

# The Standard

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## IMPROVING THE ROADS.

When Mr. Borden announced that he would favor granting Federal aid to the Provincial Governments for the improving of the highways throughout the country, he took a step in advance of any previous political leader. Before the days of railroads the highways afforded the principal means of communication between different sections of the country. Canada is probably the best watered country in the world and the early settlers found the rivers and streams the best and quickest means of communication before the construction of highways, but they were closed in the winter season. Three-quarters of a century ago the construction of railways was commenced throughout the country and to a certain extent the highways were neglected, because of the large demand made upon the treasury for assistance in railroad building. The extent to which Canada has aided in railroad construction has been very great. Not only was the Intercolonial built entirely with public funds but almost every other railroad constructed in this country has received substantial assistance, not only from the Dominion treasury, but from the Provinces and in some instances from the Municipalities as well. Just now the country is considerably worried over the excessive cost of the National Transcontinental from Winnipeg to Moncton, which is asserted to be the most expensively constructed railway in the world. How much of the expenditure has actually gone into the railway, compared with the distribution of graft, which has been so plentiful during its construction under Liberal rule, is not now and probably never will be known.

During the past twenty years, and more notably in the last decade, the development of automobile traffic has produced a demand for better roads. The "good roads" movement was started before the automobile was a prominent factor in the demand for better highways, but as the number of automobiles increased so did the demand for better roads. This demand is not confined to any particular part of the country, but is general everywhere, and to give what is required is entirely beyond the means of the Provincial Government or the Municipalities of a sparsely settled country like New Brunswick. It can hardly be said that the best of judgment was exercised in the locating of the roads in this Province. The policy pursued seems to have been to utilize all the hills, instead of avoiding them. New Brunswick is a hilly country and it was easier for the engineers to sight from hill top to hill top than to make detours that would give a reasonable grade to the road without unnecessarily increasing its length. Roads located on hills are more expensive to maintain than level roads would have been, but the main object of the engineers who located and constructed the principal roads in New Brunswick was their own physical comfort rather than the future cost of maintenance. Settlement naturally followed the roads and it would now be expensive and would render the road less useful to those residing on it to make any serious change of location. As a considerable part of the cost of maintaining existing roads and the bridges in connection with them comes out of the provincial treasury, the Government is compelled to continue their expenditures on these hilly roads with no better results than if greater care had been exercised in their original location.

The Federal Government has not yet decided as to the extent or character of the aid to be given the Provincial Governments for the improvement of the highways. There is a movement on foot at the present time to secure the construction of a highway extending from ocean to ocean. The idea is a magnificent one, but like all other ideas of such a sweeping character will probably have to wait for a long period before it becomes a practical issue, as a considerable portion of such a road would be through an uninhabited country. Of course in constructing highways in the different provinces this great project might be kept in mind, and the roads built to give the best accommodation to the people could afterwards be linked together and eventually from an ocean-to-ocean highway.

What is needed in every Province, New Brunswick as well as the others, is better highways in the more populous sections of the country and this is probably the idea that Mr. Borden has in mind when he made highway improvement an important plank in his election platform. Few people have any correct knowledge of the actual cost of road making on modern plans, suitable for heavy traffic as well as for automobiles, but it might as well be understood now as at a later period that the suggestions already made for road improvement in New Brunswick would cost the country not less than two million dollars. Such an expenditure could not come out of the current revenue and it made must necessarily be added to the permanent debt. As money cannot be borrowed at less than four per cent. interest, with the sinking fund of one per cent. to redeem the debentures in forty years, would mean an addition to the annual interest charge of \$100,000, a sum more than equal to that now spent on the highways in an average year. To place such a charge on the Provincial treasury today would mean that some special tax would have to be levied to meet the interest charges alone, and taxation even for a good thing is not always popular. The assistance that the Dominion will grant to the Provincial Governments for highway improvement will unquestionably be of great benefit and will add considerably to the mileage of really good roads throughout the Dominion.

