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"TAXPAYER'S LETTER."

In another column "Taxpayer" dis-

cusses the London and Port Stanley

Railway question in a forcible and

suggestive manner. The writer, whose

name would add weight to his letter if

he cared to disclose it, aptly describes

the electrification scheme as one

man's whim, and warns the city of

the danger of repeating the error

which kept London off the main line

of a great trunk railway. Claiming

that no alternative to electrification

is before the citizens, he cites as a

model the New York and Long Branch

Railway. This line, 38 miles long, is

leased by three steam roads, with

mutually satisfactory results. The own-

ers of the line are not obliged to own

or operate rolling stock, but they ap-

point a superintendent who controls

the trains of the operating com-

panies.

An alternative to electrification

in the form of a lease to a steam rail-

way, with differential rates which

would give shippers the full advantage

of lake navigation, has been always

open to the city. Negotiations with the

Canadian Northern were broken off

by the advocates of electrification in

control of the London and Port Stan-

ley Railway Board. They have dis-

courage steam roads from making

bids for the lease, by seeking to create

the impression that nothing but elec-

trification would be considered. An

arrangement to give all the steam

roads running rights over the London

and Port Stanley has been consis-

tently favored in these columns. The

plan suggested in "Taxpayer's" letter

has striking advantages in simpli-

fying the problem of civic ownership

and control. The city council would do

well to consult the experience of the New

York and Long Branch Railway. If

the majority of the aldermen will not

consider any plan other than elec-

trification, and refuse to give citizens

the fullest information or any freedom

of choice, the business community should

take the matter into its own hands.

NAVAL VOLUNTEERS.

A movement worthy of notice has

commenced in Victoria, B. C. It is

nothing less than the enrollment and

training of a volunteer force for a

Canadian navy. It is proposed that

these men shall have weekly drill

to begin with, under instructions from

the naval yard, and if the movement

succeeds as is expected, training ships

will be provided where the men shall

receive a regular course in seamanship

and be fully equipped for naval

service. Already a number have joined,

and the promoters are confident

that in a very short time there will

be a couple of hundred enrolled in

Victoria alone. Then the matter will

be taken up in Vancouver, New West-

minster, Nanaimo, Prince Rupert, and

all other Pacific ports.

The movement seems praiseworthy,

from a Liberal's point of view. But

the peculiar feature of it is that it

has the hearty support of the Conser-

vatives. The Colonist, the leading

Government organ, devotes considerable

editorial space to its advocacy,

and hopes "that the public will accord

it their hearty support, and use

every effort to encourage recruiting."

It states further that the proposition

was laid before Mr. Hazen, the min-

ister of marine, in his recent visit to

that section, and "he is understood to

view it very favorably." This is cer-

tainly somewhat astonishing. The

Premier has stated that Canada would

not be able to do anything in the way

of a local navy for twenty-five or fifty

years. The Montreal Star, the most

pronounced anti-Canadian-navy paper

in Canada, tells us that the only pos-

sible policy is one of naval contribu-

tion to Great Britain, and that a Cana-

dian navy is neither practicable nor

advisable. Several Conservative mem-

bers of parliament have publicly an-

nounced their adherence to this doc-

trine. The Colonist and all the other

Conservative papers and politicians of

British Columbia are supporting the

Government. Even Sir Richard Mc-

Bride, the provincial premier, who was

most violent in his denunciation of the

Liberal Government because it did

not provide a fleet unit, Dreadnaught

and all, for the Pacific coast, de-

clared only a few days ago that he

was in hearty accord with Mr. Borden

in his naval contribution policy. And

yet here are these people out west

talking about getting up a naval vol-

streets in sailor jackets and wide

trousers?

The fact is the British Columbia

Conservatives are in a very uncon-

fortable position. They have been

clamoring for a Pacific fleet, but party

loyalty compels them to support a

policy of tribute to Britain, and no

navy in Canada for another genera-

tion. It must be rather disagreeable

to them. They want the Liberal policy, but

they have got to oppose it. It shows how

far-reaching is the influence and power

of the Nationalist contingent of the

Government. It can control not only

the ultra-imperialist Tories of Cana-

da, which may not be so difficult, but

it can also over-ride the local ambi-

tions of a section of the Dominion,

which has always been noted for its

provincialism.

Of course, this may be only another

specimen of the political trickery in-

dicated in the contribution policy. The

Nationalists opposed a Canadian navy,

because that meant practical aid to

the empire. They agreed to a nomi-

nal contribution of money, telling

the rank and file of their party that

this was only a mark of goodwill, that

the time for giving over the money

was not stated, and that there was

no likelihood anything more would be

done beyond voting it. It may be that

the Government has suggested to its

disaffected Conservative supporters in

British Columbia a policy of naval

volunteering. It will occupy the minds

of the people out there, and give them

an opportunity to wave the flag, and

make flamboyant speeches about our

brave Canadian sailors, who are pre-

pared to march through the streets in

gallant array, and aid the British Em-

pire in its emergencies by a startling

display of naval tactics in the parks

of Victoria.

