

THE EVENING TIMES-STAR, SAINT JOHN, N. B., THURSDAY, JULY 22, 1926

The Evening Times-Star

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YOUR TAXES AND THE OTHER FELLOWS

An impossible situation exists in Saint John today with respect to taxation. It cannot last, because it is shot through with injustice and surcharged with irritation. It is astonishing that conditions as they are today could have lasted so long without that sort of public protest which precipitates revolutionary changes.

There is published each year from the official records a list of those individuals, firms or estates paying from fifty dollars upwards into the city treasury. A study of that list by anyone whose knowledge of the circumstances and incomes of his fellow-citizens is at all extensive produces a sense of outrage, and so soon as he has gone through the first few hundred names and has instituted comparisons his examination not only indicates but proves conclusively that a very considerable portion of the taxpayers are paying not only their own taxes but a pretty slice of the taxes of others; that evasion of taxation is a popular expedient among an amazing number of our citizens; and that many in this class are those best able to pay, that the long and growing list of defaulters is by no means made up only of those whose poverty renders it impossible for them to pay their taxes but that it contains the names of a very great number who could pay but who prefer not to do so, even though they are fully aware, as the civic authorities are, that the resulting deficit is shouldered off upon those who take the discount annually or who struggle along honestly, or perhaps under the pressure of necessities, to pay by installments.

Any small committee whose members have a dose working knowledge of conditions in Saint John, if they examine the list referred to, would find inequalities and obvious evasions which are really startling; and not a few of them, but scores and hundreds of them, examples of a character proving beyond question that our taxation plan, whatever its merits or demerits, and we know it needs revision from several angles) results in practice in the rank and file of injustice.

A proper analysis of the list would establish that men of moderate income in some instances are paying more taxes each year than other citizens whose income is double or treble theirs. But even statements are submitted, says somebody, so they are. But there are a great many men—not to say women—who regard taxation evasion, by whatever device, in much the same light that they regard smuggling, and, whatever excuse they make to themselves, the facts remain. Oaths or no oaths, the evasion is there, glaring, sticking out like a sore thumb to anyone whose knowledge of business conditions in Saint John is at all extensive.

"Of all debts men are least willing to pay the taxes," said Emerson. "What a satire this on governments." As a matter of fact, by far the greater number of Saint John taxpayers would be willing, even glad, to pay their taxes if they but felt certain that they were paying only their own taxes and not a portion of the other fellow's, if they felt assured, beyond that, that they were getting a real return for their money. Most of them have no such feeling, and most of them know only too well that we have in the community a considerable company of those individuals described by Sydney Smith as "rich who prefer to lead of infamy, however great, to any pressure of taxation, however light."

The salaries claimed by the last notch. Their incomes are known, and, as a rule, salaries are small or moderate at best. But, large or small, the salaried taxpayer, assuming that he is not among the number of defaulters, knows full well that he is paying not only his own taxes but a portion of the other fellow's, and he suffers the additional irritation of feeling that a portion of the money he pays goes for something other than efficient service.

It is not the purpose here to make any attempt to separate the sheep from the goats. It would not improve the situation to suggest that more evasion—and most evasion is undoubtedly deliberate—exists among one class of taxpayers than among another. Honesty and civic patriotism are not governed by the amount of a man's income or by his worldly status. Nor is it the purpose to suggest that any system of taxation which would be generally satisfactory could be devised. When, at long intervals, reforms are made to hammer out a revised taxation plan, one selfish interest encounters another. Real estate, always feeling itself heavily punished, suggests a heavier impost upon personal property and income. The income earner and the owners of personal property, in turn, feeling greatly oppressed by the tax burden of the day, use every endeavor to push more of the weight back upon real estate.

Everybody complains, and none is satisfied. The Archangel Gabriel could not devise a model scheme of taxation for taxes.

ALL TOGETHER—HEAVE!

"When the other fellow's shovelin' With a push that ain't all lovin', An' tryin' hard to clear you off the track; Don't like a kid, start cryin', An' don't give over tryin', But pull yourself together an'—push back."