## THE RAINY DAY IN THE WEST.

Do we in the East, in the fertile Province of New Brunswick, know when we are well off? In the past, judging by the exodus to the West and the evidence of the census returns, there has been some doubt on this point. The tide of immigration, we are told, is now setting Eastward. Nothing will tend more to speed its course than a realization of the hardships which settlers in the Prairie Provinces are suffering today—suffering, not because the West as a great grain growing country is at fault, but because the inexperienced immigrant, in his eagerness to grow rich, has been lured into a gamble against Nature, and Nature wins.

Let it may be thought that these conditions are overstated let us consider a graphic word-picture by a master in the art, Hon. George E. Foster, given to the House of Commons and the country this week during the discussion on the Grain Bill. No one, it will be admitted, is in a better position to know the facts than the Minister of Trade and Commerce, who has his hand constantly on the pulse of the country. The point under consideration was the question of giving the Grain Commission full authority in individual cases to relieve congestion in the West and facilitate the despatch of grain. In the course of his remarks

marks urging the adoption of this section, Mr. Foster said:

"My heart is no more soft than the hearts of other members around this table, but I have letters in my office which would almost make a man's heart bleed. I have one letter in my office of a man living out some 18 miles from his station, a newcomer who was in debt for everything that he had been using, and his implements as well, who had got his grain at least harvested and threshed out lately but who had no order in for a car that could possibly get to him for months may be, in the state of shortage and congestion there. Teaming in with his two teams a portion of his grain, what did he find? He had no cars. The car track buyer was there, but there was no car that the track buyer had into which he could put this man's grain if he had bought it. The man on the street was there, or thereabouts, but the man on the street could not buy his grain. He had no place to put it if he bought it; the elevator was chucked full and had not been emptied for a long time. That man tried in vain to sell his grain or to store it, but there was no storing place for it. He took his grain back to his own farm again and kept it there. Others piled their grain out behind somebody's shed and covered it over, may be with some straw; they cannot sell it."

They cannot sell it. They cannot store it. They have no barns even on their homesteads in which to put it. The grain must be piled up to rot. Why is the settler in this condition may reasonably be asked. Take the case of the man whom Mr. Foster quotes—a case typical of thousands of settlers in the West. The country had been pictured to him as a bonanza. He had only to secure his homestead, procure farming implements on credit, sow the seed and reap the golden harvest. There is not one Western settler in a thousand who provides for the rainy day which comes when the season is late and untoward events happen. He does not know such a day will dawn. He is never told. Countless homesteaders exist where a barn to store the grain has never been thought of. Year in and year out Nature is expected to assert herself and the crash comes. That is what has happened in the West this year. Widespread disaster is the result.

To place the blame on the transportation companies will not solve the problem, neither would it be just. Today there is but one line, the Canadian Pacific Railway, running East from Port Arthur to Winnipeg. The Canadian Northern is not yet completed and the National Transcontinental after eight years of bungling administration ends in the air. If there were ten lines from the wheat fields to Fort William in winter, and only one line coming East, as there is today, the carrying capacity from the West is the capacity of that one road. The elevators are full. That, in brief, is the transportation situation in the West today. The hopper is too big for the spout, and the inexperienced grain grower, who was not prepared for this contingency of a late season, bears the brunt.

A powerful lesson both for Western Canada, and the Maritime Provinces may be had from these unfortunate and unforeseen conditions. The Grain Commission will do much to ameliorate the congestion in the Prairie Provinces. It will secure a more equitable distribution of cars and keep a stricter supervision over transportation facilities, but it will not teach the Western settler, green and fresh from the Old Country, what he needs to know—that the rainy day comes even to the wheat grower and that provision must be made. This is not one of the Grain Commission's duties. The obligation rests with the Governments of the Western Provinces. In their own interest, and to prevent the West from earning a reputation it does not deserve, they should include in future in their advertising and immigration campaigns a true statement of the facts.

For New Brunswick and the Maritime Provinces generally there are consolations and a practical lesson. We are not in competition with the West in the production of wheat. We have resources and advantages of our own which our Western brethren do not share. In opportunities for profitable fruit raising, market gardening, and mixed farming, there is no Province in the Dominion that excels New Brunswick with her fertile valleys and sweeping uplands. With means of transportation at our doors and an accessible home and British market the cloud which temporarily obscures the West is not among our troubles.