THAW AND CANADIAN JUSTICE.

In the new Thaw affair Canadian

law is on its trial. By the sort of peo-

ple that love vulgarity and are at-

tracted by the criminal of note a per-

verse attempt is made to lionize the

prisoner at Sherbrooke. An impression

prevails among them that Canada is

bound to protect this man against his

pursuers. This, needless to say, is a

false conception of the role that Cana-

da has to play. Her business is to get

rid of Thaw with all the speed her law

is capable of, and the speed of that law

is on trial.

No technicalities should be allowed

to prevent the return of a certified and

homicidal lunatic to his asylum. The

man has a lot of money. If he were

a poor man the technicalities would not

have been developed to view.

Apart from mere law and justice un-

alloyed, there is nothing in Thaw's

career to make him specially the ob-

ject of sympathy. All his life he has

apparently done nothing but gratify his

sensual desires. He made it a principle

to "take his license in the field of

time" and this license helped a weak

reason to decay. There is nothing

about such a character to claim any

hospitality here except the jail or a

helping hand back to where he escap-

ed from.

Only his wealth and family station

have kept him in the public eye since

his incarceration. Even wealth seemed

to have played its last card some time

ago, and we thought we were going to

have a rest from the affair and the af-

fairs of Thaw. But a scheme is hatched

which gets him out of safekeeping and

flings him into Canada. Once again we

are forced to consider this anomalous

offspring of idleness and money and to

recall the disgusting background of

crime and immorality from which he

emerged into the limelight of prosecu-

tion and conviction. The important

point to be emphasized in Canada is

not that his lunacy is or is not ques-

tionable, but that he is a fugitive from

a justice that was strained greatly in

his favor by all accounts. He is a

criminal, lunatic or not, of a particu-

larly unsavory kind. Thaw was a flower

of wealth, and "lilies that fester smell

far worse than weeds."

It is for Canadian justice to show

that wealth cannot even delay unduly

in this country the processes of the law.

It is highly desirable to get rid of Thaw

with the utmost expedition possible

under the law. He is about the most

undesirable immigrant that has set foot

in Canada, and our courts will not gain

respect by failing to push him back

where he is wanted for permanent cus-

tody.

The list of counsel engaged by

Thaw reads like a roll-call of the Mon-

treal bar. It may not be able to pre-

vent or retard justice, but money is

certainly going to talk in this case.

The British Postmaster-General will

tour Canada in company with Mr.

Pelletier. He can learn a lot from Mr.

Pelletier which he doesn't care to

know. The British postoffice isn't

run on the Pelletier-patronage prin-

ciple.

The Vancouver Sun reports that the

Liberals of British Columbia have now

a capital organization and are in

great fighting trim. It is highly prob-

able that both the Manitoba and British

ly we are becoming a Panama. To

a vast and ever-increasing number

of his majesty's subjects the objects

the methods, the persons of these

Tammany Hall politicians are all

equally odious."

Ara the men who rule Britain, the

choice of the British people, as bad as

that? If they were, what claim would

Britain have upon Canadian loyalty?

Of course, the description is merely a

spewing of partisan venom, as ridicu-

lous as false. Yet the National Review

poses as an organ of the only simon-

pure imperialism and solicits Canadian

subscriptions on that score.

IN A WAY.

[Kansas City Journal.]

"Are you acquainted with Mrs. Hidy,

your fashionable neighbor?"

"Only in a roundabout way. Her cat

boards at my house."

A LUXURIOUS PEOPLE.

[Guelph Mercury.]

No wonder it costs more to live now

than a few years ago. Almost any

time you care to pass a shoe shine par-

lor there is a row of young men, some

of them not over 15, waiting for a shine.

While it is a commendable thing to see

a young man keeping his shoes shined,

the question suggests itself: "Why

doesn't he do it himself?" Probably afraid

that he will dirty his fingers. Perhaps it

gives him a feeling of importance to puff

a cigarette while some one cleans his

shoes for him.

THE WAY TO LOVELINESS.

[Orinda Journal.]

"Cultivate repose," says beauty ex-

pert. And let mother do the work.

THE FAN.

He said the fan was a thief.

And heaped abuse upon his name.

What is the cause of all his grief?

His home team lost a game.

Today he says the "ump" is great—

The very best beneath the sun;

Why such a sudden change of state?

Today his home team won!

ILLUSTRATED BY CUTS.

[Baltimore American.]

"The barber is a great man for

stories."

"Yes, and he illustrates them with

cuts."

BOTH DESERVING OF PRAISE.

[New Orleans Picayune.]

Schiller says that the best woman in

the one nobody talks about. He might

have also said something nice about the

woman who talks about nobody.

BILL'S IMPORTATION.

[C. R. Moore in Judge.]

We all was married out of us

What owned the Skookum mine—

But Bill, the city bachelor,