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E. W. MOORHEAD, Editor.

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Semi-Weekly Telegraph

ST. JOHN, N. B., APRIL 13, 1904.

BEFORE THE CURTAIN RISES.

There are more than 100 foreign newspaper correspondents in Manchuria, Corea and Japan today at a time when two fleets and two armies are jockeying for position before the first serious test of strength, yet so strict is the censorship exercised by the combatants that of the real position of the opposing forces, which is a matter of world-wide and absorbing interest, no definite word reaches an expectant public. Every resource which money and ingenuity and espionage can command has been employed by the great newspapers of the world for the purpose of reporting the war, but the censorship of the censor keeps the correspondents during this period before one or the other of the opposing generals drives home his blow.

But while these preliminary moves on the chess-board of war are hidden from us, the correspondents will have their day. Once a battle has been fought there will no longer be any necessity for the secrecy which is now observed. The capitals of both Japan and Russia will learn the news from the front with all speed. The capital will send out official accounts, and following these will come the descriptive stories of those reporters who were lucky enough to be attached to the divisions engaged.

The lack of definite news during the last few days has been ominous. Apparently the centers have shut down absolutely upon dispatches containing anything relating to the movement of troops, and even the newspaper men who are stationed in the cities nearest the front have been "bottled up" almost to a man. The public finds the interval tedious, but when the news comes it will be a revelation. It is not like that now existing in the Far East, they forget the outside world until there is news so good—or so bad—that it must be told.

THE MONEY.

Next year will be Fredericton's turn to receive the grant, the date of the exhibition here was announced last November, and it would certainly be unfair for St. John to grab the grant this year for the Champlain celebration, and then demand another for an exhibition next year.—Fredericton Herald.

St. John certainly will carry out the centenary programme, and the celebration will be on a scale which has never been attempted hitherto in this part of Canada. St. John may have an exhibition also. It is doubtful whether the exhibition will be the best ever held in the province. Fredericton will "send" the victory to the city during the events, then almost any other community, and all of them will be glad they came.

There is, however, no disposition to "grab" any money at the expense of the Fredericton exhibition which will be held when the right time comes. The centenary celebration is a matter separate and distinct from any and all exhibitions. Some money will be required from the local government and from the city. St. John's interest in this celebration, so picturesque and attractive will it be, and so beneficial to the city and the province is certain to prove that we have no doubt both the aldermen and the legislators at Fredericton will vote reasonable aid to ensure the carrying out of the programme in admirable fashion.

The Fredericton Herald very properly remarked some days ago that the St. John river did not both rise and empty in this city, the stream being common to the province. For this reason and because a reasonable man has yet taken any but a most favorable view of the coming celebration, St. John is confident that the money required will be forthcoming and that this summer will be one which all New Brunswickers will remember with pride. St. John will pay its full share of the bill, but as the celebration is distinctly of provincial interest the legislature will be expected to make a grant, just as it will, at another time, make a grant in aid of the exhibition at Fredericton.

OUR "FROZEN" PORTS.

The English make some awful blunders when they discuss Canadian matters, but Lord Strathcona and others are gradually educating those most in need of instruction—the public men whose misstatements are most harmful. In the British House of Commons recently Sir C. McLaren, M. P. for Leicestershire, who is a nephew of the late John Bright, tried to correct a

statement which, as he thought, displayed the ignorance of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The Chancellor had intimated that vessels could approach some Canadian ports in the winter season. Sir C. McLaren then asked with crushing gravity: "Is the right honorable gentleman aware that Canadian ports are closed during the winter months?" Whether or not the right honorable could find no word to say for himself does not appear, but, as the Times reported Sir C. McLaren's question, it came to the notice of Lord Strathcona.

The learned members of the British Commons were perhaps amazed to read authentic statements to the effect that some of our seaports are as accessible in winter as are Liverpool or London. Lord Strathcona quoted from the reports of the Hydrographic Office of the Admiralty concerning Halifax and St. John harbors, which are described as follows: "Halifax possesses an area of ten square miles, is open at all seasons, and its position is scarcely ever interrupted by ice. It is one of the finest and safest harbors in the world, affording space and depth of water sufficient for a large number of vessels. St. John harbor—One of the most remarkable and beautiful in America. Is safe, commodious, and always accessible; its navigation, even during the winter months, is never impeded by ice."