For about three generations the Maritimes have been pushed until they are almost out of the picture. During the past year or so they have gradually made it known that they are tired of one-sided pushing. They have pushed back. The semi-fatal push is now in progress. The only justice we ask is a remedy of our present disabilities, an opportunity to thrive in the future; the only reference we desire to make to the past is to prove past injustice and inequitable treatment. We ask for nothing which will deprive our sister provinces of their fair share of the blessings of Confederation, only to enjoy a like privilege. We recall to the Dominion that it was the Maritimes that sacrificed real well-being for a Confederation which has given prosperity to all except ourselves. We remind the Dominion of the promises which have never been kept in the spirit. We will show how matters can be put right and we will demolish by examples the arguments urged in opposition to our plans. Then we must leave it to the Commission under Sir Andrew Duncan, now sitting at Halifax, and presently to sit in Saint John, to collate the evidence and submit our case to Parliament. That is our part. We have pulled ourselves together and pushed back.

The Commission has no power to remove our grievances. When it submits a report to Parliament it will have done its work and we have every reason to expect that it will be well done. In Parliament alone rests the power to right wrongs. In Ottawa it will be finally decided, it is there we must see that party politics be not allowed to insulate themselves into what is now a partisan issue. One more push. But, since it is no favor we crave a boon from any party. If by any chance some new party, hitherto unheard of, were to arrive tomorrow and sweep into power, our claims of justice and equity would be just the same.

At the moment we do not desire to discuss the alternative left us if justice be denied. It exists nonetheless. So far we have munched the stale crusts of Confederation's loaf. Henceforth we intend to have our portion of the crumb, our share of butter and jam when such is on the table. Otherwise we shall have to bake our own bread and stock our own larder.

But we are not downhearted. We are confident of success. We have assurance of sympathy and support from other sections. If the cloud still looms, it has a silver lining. At the beginning there is quoted a verse written by a soldier-poet during the war. A second will serve as conclusion:

"When thy clouds look dark with thunder, An' yer troubles make you wonder, When you feel as how yer luck had got the sack; Then it's time to stop and ponder On the streak of silver yonder, 'Twill push the - clouds a long way back."

Speaking of taxation payment by installments, the city clerk of Moncton publishes the following advertisement in one of the newspapers there:

"Save Five Per Cent. by paying City of Moncton Taxes on before the 20th day of July, 1926. If unable to pay your taxes in full save Five Per Cent. on amount paid by making partial payment. Any amount accepted."

Just Fun

"ISN'T Life Wonderful With Carol Dempster," reads the advertisement, to which we say we wouldn't be surprised.

DENTIST — "Now that didn't hurt you, did it, Willie?" Willie—"You can't fool me, my dad's an advertising man, too."

SECRETARY HOOVER was talking about a sharp business deal. "It was perhaps a little too sharp," he said. "It reminds me of a girl who had just broken off her engagement. 'I suppose you'll give me back my engagement ring?' her rejected sweetheart said to her. 'No,' she answered firmly. 'Diamonds have gone up. I'll give you back what you paid for it.'"

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HUSBANDS WHO SHOULD BE CROWNED: Those who speak of their wife as the "wife," the "missus" or "mother."

PRISONERS enjoy music and always listen eagerly for the opening bars.

"WHY shouldn't the temperature be high? Everything else is."

ON VACATION you get about half the pleasure as much to eat and about one-half the convenience of home.

TWO THOUSAND YEARS ago Aesop said: "If there is any good in a man it is bound to come up on an ocean voyage."

POEMS I LOVE

"Arab Love Song," by Francis Thompson. The rich, pontifical beauty in Thompson's work will give him a sure place in English literature. His longer poems, such as "The Hound of Heaven" and "Daisy" are exquisite examples of his robust art, wherein is mingled a sublime tenderness difficult to match.

The hunched camel of the night Trouble the bright And silver waters of the moon. The moans of the moon will soon Through Heaven stray and sing Star gathering.

