

The Evening Times and Star  
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THE PUBLIC HEALTH ACT.

The political animus of some members of municipal councils in discussing the public health act is perfectly obvious to those who know the gentlemen and their record as politicians. They would cheerfully sacrifice the public interest to score a point against the government to which they are opposed. It is the more unfortunate for the public at large that such persons are placed in a position where they do that which is injurious to the general welfare.

It is all very well to talk about retrenchment, but these partisans forget that conserving public health and saving life is retrenchment in its highest form. Thanks to the present public health act and the manner in which it is administered the percentage of deaths of infants under one year is steadily being reduced, the risk from epidemics is much less, the causes of typhoid and other diseases are being removed, and the public health is being guarded and the public health is a favorite ground of objection by the advocates of "retrenchment" is that too much money is paid for salaries. Are these gentlemen such boneheads that they do not know that officials are the stock-in-trade of any health department anywhere in the world? A board of health does not deal in houses or lands, or merchandise, or anything of that sort. It does not even employ grave-diggers. But it looks after sanitation, and it looks after medical school inspection, and it gathers the vital statistics which are the only means of revealing health conditions from year to year and showing whether we are going forward or backward. Because the city of St. John has a fire department that costs a considerable sum of money it does not insist upon having a lot of fire, but when a fire occurs the machinery is there to deal with it and prevent its spread. It is so with public health officials. They have certain duties to perform, and when an epidemic is threatened they do much more, and what their activity in such cases means in saving to the community is not to be estimated in dollars and cents.

Nor should insults be heaped upon the Red Cross for sending out nurses to do very necessary work in connection with that of the public health department. The subject is not one for levity, nor are physicians who inspect schools a fair target for facetious remarks on the part of municipal councilors.

The Standard credits people in St. John with believing they got a good service under the old board of health system at half the cost. If the old system were still in vogue the cost today would be about \$15,000 per year, but the board of health now has medical school inspection, the value of which cannot be denied. It has charge of the slaughter houses, and we do not hear the old complaints about them. It gathers vital statistics, which were not fully gathered before, and it has aided in the construction of the old system is to be a betrayal of an amazing ignorance or a pronounced political bias.

The health department makes every year a sanitary survey in every district in the province, as a safeguard against typhoid, diphtheria and other diseases. It does not multiply officials, but doubles up the duties of the three branches of its work wherever possible, so that two or in some cases one official will cover the field. In rural districts, when cases of typhoid, diphtheria or others of similar nature are reported, there is an official on the scene to take prompt action. Under the old system nobody was responsible and the disease spread.

But what is this dreadful cost which has been convulsed? The cost to a farmer with a family of five would be about two and a half pounds of butter for a whole year. Viewed from this angle one does not have to look far to find the cause of opposition to the expenditure for public health. That cause is either ignorance, gross selfishness, or a political partisanship which is stronger than regard for the public welfare. The public health department of New Brunswick has done more to give the province the right kind of publicity than any other department, and it deserves a whole-hearted support. It may suffer from the failure of some officials to do their full duty, but has anyone heard of a perfect organization? The public health act of New Brunswick will stand to the credit and the honor of the province when its detractors have been forgotten.

Quebec still balks at woman suffrage in provincial affairs. Having the federal suffrage there is no sound reason for denying women the franchise in the provincial field. But Quebec also clings to the liquor traffic. In some respects at least it is still behind other provinces.

If the farmers can get the full benefit of the concessions made by the railways in regard to fertilizers it should benefit them to a considerable extent.

The employment office opened in St. John daily proves the need of one linked up with the federal employment service.