The distinction drawn between the effect of ice here and at Halifax will not be welcomed in the winter city. Halifax really deserves a less qualified certificate; but the general trend of Lord Strathcona's reply will be praised in Canada and should do something toward convincing grave persons like Sir C. McLaren of the remarkable density of their ignorance regarding ports which are constantly loading and discharging British liners throughout the winter.

Lord Strathcona supplemented the admiralty report by the information that many other Canadian ports are open during the winter, among them Sydney, Esquimaux and Port Simpson. His lordship loses no opportunity to correct mistaken and injurious impressions regarding Canada, but, as this incident in the Commons indicates, the work is of discouraging magnitude.

THE ODDS AND THE COMING TEST.

While the world watches the Yalu and military experts guess who will win the first important land battle, an American observer rebukes the prophets who see indications that Britain, France, Germany and the United States will become involved in the war, and tells them Russia cannot win. The prophets, says this writer, are fond of quoting Napoleon's saying that victory belongs to the big battalions. He cites the Boer war to show how long and desperate may be the resistance of a people insignificant in numbers, and argues from this example that five times Russia's entire army could not conquer Japan.

More impressive is his view that Russia cannot bring her weight to bear: "There is, however, no reasoning from the case of Kruger to that of the Mikado. Napoleon's famous dictum applies in Japan's favor. From the moment she can command the Yellow Sea the big battalions are hers for campaigns on the mainland. Even if Russia could muster an equal army by transportation over thousands of miles of single-track railway, or by marching them to the ground on foot, the problem of supplying them by that one wretched road would be insuperable. She cannot levy supplies from the Manchurians and Chinese without danger of her army and her line of supply being surrounded by hostilities. Her case is as Gulliver's when he was tied down. He could turn slightly to one side, and no doubt, move his little finger. But the Lilliputians could and did walk over him safely. Had he not surrendered they might have bled him to death at one extended writ, as distant, comparatively, from his main strength as Korea is from St. Petersburg."

This writer, like many others, assumes that the Japanese military organization is so perfect and her men of such stamina that both will be equal to the test of a campaign of the most strenuous and desperate character. Both Japan and Russia have yet to prove their mettle against a brave and resourceful foe under the conditions of modern campaigning. We shall know more about them when they have felt the full shock of cold, hunger, wholesale killing. The proof of the real strength of either nation in the field is yet to come.

PROHIBITION AND POLITICS.

The oracular reply of Premier Ross of Ontario, to the Methodist and Baptist clergymen who waited on him last Monday and demanded a straightforward answer to the question whether he intended to fulfill his pledges with regard to prohibition, has provoked no little amusement in that province.

The Toronto News publishes a cartoon, "Deserted at the Altar," in which Mr. Ross is pictured fleeing from the side of a horrified maiden lady, "The Temperance Party," just as the clergyman is about to make them one. The Toronto Mail and Empire compares the premier's reply to the statement of Captain Jack Bunsby, who won fame by delivering himself in this wise: "Whereby, why not? If so, what odds? Can any man say otherwise? No, avast them!"

Premier Ross had pledged himself to give an answer within forty-eight hours. He took three hours grace, and then handed out the following:

April 6, 1904.
My Dear Sir,—
In reply to the deputation which I

had the honor of receiving yesterday, I desire to express my concurrence in the views presented by the different speakers, that nothing short of the prohibition of the sale of liquor in hotels and restaurants over sales for purposes generally recognized as proper and legitimate would fully protect society from the evil effects of excessive drinking so far as legislation can be invoked for that purpose.

Your decided preference for such a measure as against amendments to the license law I understand to mean that you do not favor at present any other form of temperance legislation.

Yours truly,
W. G. ROSS.

Rev. J. A. Radkin.
The newspapers at once sought interviews on the subject. Some of the delegates who had waited on Mr. Ross were greatly disappointed, some were disappointed as to his meaning, and some expressed the hope that something good was concealed in the deliberation.

"I have been praying for Mr. Ross for a long time," said Rev. Dr. Carman, general superintendent of the Methodist church, "and I hope he took his breakfast today with an easy conscience." But Dr. Carman added that he was hopeful concerning the whole situation.