When we contrast the picture of Mr. Foster's Western settler with conditions in New Brunswick today the question asked at the opening of this article answers itself. We are not only well off, we are better off. If remains but to more fully realize our advantages and advertise them to the world. The West in time will take care of its own immense opportunities, but "the lure of the West" may be a by-word of the past.

The Times would give the impression to its readers that Mr. Copp is a thorn in the side of the Government. Mr. Copp has been in the House ever since the change of Government and no member of the Opposition has been more in evidence than he, but up to the present time he has never been able to make the Government feel uneasy. He has frequently asserted that the present Government was extravagant because it spent the revenue collected, but no one ever took the hon. gentleman seriously, not even himself, for when the estimates of expenditure were produced Mr. Copp was dumb as an oyster and allowed them to pass without a word of criticism. It is all very well to make barn storming tours through the country districts denouncing the general wickedness and extravagance of a Government, but it is altogether a different thing to prove that an estimated expenditure is extravagant when the matter has to be voted on before it can be made. The time for Mr. Copp to criticize the Government and point out its errors is before the money for the expenditure is voted. If he honestly believes that the country is going to the dogs he ought to raise a voice of protest against such a policy instead of giving his assent by his silence. In his failure to pursue such a course Mr. Copp has only himself to blame and neither he nor the Times has the right to complain if no one takes him seriously.

## Current Comment

(Kingston Whig.)

A change in the law is desired, and to the extent of making sons and daughters, when able to do so, support their aged and infirm parents. Merciful idea! But what a reflection on the race that it should be made necessary.

(Ottawa Journal.)

It is stated by responsible authorities that in one Province of China, Shan Se, enough anthracite coal is easily available to supply the world for a thousand years. Such is China, which is waking up.

(Vancouver News-Advertiser.)

Mr. Fleming seems to be holding his own as Premier of New Brunswick. Two by-elections since he took office returned supporters of the Government without opposition. One is a seat captured from the Opposition.

(Hamilton Spectator.)

Sir Wilfrid was dumped from his cutter into the slash at Ottawa the other day. But, after his experience of last September he shouldn't feel upset over a little thing like that.

(Philadelphia Inquirer.)

In spite of automobiles and aeroplanes, the war horse is still a factor in the game.

## TEMPERANCE ADVOCATES MEET THE GOVERNMENT

Continued from page three.

In Kent have voted against the saloon. In Fairville the voters have declared against the saloon and no licenses will be issued after the first of May. The Government of the Square Deal. The government moreover adopted another amendment by which it grants prohibition. Under this amendment the governor-in-council on receiving a petition from the voters of any district may declare by proclamation that no license will be issued after a certain date, and as a result proclamations have been made closing the saloons in two parishes of Gloucester, in the parishes of Wellington in Kent, and in Madawaska, and in a number of other places. In order to bring about a better enforcement of the law the government appoints sub-inspectors whose duty it is to assist the enforcement of the law under the new conditions created by the closing of saloons by proclamation. Under the amendments adopted by this government there has been a rapid change for the better and the licensed saloons have been abolished in many districts. You have been getting prohibition. This government made the amendments that gave the temperance people a square deal. (Hear, hear.) I hope you will remember that.

In conclusion the Premier declared that the important thing from the standpoint of temperance was to make local option a pronounced success. If local option was well enforced other districts would take it up, while if there was a lax enforcement of the law, instead of being an impetus to a return to old conditions.

The prohibition law was spread over the Province there would doubtless be drinking and suffering, but in a district where the sentiment was strong for prohibition it would be a comparative easy matter to enforce the law, while in the community where the popular sentiment was against the prohibition there would be minority rule and a corresponding difficulty in enforcing the law. It was a well recognized fact that law enforcement depends on the sentiment of community, and as practical men they had to consider whether they could enforce a prohibition law in a district where the general feeling was against it. Among those who were present at the conference were Dr. J. W. Daniel, M. E. Agar, E. W. Stockford, J. King Kelley, and A. A. Wilson.