CHINA'S GREAT TASK

While the other great powers may clear the field for the development of China without foreign intrigue or interference for selfish purposes, the Chinese must work out their own salvation under very difficult conditions. The vastness of the Chinese provinces are under military governors who have large forces under arms, and who pay little attention to the desires of the government at Peking. Aside from the drain upon the country to keep up large military establishments, their existence stands in the way of Chinese unity. Only last week one of the chief governors, Wu Pei Fu, called on the cabinet of Liang Shih Ya at Peking to resign, threatening to march on the capital if his wishes were not complied with. Liang refused, and it is said that civil war may result. The situation was referred to by Sir Robert Borden at the Washington Conference on Friday last. In supporting a resolution that the Peking government should band the forces of the different governors, he said: "The power of these governors has increased to such an extent that the central government at Peking exercises very little control over a large part of the country." A summary report of Sir Robert's further remarks says:

"The military governor has become dictator in their provinces; raised their own troops and, between fighting each other, combined at intervals to dictate to Peking, whose authority was recognized by the military chiefs as it suited their interests. There had been lacking in China the ability to organize a strong central government. He estimated there were more than a million under arms in China, and that half of the revenues of the country were used in supporting them. They were not enlisted to defend the nation, but to fight in civil war. He thought it would be a good thing if they were put to building roads and like work. Sir Robert said that China had a great civilization, a great past. She was passing through a transition from a dynastic monarchy to the development of democratic institutions. One need fear for the future of China. China would be right some of these days. But outside nations could not bring that to pass. The Chinese must work out their own political salvation. The outside nations, as they were doing at this conference, would lend a helping hand for the political regeneration of this illustrious people."

The difficulty, of course, is that while the Peking government may comply with the wishes of the powers and order a reduction of the military forces, the governors may snap their fingers at them, and as Wu Pei Fu has done, march against Peking. There is thus the possibility of civil war before the unity of China can be accomplished. The best the powers can do is to encourage the Chinese to settle their differences, and at the same time see to it that matters are not complicated by an aggressive policy on the part of any one of their own number. They can help, but it would be extreme folly to attempt to coerce.

PUBLIC OWNERSHIP PAYS.

Manitoba Free Press—"Public ownership in connection with the hydro-electric enterprise at Winnipeg has been an undisputed success, and has proved a substantial advantage to the people. The cost of electric light and power would unquestionably have been some four times as much if everything else in the last few years, but for the fact that the rates were controlled by those fixed for the people's own service." Commenting on this the Toronto Globe says—"In Ontario, too, the charges for light and power would have soared but for public ownership. And but for the new supply now provided by the Chippewa project prices would go up in the near future, because the Hydro-Electric Commission would be compelled to pay increasingly from private companies across the line to meet the Ontario demand."

Hon. Arthur Meighen won easily in Grenville, and will be in the new parliament. The Liberals were willing that he be elected without opposition, but the Progressives took the opposite view and were thoroughly beaten in a light vote. Mr. Meighen will add to the debating strength of the house, and his election gives him an advantage in the fight for the leadership of the Conservative party. It is an open secret that some of the old guard would have been quite content to see him defeated in Grenville, as there would then be a larger political world for them to bustle in.

The city council did well yesterday to reduce the harbor estimates. Let us know first what the government's plans are regarding C. N. R. terminals and traffic at this port, or what the government may be inclined to do in carrying out the long promised policy of nationalizing the port. That is the first objective, and it is not a matter for any one organization, but for the citizens as a whole.

Mrs. Thomas Robinson occupied the chair at a crusade night held last night in the vestry of the Waterloo street Baptist church by the Women's Mission. Miss Margaret Hamilton, Mrs. Silas

SONGS.

Sing me a song of gladness, that I may feel  
A glow of exquisite pleasure through me  
Cheerful as the tinkling sound of chiming  
That wafts its music in the air, en-  
chanting by its spell.

Sing me a song of hope, that I may turn  
My discouragement to hopefulness and learn  
To trust and watch and pray  
And be safely guided through the live-  
long day.

Remembering the darkest clouds are  
Just before the dawn.  
When waits all nature with the sweet  
birds' song.

Then sing me a song of love, reveal-  
ing  
All the sweetness and its bliss,  
Love of God, of home, of country:  
What can be compared to this?  
Without it this world would be  
As dreary as a storm-tossed sea.

Then sing me a song of peace, that  
Its melody fine and clear  
May cleanse my soul of every haunting  
Sorrow, how very interesting," said the  
author, "the 'die'."

JOHN KENDRICK BANGS.  
John Kendrick Bangs, humorist and lecturer, died at a hospital in Atlantic City on Saturday.