Rev. Dr. McKay, of Woodstock, said: "It reminds me of an incident in the life of the late Sir John A. Macdonald. A friend of his, who was also a strong Liberal, said to him one day: 'Sir John, you have my prayers and sympathy, but I must give my vote to my party.' Sir John replied: 'If it would make no difference, I would prefer that your prayers and sympathy should go to the other party and that you should give me your vote.' If Premier Ross would only give his vote for once to his temperance friends we would not mind if his prayers and sympathies went to the other fellows." But Dr. McKay hopes Mr. Ross will say more when the question comes up in the house, and expects him to "stand by his oft-repeated pledge."

One fact is quite noticeable in the various published interviews. Those persons who are politically friendly to Mr. Ross are very cautious in expounding opinions. It is not an easy task in either party to dissociate temperance principles from political considerations.

A BURNING QUESTION.

The St. John bank tax bill as amended in committee is hard to kill. Receiving a three months' hold by the casting vote of the chairman in the committee of the whole at Fredericton yesterday, the measure is apparently not yet abandoned by its advocates. Perhaps, however, they will reconsider the proposal to try to have the House pass it by one vote after the warm and damaging discussion of which it was the subject yesterday. St. John will watch the next chapter of the bill's history with keen interest.

Meantime the main question is: How, and when, is this city going to get down to a business system, not only in levying and assessing taxes, but also in collecting them.

The present system of assessment is not only ancient, but bad, as well.

Our taxes are increased every year, but while a certain proportion of our citizens pay more and more, others, who should pay their share of the increasing civic burden, are permitted to evade it by one subterfuge or another. The law is a bad one, reflecting no credit upon its authors. And it is all the worse because it is not properly enforced.

Last year the rate was \$1.02, this year it is \$1.70, and who knows that next year it will not be \$2.00? It looks as if more money would be required for schools, streets, and especially for water, as the water system must be reformed at heavy cost. Of course there is the old method of borrowing the money to meet all expenditures, but our interest account is running up very rapidly, and the principal must be provided for some day. The council ought to devise some means to collect the bank taxes or settle them in some way, and it should see that all who are able to do so should be made to do so. With the present debt increasing so rapidly, it behooves the council to discover and levy upon new sources from which to derive more cash.

If the local government allows the bill before the house to pass, as it is supposed to do, it will give the city a total tax of \$9,772 from branch banks, including the Bank of Montreal taxes full. There is no reason why these taxes should be lowered at all; they should pay the \$500 the same as other banks, making the amount they should pay this year, about \$3,720. Adding on the Bank of New Brunswick's taxes, at last year's figures, there would be a total of \$17,391.

If the present bill is passed in the house, it will mean that the city will lose about \$4,000 clear, which will have to be made up by the business and industries, which are now taxed up to their full limit, and are not nearly so able to pay as the Bank of New Brunswick or Bank of Montreal. Yet the present bill will reduce the taxes of these institutions, certain aldermen to the contrary notwithstanding. These aldermen, by the way, have changed their views since the bill was introduced.

The bill as originally presented would be of a great deal more benefit to St. John than as amended. The people who own bank stocks have no cause for complaint. They do not belong to the poor class but to the wealthy class. There is no good reason why they should not pay their full share. Legislation which permits them to escape a part of their taxes is indefensible. St. John's representatives in the legislature should consider the city's

interests well before permitting the bill to pass in its present form.

Would it not be better to place the whole matter in the hands of the Common Council, giving the aldermen and the assessors power to arrange all taxes? Certainly nothing should be done at Fredericton to perpetuate a weak, misjudged and impracticable system such as would follow the passage of the amended bill.

THE PROVINCIAL BUDGET.

The statement concerning New Brunswick's prosperity contained in the opening paragraphs of the budget speech has more than the customary weight this year. The province has enjoyed good times. The prevalent feeling is one of hope and confidence. The government is justified in claiming much credit both for its management of the economy's affairs, which has been at once economical and progressive, and for its stalwart defence of provincial rights. The fruits of the enlightened agricultural policy inaugurated a few years ago are apparent today, and it is but fair to say that the foresight of the government in this particular has been of great value to the people generally, since, as the Attorney-General says, the success of the agricultural population means prosperity for the province.