Queer Quirks of Nature

THIS PAIR IS SELDOM SEEN TOGETHER MR. AND MRS. PROMETHEA

By AUSTIN H. CLARK. THE commonest of all our larger moths is the promethea. This is a curious moth, for the two sexes differ widely in their color. The female looks like a small dull reddish caterpillar, but the male is black with a putty-colored band across the middle. More curious still, the black male flies only in the daytime with a very regular swooping and darting flight, while the female flies only at night with a direct and heavy flight. The promethea is commonly mistaken for a large black butterfly.

The promethea is rather late in coming from its winter sleep, appearing first in late May or early June, and flying until well into July, in the north until August. A few are sometimes seen in the late summer. The caterpillar looks much like a small ecrope caterpillar. It feeds especially on wild cherry, tulip tree, saffron and spike-bush, but also on other trees as well. It is generally to be found on the lower branches. The cocoon is twice as long as broad, and is spun within a leaf which is wrapped about it. A thick band of silk runs up the leaf stem and is securely fastened to the twig, and sometimes the twig is in the same way fastened to the branch.

After the falling of the leaves these cocoons are very easily seen as they dangle from the branches. They are quite common along roadsides and in the more open woods.

Of course it was unprecedented; and of course, a new precedent was in order. That new precedent was the refusal of a dissolution until parliament declared that the governor-general's action lacks a precedent and is, therefore, irregular, he neglects the other side of the shield. It is a sound principle of British and Canadian constitutional usage as specific events call for innovation. To allow a prime minister to dodge an impending call for innovation by a course such as that of the Canadian ex-premier would violate the basic principles upon which all constitutions and precedents are founded.

COOK Saturday—stuff Sunday—grumpy Monday.

Other Views

UNITY IN GOVERNMENT (Paris Journal). The first condition of parliamentary discipline is governmental discipline, and there can be no discipline in government unless it is united. To surround a table the delegates of all the groups, whether under the name of the national union or under the name of concentration, and to suppose that salvation will come from such a gathering would be without doubt the most fatal of errors. For such a proceeding would be to transport into the heart of the executive all the causes and all the effects of weakness with which the legislature itself is reproached.

EMPIRE AND THE AIR (London Times). If, as no one who remembers what they did for the Mother Country and the other dominions join with Australia in giving their approval and willing co-operation to the scheme, there will be set up in each country a central air station, from which branch lines will radiate to form a local series of internal communications, all connected with each other and with the great common system joining the Empire from end to end. That is the ideal set before us and then, in which all may take a part. It is something that will make cheaper the problem of imperial defense. It is much more that it will make easier the field of imperial trade, and will make firmer the tie of imperial intercourse.

PRECEDENT UPON PRECEDENT (Winnipeg Tribune). Constitutional precedents will be searched in vain for a case on all-fours with that which was submitted to Lord Byng by Mr. King. When it will be asked, has a prime minister appealed to the King or his representative for dissolution, when that minister's government was on trial for its very life? When the evidence of guilt was all in? When the parliamentary jury was about to be polled? When, indeed, some of the jurymen, hitherto friendly to the government, had cried "guilty" in advance of the formal verdict? At this point Mr. King rushed to his knees. He exclaimed: "I want a new jury; let me get away from parliament." (Yet parliament is Mr. King's fetish of last resort in all matters of government.) How vain now for Mr. King to plead that the action

Timely Views On World Topics

STRONG DEBTORS OF THE WEAK By BISHOP LUTHER B. WILSON, Methodist Church Leader in Recent Address.

"I AM DEBTOR" said St. Paul and that was the key to his life of service and achievement. It was this philosophy that led him to the triumphant end when he could say that he had fought the good fight and was ready for rest.

The strong in capital are indebted to the weak in knowledge; those strong in knowledge are indebted to the ignorant, and the strong in numbers are indebted to the few. If we accept the philosophy of Paul's life we see how the west side is indebted to the east side and how those living in the residential sections owe something to those who dwell in the unsanitary and sordid slums of the city.