When John Kendrick Bangs was very young his father planned to make him a lawyer, but when he got older, he took the reins of life in his own hands and became an author and a humorist. He did begin the study of law, but he found his legal education in his own mind. He studied law for more than a year in his father's office. But even before he began to devote his time to literature, he had taken up a literary career at Columbia University. He was the editor of one of the college papers.

His education completed and after his brief experience with the law, Mr. Bangs became assistant editor of Life magazine, and then he was in New York, May 27, 1902. He was a son of Francis N. and Amelia Frances Bull Bangs. He was graduated from Columbia in 1883, and thereafter studied law. Although immersed in literary pursuit, Mr. Bangs found time to take an interest in politics and civic betterment. He was the Democratic candidate for mayor of New York in 1894. He was defeated. He was elected vice-president of the New York board of education in 1897. In 1899 he was a primary candidate to succeed Louis B. Goodell as members of Congress in the Portland, Me. district.

In 1918 Mr. Bangs went to France for the Y. M. C. A. and the American Committee for Devastated France. The first work by Mr. Bangs was Reginald Castle published in 1886. This was followed by The Idiot, 1887. Some of his earlier works were The Idiot, 1887, The Idiot, 1887, The Waggings of Old Tales, Tiddleywinks Tales. All these were written in the 80's.

He wrote the Tiddleywinks Poetry Books in 1890, and this was out a very few months when in Camp With a Soldier came from the press. Coffee and Repartee was printed in 1899. The Water Ghost made its appearance in 1903. Then came Three Weeks in Politics, The Idiot, Mr. Bonaparte of Corsica. The latter came from the press in 1904, and was followed in the same year by A House Boat on the St. Lawrence. Some other well-known works by Mr. Bangs were A Believable Heroine, The Pursuit of the House Boat, Paste Jewelry, The Mantelpiece Minstrel, Ghosts I Have Met, Peep at People, The Enchanted Typewriter, Cobwebs From a Literary Corner, The Idiot at Home, Olympic Nights, Uncle Sam, Trusts, Rimbaldini, Over the Plum Fuddling, Molly and the Unwise Man, and a farce, Proposal Under Difficulties.

In 1908 Mr. Bangs wrote a musical play, The Worst Man, and his next musical effort was a comedy version of The School for Scandal, which was entitled Lady Teagle. He was also the author of Tomorrowland, a musical farce. Some of his later works include The Cherry Way, which was published in 1919; Half Hours With the Idiot, 1917; From Pillar to Post, 1916; A Quest for Song, 1915.

Mr. Bangs' first wife was Agnes Lawson Hyde, whom he married on March 8, 1886. His second wife, whom he married in 1904, was Mary Blakeney Gray of New York.

"Moonshine" Gold Theory Exploded  
Berlin, Jan. 27.—The search of Professor Irving Fisher of Yale University, for "moonshine" gold came to an abrupt end when Professor Fisher was informed by an unidentified scientist that the German who had claimed the discovery of a synthetic gold process was a fraud and had a prison record.

Ald Society of that church. Those taking part in the programme were: Gregg, Mrs. Potter, Mrs. J. Frothingham, Mrs. F. Wright, Mrs. W. Kierstead, Mrs. J. Mott, Miss Agnes Pooley, Miss Ada Contes, Miss Brewster, Miss J. Kierstead and others. Rev. J. A. Swetnam gave a short address.

SLUMS EVERYWHERE  
SAID DR. HASTINGS

Told That Toronto was Free,  
But Investigation Showed  
Otherwise—Problems of  
Housing.

That one important lesson taught by the war should be taken to heart and corrected at its primary cause, was the conclusion arrived at by Dr. C. J. Hastings, medical health officer of Toronto, who, on Monday, delivered a lecture in the social service extension course being given at McGill University. The important lesson referred to by Dr. Hastings was that the proportion of from thirty to fifty per cent. defective found amongst war time recruits and drafted men should not cause any great surprise when it is known that medical school inspection reveals from fifty to seventy per cent. of children possess physical defects, altogether apart from carious teeth. In a general way, Dr. Hastings attributed these defects in children, with consequent defects in adults, to bad housing conditions and the correlated evils of ignorance and restricted revenue on the part of those compelled to reside in poor lodgings.