The budget speech which Hon. Mr. Pugsley delivered in the forgettable assembly of the Premier, is printed at some length elsewhere, and deserves careful perusal. The government looks forward to a surplus of some \$2,000,000 and gratifying as the figures are, the estimate is likely to be within the mark. The effort to secure from the Dominion government the immense sum due this province as a result of the Halifax Award has been sustained, and there is now much warranted confidence that the issue will be favorable.

This annual outline of the provincial housekeeping usually elicits a certain line of criticism from the opposition benches. That criticism may be expected now as hitherto, but it will be offered in accordance with custom rather than from conviction that there is much just cause for complaint. The opposition will doubtless persist in its effort to discourage and discredit the government's determination to secure for the province the extensive amounts which our ministers are convinced the Dominion now unjustly withholds from our coffers, but public sympathy in this matter is almost wholly with the ministry.

UNSATISFACTORY SITUATION.

The directors of the exhibition association have decided to go on with the exhibition, demanding the full \$5,000 of the government grant. If by this action they weaken the chances for a proper celebration of the Champlain tercentenary, it will not add to the popularity of the exhibition. There is a possibility, however, that the government may yet agree to give a small grant toward the tercentenary celebration, which must be carried out.

Some curiosity appears to have been expressed on the subject of subscriptions toward the tercentenary fund. Any member of the exhibition association who desires to contribute will no doubt find an open door. An exhibition is a good thing. The proposed Champlain celebration is a good thing. Neither should be allowed to kill the other. It would have been a graceful thing on the part of the exhibition people to have expressed a determination to assist the other enterprise, in which the people at large are so much interested. The celebration cannot be postponed, and certainly cannot now with credit to the city be abandoned. Doubtless the St. John members of the legislature will make a strong plea for at least a small grant, and the tercentenary committee will have to appeal again to the council. The position of affairs is anything but satisfactory.

THE ASSESSMENT LAW.

The St. John assessment law must be further amended. The demands of the public services are increasing, and call for larger expenditures. The taxpayers must provide the money. The amendment with regard to banks does not meet the case. Some of the banks would pay more; but two of them, the Bank of New Brunswick and Bank of Montreal, would pay less. After all the explanatory and apologetic talk about disproportion of taxes in the past has been poured into his ears, the citizen who will have to pay more taxes this year will still be conscious of the fact that two of the banks pay less. He asks the council and the tercentenary committee will have to appeal again to the council. The position of affairs is anything but satisfactory.

But the purpose of the bank assessment bill was to produce more money for civic purposes. It has failed in that respect, for the increase will be but trifling. Where, then, are the funds to come from? Certainly the problem is not an easy one to solve, but the requirements of the public services will compel a solution of some kind within the next few years.

The Deal Trade.

W. B. Snowball, manager of the J. B. Snowball Company, Ltd., has returned from Great Britain and the continent. He is not favorably impressed with the conditions prevailing in the deal markets on that side of the Atlantic. He found many who are making engagements at prevailing prices, as they expect to think they may be able to do better by-and-by. Mr. Snowball says the stocks on the other side are quite large, a fact which encourages a waiting policy on the part of buyers.—Miramichi Advertiser.

Ice Made a Start a Woodstock.

Woodstock, N. B., April 10.—(Special).—The ice in the creek and river made a start this morning and is gradually breaking up.

OAK HALL

It is the Spring Overcoat Headquarters.

Oak Hall sells Overcoats for Twenty-five Dollars. The men who wear them usually have their other clothes made by the best merchant tailors—and they expect absolute perfection.

Oak Hall sells Overcoats for seven dollars. The men who wear them cannot afford to pay more—and they look for two or three seasons of comfort from them.

NEITHER ARE DISAPPOINTED.

In both grades this is the most value for the money that human skill and business ingenuity can devise; so Oak Hall holds its old customers, gets new customers, and keeps on giving a little more for the money season after season just because of this—because of the greater volume of its business.

If you want an Overcoat for \$25.00 or 7.00, or for any price in between, at variations of a dollar or two, you will miss the opportunities offered by headquarters buying if you don't come here.

Out-of-Town Folks.

Do not let distance deter you from sending us an order. Remember our store is as near to you as your nearest letter box, and at all times we will be pleased to answer an enquiry.

Send for our Spring Sample Book.

Mailed for the asking.

GREATER OAK HALL, SCOVIL BROS. & CO.

King Street, Cor. Germaine, St. John, N. B.