It is the paying of this debt of strength to weakness that expresses Christian service. If we believe in the strength of our faith we must consider ourselves the debtors of those who do not have the comfort of our religion. There are millions in the Orient without a sustaining faith. In Latin countries there are those who worship in cathedrals with golden altars but whose lives are devoid of the elevating influences of the faith.

Helping others with a feeling that we are fulfilling a debt which is laid upon us by the spirit of superiority that is doing much harm in China and other lands. Several persons have informed me that there is a growing dislike for foreigners and even for Christians because in fulfilling the debt of strength the representatives of the faith shown a superiority complex which King's fetish of last resort in all matters of government.) How vain now for Mr. King to plead that the action

MONCKTON shows us the way in this matter. In due season we will improve upon the Moncton plan. Monckton is ahead of us in this respect, just as it is in the business of street paving, for Monckton has some exceptions to its fine streets, the construction of which some of our street-making authorities might well study to advance.

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New Colossus At Rhodes



—From the Item, New Orleans, La.



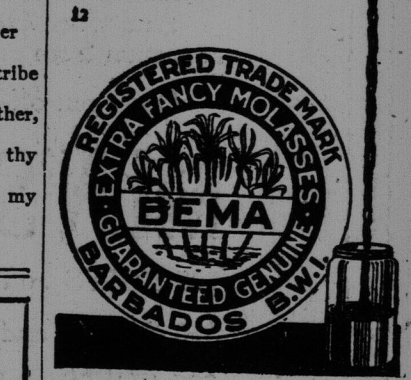
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Remember: Ask for the Genuine Barbados Extra Fancy Molasses! GOOD GROCERS SELL IT.



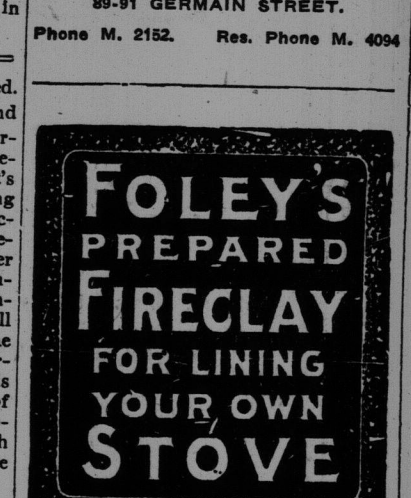
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PHILADELPHIA, Pa.—Do you wear glasses? Are you a victim of eye-strain or other eye weaknesses? If so, you will be glad to know that according to Dr. Lewis there is real hope for you. Many whose eyes were failing say they have had their eyes restored through the principle of this wonderful free prescription. One man says, after trying it, "I was almost blind; could not see to read at all. Now I can read everything without any glasses and my eyes do not water any more. At night they would pain dreadfully; now they feel fine all the time. It was a miracle to me." A lady who used it says: "The atmosphere seemed hazy with or without my glasses, but after using this prescription for fifteen days everything seems clear. I can even read the print without glasses." It is believed that thousands who wear glasses can now multitudes more will be able to strengthen their eyes so as to be spared the trouble and expense of ever getting glasses. Eye troubles of many descriptions may be wonderfully benefited by following the simple rules. Here is the prescription: "Go to any active drug store and get a bottle of Bon-Opto tablets. Drop one Bon-Opto tablet in a fourth of a glass of water and allow to dissolve. With this liquid bath the eyes two to four times daily. You should notice your eyes clear up perceptibly right from the start and inflammation will quickly disappear. If your eyes are bothering you, even a little, take steps to save them now before it is too late. Many hopelessly blind might have been saved if they had cared for their eyes in time."

NOTE: Another prominent physician has said: "Bon-Opto is a very remarkable remedy. Its constituent ingredients are well known to eminent eye specialists and widely prescribed by them. The manufacturers guarantee it to strengthen eyesight 50 per cent in one week's time in many instances or refund the money." It can be obtained from any good druggist and is one of the very few preparations I feel should be kept on hand for regular use in almost every family. It is sold in this city by all good druggists.