In opening his address, which was delivered in the lecture theatre of the chemistry building, Dr. Hastings said that had Nelson added to his memorable message: "England expects every man to do his duty," the further message: "England expects every man to do his duty," it would have been of greater historical importance. The lecturer pointed out that the health of the nation is the foundation on which rests the happiness or unhappiness of the nation. They would have saved the humiliation of learning the physical defects of their manhood, a million more men would have been available for the army, and the war would have surely terminated a year earlier.

Slums in Toronto.

In reviewing the numerous surveys that had been made, Dr. Hastings said that a Toronto inspection of slums in their first school year had revealed that fifty per cent. of the pupils were suffering from defects of vision, dental disease, poor power, brain and brawn, is the most valuable asset the nation possesses. If we are to profit by the experience of the war, and not slumber over it, we must get to the causes of physical defects and remedy them. The only treatment for tuberculosis is sunlight, fresh air, good food and regulated exercise, and such things could not be obtained in the slums of those most afflicted. In dealing with the causes of these diseases they must be proportioned to the housing, the individual and revenue.

There is always the question of what a man can afford. Limited revenue means restricted diet, clothing, housing and every activity needed for the obtaining of good health. Dr. Hastings dwelt upon the necessity for pre-natal care, asserting that early infantile mortality was due as the result of pre-natal conditions.

Coming more directly to housing conditions, Dr. Hastings said that where people said there were no slums meant that there had been no investigation, and that such people were living in a pitiful state of ignorance. There is no city of more than 100,000 population in America without slums. When I went to the health department, I was told that there were no slums in Toronto. That was in 1910. Investigation soon revealed that Toronto had as many slum problems in proportion as any other city. There were then over 17,000 tenements, just 17,000 opportunities for contamination of the fresh air. Of that number, 15,500 have been abolished, the others being on streets where sewers have not yet been built."

A Serious Reflection.

Dr. Hastings had found other conditions, such as lack of ventilation and dark rooms. "It is a reflection on our intelligence and on our civilization," he said, "that we have not taken a complete survey of the city because the problems cannot be dealt with until there is a full and proper information."

The demoralizing effects of congestion was that in an area there was a hot-bed of crime and from these places arose the principal source of juvenile delinquency. The problem must be considered in all its factors, and behind much of it was the insufficient revenue of the workers, which compelled living in such inadequate lodgings.

Dr. Hastings told of the educational work done in Toronto, where a staff of 12 public health nurses and an organization of municipal house-workers went into the homes and taught personal hygiene, chased dirt and taught the value of food. "The ignorance found is frequently pathetic. We find people eating from one-half to two-thirds of their budget on meat and at the same time using condensed milk."

In conclusion, Dr. Hastings said: "Let us make our cities, cities of homes. Nations are what the men and women are, and what their homes are, and homes are what women make them."

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The New York Fire Department will be completely motorized early in March, according to action, who says that New York's Fire Department is already "the finest in the world," holds that it ranks first not merely because it has been provided with the most up-to-date equipment, but because of the timber of the fighters who man the apparatus. Most of the officers are graduates of the Fire College maintained by the department. The substitution of the motor fire engine and truck for the old horse-drawn apparatus. Chief Kenlon says.

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When their places are filled a few weeks hence by the motor apparatus Chief Kenlon says, blue ribbons will be placed around their necks and they will be taken up-State to "pasture green" to spend their remaining days in retirement.

There are in this city only a few stations which still have the gallant horses that in days gone by provided stirring spectacles as they dashed to fires in all parts of the city. From time to time as motor vehicles have been added to the equipment, these faithful animals have to give way. This process of retirement, the same as any change in the personnel of a business organization, always has taken those animals' best consideration and left the "veterans," whose names are included on the honor roll. There are a hundred of these veteran horses left.

In thirty minutes, and this is a greater number of pieces than can be concentrated in the same length of time at any other place on the face of the earth. "Such a concentration represents the mobilization of one-sixth of the entire manual forces of the Fire Department, and one-tenth of the actual mechanical equipment."

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