After hearing the delegation from the government, the government gave audience to a delegation from the council of the Moral and Social Reform Association, consisting of J. Willard Smith, M. E. Agar, Rev. W. R. Robinson, Rev. David Hutchinson, Councilor Bryant of Fairville, A. A. Wilson and Rev. H. L. Staver, of Harcourt. General Prohibition Law.

A. A. Wilson acted as spokesman. In opening his remarks he said he favored a general prohibition law, and that the government would pass it and render unnecessary any amendments to the license act. He said the Moral and Social Reform Association which represented nine churches and societies, had given much consideration to the license act and had unanimously decided to ask for a number of amendments. In their opinion the wholesale liquor business conducted in connection with grocery stores was very dangerous. An increasing number of women were buying liquor, and becoming demoralized. The association therefore asked that no liquor licenses be issued to grocery stores. Another amendment they wanted was the prohibition of the present practice of allowing an entrance between wholesale and retail premises.

Screen Question. They also wanted the act amended so as to admit of no doubt as to the interpretation of the section providing that bars should be visible from the street. They wanted the bars placed close to the street, with large windows which should be kept clean. Some time ago the hotel was making preparations to move their bars to rooms next the street, but the courts had decided that they need not do so.

"We also want the government to provide for the inspection of liquor. Much of the liquor sold here is manufactured or doctored on the premises. It is of a vile quality; it does not make men drunk, but sets them crazy."

The provincial secretary—Would the inspector be a lawyer? Mr. Wilson said his idea was to have the inspector take samples of liquor exposed for sale and have them analyzed.

The premier—Have you done anything to admit of the sending of liquor from St. John to Scott Act districts? That is the great evil, isn't it? Can't Seize Liquor.

Mr. Wilson said the Temperance Association was alive to this evil and was trying to stop it. The great difficulty was that an inspector could not seize liquor being transported on the government railways, as they could on the C. P. R. Continuing, Mr. Wilson urged the need of prohibition to prohibit the treating habit, and enlarge the

## Wind on the Stomach

A Well Known Westerner Tells of Suffering, Misery and Pain That He Cured With "Nerviline."

"A few weeks ago I ate some green vegetables and some fruit that was not quite ripe. It first brought on a fit of indigestion, but unfortunately it developed into hiccoughs, accompanied by nausea and cramps. I was dreadfully ill for two days—my head ached, I trembled; I belched gas continually, and I was unable to sleep at night. A neighbor happened in to see me and urged me to try Nerviline.

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provisions regarding inderdicts. He called attention to the fact that in recent years saloon keepers had been suing people for barroom bills, and urged an amendment to prohibit this. "Under the old act it was impossible for a retail dealer to sue to recover for liquor sold over the bar," he said. "and we want that provision revived. In the draft amendment the provision won't apply to wholesale dealers."

Mr. Smith—Mr. Blair dropped that provision out of the old act along with a number of other important clauses. Mr. Wilson said there was great need of a provision preventing saloon keepers selling liquor on credit. He knew of one workingman whose bar bill was \$60 in two months, and his family was suffering.

Continuing, Mr. Wilson urged the adoption of a regulation which would prevent the opening of a saloon within two hundred yards of a church or school located on the street on which the bar faces, and also a provision requiring applicants for licenses to get one-third of the residents in the district to sign a petition in support of the application.

Mr. Smith said the petition requirement was in the old law, but had been dropped out.

The delegation submitted a draft copy of the amendment which they want adopted, and the discussion became general for a time, the principal feature of it being the complaints of the temperance leaders that the older commissioners and inspectors in this district were not doing their duty. Mr. Robinson said that the government instead of employing one inspector, should divide his salary among the policemen and interest them in the enforcement of the law.

In reply to the delegation Mr. Fleming said the members of the government would examine the draft amendments and give them the most careful consideration. He thought the whole subject of the enforcement of the license act should be gone into, as it was a serious matter to have any laws on the statute books which were not enforced, and must lead to a lack of respect for all the laws.

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