NOTE AND COMMENT.

Mr. John Charlton's health has so much improved that it is hoped he will soon be able to take his place in parliament.

The Globe says Mr. Smith, of Carleton county, should have avoided the preference question. That is what Mr. Hazen thinks, too.

Wanted—An assessment bill that will prevent the banks and all similar institutions from evading any portion of their full share of the civic burden.

It is probable that the provincial budget will be delivered at Fredericton today, but the house is not expected to conclude its business this week.

Britain and France have settled their last difference. When French warships come to St. John this summer they will come representing a power virtually one of the Empire's allies.

The tax rate is high, but it will be higher next year if St. John has a sufficient supply of water and the present aldermen still spend the money of the taxpayers.

In Mr. Flemming's opinion, Hon. Mr. LaBrosse's prescription for that tired feeling will not be satisfactory to the suffering carriage makers. But the prescription stands.

Fredericton continues to hurt at the St. John aldermen the charge that they do not know what they want. It is false. The aldermen always want what they did not want yesterday.

This country would feel a great deal easier in mind concerning the G. T. P. if the company were going to put more money in the enterprise and had less invested at Portland (Me.).

Wheat, which was quoted not long since at 110.34 in Winnipeg, was down to 90.38 one day last week, in the same market. That should make considerable difference in the price of flour.

Cape Breton has produced two prize fighters. But perhaps they were compelled when they were young to listen to sermons preached in Gaelic. A too harsh judgment should not be pronounced without enquiry.

If we may judge by an article from a Chicago newspaper which is reproduced on another page, his Chicago congregation and at least one newspaper man have been most favorably impressed by Rev. Dr. Morrison. He is an able man and Chicago sorely needs more like him.

If Russia actually has 400,000 troops in Manchuria there is material for some heavy fighting. Apparently, however, the Russians would not risk a conflict in northern Corea, where it had all along been anticipated that the first heavy engagement would occur.

The study of Latin is optional with student teachers in Ontario. An effort is being made to restore it to the compulsory list. The Ontario Educational Association discussed the subject last week, and decided by a vote of 132 to 65 in favor of making Latin a compulsory subject in the examination for teachers; but the anti-Latinists are confident that the minister of education will not yield.

The board of control of the city of Toronto has this year increased the appropriation for street cleaning by some \$3,000, and added \$10,000 for flushing the streets. The total sum for these purposes is \$74,000, and to this again is added \$30,000 for street sprinkling. The people of Toronto believe in clean streets. The people of St. John may have similar aspirations, but the evidence is less convincing.

The following statement appears in the Montreal Gazette: "The government of New Brunswick is desirous of making known to Europeans who purpose immigrating to Canada, what a large area of

arable land remains unoccupied in the province, but more particularly as to the forests of good timber which are there found. To this end they are conferring with the C. P. R. in regard to the matter. It is possible that the government may join with the company in a system of advertising the province's natural resources."

One of the promoters of the Trans-Canada railway declares that the company intend to go on with the construction of their line. He says the government have finally decided to build the G. T. P. line south of Lake Winnipeg, whereas the Trans-Canada takes a much shorter route north of that lake. "Besides being invaluable to the Dominion for military purposes, it will be essential to the development of the valuable country north of the Saskatchewan, and in the Peace River Valley and of the James Bay country, and will give the option of three summer sea ports instead of one, namely, James Bay, the Saguenay and Quebec, and the shortest route to Halifax and St. John in winter."

Although the franchise bill did not pass in its original form, the city council may be able to assist those citizens who are eager to be able to cast their votes. Possibly it may devise some means of making them pay their taxes promptly. Then they will be able to vote, and the city will secure a larger proportion of revenue from the amount assessed. That should make both parties happy.

The Gazette intimates that Mr. George Robertson will not be appointed Surveyor-General until Premier Tweedie has satisfactory assurances that he can be re-elected. The Richmond Review can see a chance for no one except Mr. James Barnes. Says the Review:—

"Some of the opposition newspapers are busy reconstructing the provincial government. The Sun publishes a rumor to the effect that the Surveyor-Generalship may go to York and that the claims of Kent to cabinet representation may be overlooked. These reports are mere guesswork. The Surveyor-General should represent a North Shore constituency and we believe that when the appointment is made it will go to Mr. Barnes, of Kent."

