any dinner on New Years?

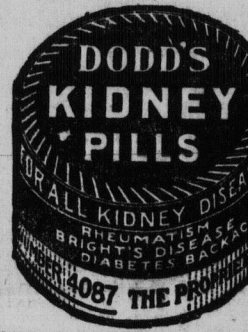
Yes, but we wanted to try a experiment, I sed, we wanted to try to not eat anything but candy all day New Years.

Cancel my subscription, sed pop, and ma sed, And mine too, and Gladis sed, And mine.

Wich I did.

## PAINTED PORTRAIT OF QUEEN OF SPAIN

(Copyright, 1921, by Cross-Atlantic.)  
London, Jan. 10.—Philip de Laszlo, the once-fashionable portrait painter, seems to be emerging from the cloud that gathered about him during the war owing to rumors that he was an enemy spy. He has just completed a new portrait of the Queen of Spain, which King Alfonso inspected during his recent visit to London. De Laszlo, who is a Hungarian, before the war rivalled John S. Sargent and Sir John Lavery as the limner of society beauty, and to be painted by him was to be acknowledged as a reigning belle.



## THE LAUGH LINE

Cheerfully Subscribed.  
Mrs. Yearwood—Oh, Jack, father has sent a \$1,000 cheque for our new baby. Wasn't that fine of him?  
Yearwood—I should say it was. I'll write him at once and thank him for his contribution to the Fresh Her Fund.

Abundantly Proved.  
Cop—Here! Here! you can't stop here, you know.  
Motorist (in stalled car)—Can't, eh? You don't know this car.

Met the Emergency.  
Hotel Clerk—The gentleman in 201 says that his room is full of steam from the laundry.  
Proprietor—He does? Add \$1.50 to his bill for a Turkish bath.

Professional Touch.  
Visitor (to police inspector)—I say, inspector, can I see the man who was locked up for breaking into my house? Inspector—What do you wish to see him about?  
Visitor—I want to find out how he did it without waking my wife.

An Important Course.  
In an Ottawa family recently the engagement of a daughter was announced. A friend called was met at the door by the colored maid, who announced: "No'm; Miss Alice ain't at home dis afternoon—She's gone down to de class."

"What class?" inquired the visitor.  
"You know Miss Alice is gwine to be mailed in de fall," explained the maid "an' she's taking a course in domestic science."



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## TABERNACLE GETS

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Presentation Made Last

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Charlotte Street Socie

The St. John City and County in connection with the Young Peoples' Union was last presented to Tabernacle by R. H. Parsons, the county president, and was by the winners amid much and will be held by them on the Charlotte street church