ALIFAX LAW STUDENT MAKES TROUBLE FOR JERE, McAULIFFE.

Halifax, April 11.—(Special).—Jere McAuliffe and Manager Medcalf, of the Academy of Music, appeared in the police court this morning on warrants issued by one John Wood, who claimed to have been held up to ridicule by one of the members of the McAuliffe Company.

Medcalf was acquitted, but McAuliffe has to appear again tomorrow. The affair is creating considerable sensation.

MORE MONCTON MEN HELD UP AND ROBBED.

Moncton, N. B., April 10.—(Special).—Max Casey reported to the police yesterday that while going home to Lewisville last Thursday night he was beaten into insensibility and robbed. The alleged assault and robbery took place at Robinson's Creek bridge. Casey says his assailant got \$10, the rest of his money being in another pocket.

Another Lewisville man reports losing \$20 on the same night. Both men are I. C. R. employees and received their pay on the night in question. The latter does not know how he lost his money but thinks he was robbed in some way.

The police have had a busy time the last two nights, the lockup being taxed to accommodate the prisoners, mostly drunks. One arrest last night was for carrying firearms.

Briggs—"Wonder what makes Brightsome so happy all the time?"
Griggs—"I am told that he hasn't looked at a thermometer, winter or summer, for ten years."

HEAVY SENTENCES FOR TORONTO MEN

Deputy Returning Officers and Polling Clerks Sent to Prison.

FORMER GOT TWO YEARS.

And the Latter a Year Each—Prisoners Were Found Guilty of Conspiracy in Civic Election—Judge Scores Them Severely—Appeal to Be Made to Minister of Justice.

Toronto, April 10.—(Special).—Judge Winchester yesterday in the sessions sentenced the election officers found guilty of conspiracy at the last civic election. The deputy returning officers got two years, less one day, and the poll clerks one year in the central prison. His honor refused the remission case asked on behalf of Mr. Gray.

The men sentenced are D. Rose, Sam Thompson, Frank A. Gray, druggist; and A. Calhoun, painter, poll clerk; Lieut.-Col. Gray and Thos. Kerr, a student.

Judge Winchester, before pronouncing sentence, said to the prisoners:—"It is not the first time you have committed this offence, but it is the first time you have been convicted. You recognized that you had done wrong the first time, but still you continued to carry on the crime. If the men in whom the public have confided to carry on the elections of this country go wrong, then the people will have no confidence in the election of proper men, and anarchy would soon follow. You were well advised by your counsel when you pleaded guilty, but this crime must be stopped."

On behalf of the condemned officials an appeal will be made to the minister of justice.

YARMOUTH P. O. CLERK, INVOLVED, QUITS TOWN.

Yarmouth, N. S., April 8.—Although in receipt of good salary as chief clerk in the post office here Max W. Allen was not content. About fifteen months ago he went into the literary stable business and secured a contract for carrying mail between Yarmouth and Tusket Wedge and intervening areas, at the old line continued to operate a freight and passenger service both lines were swamped. Allen became involved, although unknown to friends, to the extent of several thousand dollars.

On Monday he left for Bridgetown, having obtained leave from the postmaster to be gone until Tuesday. He said he was going to purchase horses. He wrote a note to his wife from Digby that he would return no more, as he was too heavily involved. The shock to his wife, who did not know anything was wrong, was great. The only creditor secured is J. B. Wynne, his banker in the literary venture. Others are filing attachments on his furniture. Much regret is felt here for the whole occurrence.

KEEP THE LITTLE ONES WELL.

There ought not to be any sleepless, fretful children—there would not be any if mothers gave their little ones an occasional dose of Baby's Own Tablets. The little ones are healthy and fretful and sleepless because of some stomach bowel or liver trouble. These and other minor ailments of little ones are speedily relieved and happily cured by Baby's Own Tablets, and the little one thrives and grows up strong, healthy and content. Let the mother get her little one and let as well Mrs. J. B. Wynne, of Yarmouth, Ont., says: "I can recommend Baby's Own Tablets to all mothers who have cross or delicate children, do not know how I could get along without them. Mother, isn't it wonderful while to give this medicine just one tablet if your medicine dealer does not keep the Tablets send 25 cents to The Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brockville, Ontario and the Tablets will be sent by mail post paid."