

## The St. John Standard

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ST. JOHN, N. B., THURSDAY MARCH 24, 1920.

### HON. MR. MURRAY ON THE PROVINCIAL FINANCES.

The history of the financial transactions of the Government, as prepared by the Comptroller-General for the use of the Provincial Secretary, and by him laid before the House yesterday, appears from the report to be fairly comprehensive, if not entirely reliable. It goes to show that the Government went ahead with their expenditures, utterly regardless of the fact that they had not the money on hand, or even in sight, out of which to discharge the obligations they were cheerfully incurring. That has to come. The fact that conditions over which they have no control will probably give them a surplus on the present year's working is something for which they should be profoundly thankful. At the same time, there is every prospect that the estimated expenditure for the ensuing year is just as likely to outrun the revenue as it did last year, and when the end of the year comes, the Government will in all probability find itself in the same predicament as it is in today. Of course no one knows as yet what untapped sources of additional revenue the Rev. Mr. Kierstead may have unearthed; but if the Departmental officials do not know of any, it is not very likely that he will be able to help the Premier out to any vast extent.

Mr. Murray made a great deal about the great saving of money there had been through the taking up of the Valley Railway Bonds. According to his statement, the total cost of redeeming these bonds was \$517,000. To provide for this the Government made an issue of \$500,000, which was sold to Messrs. J. M. Macdonald & Sons at 95. This would realize \$475,000, not much more than half the amount the bonds had cost to redeem. How was the difference met? Or has it been written off or put in a suspense account?

Mr. Murray expressed his surprise that the Standard should make the statement that the annual balance sheet was not that of the Comptroller-General, but of Price, Waterhouse & Co. The Standard made that statement because it believed—and still believes—it to be in accordance with the facts. It is as Mr. Murray says, it was necessary to have the Comptroller's balance sheet audited, then the auditor's report is referred to his post the better. An auditor whose work has to be audited over again by someone else to make sure it is reliable is too costly an official for any concern to employ. Mr. Murray could hardly have given the Comptroller a much poorer testimonial. If Price, Waterhouse & Co. have to audit the books ultimately, why not let them do it in the first place, and leave the Comptroller's mission to attend to other duties, which the Government may feel he can be trusted to perform accurately.

Many other statements were made by Mr. Murray which will bear looking into, but their consideration must be deferred till another time.

### ADMIRAL SIMS' CRITICISMS.

Admiral Sims is certainly proving to be no half-hearted critic of the Navy Department at Washington, and has not hesitated to speak his mind pretty openly in regard to the manner in which they conducted affairs during the time the U. S. fleet was co-operating with the British fleet in the North Sea. Had any British admiral, under similar circumstances, ventured to be half as outspoken as Admiral Sims has been, he would promptly have been "carpeted," and at least severely reprimanded, if not worse. The attitude taken by Admiral Sims is thoroughly supported by Captain Lanning, Assistant Chief of the Bureau of Navigation, who yesterday told the Senate Committee that virtual chaos existed in the Navy Department when the United States went into the war, and that the only policy that Secretary Daniels appeared to know anything about was that of doing nothing.

Admiral Sims claims that failure of the United States Navy Department to throw the full force of its navy into the struggle resulted in the "unnecessary loss of 1,500,000 tons of shipping by submarine attacks in 1917, and 1,000,000 tons in 1918." He claims that he was handicapped at every turn by the neglect of the Washington department to keep him informed as to his plans. The Admiral states that some of the instructions issued made him so exasperated he could have wished to jump overboard. Mr. Daniels seems to enjoy this public demonstration of bailing, and has prepared a case in reply to Admiral Sims which hopes to omit nothing. It even quotes Admiral Jellicoe's report recently submitted to the Canadian Parliament, and which says: "Naval assistance in the shape of cruisers, destroyers and other small vessels, rendered during the last eighteen months of the war by the United States, was of great help in the institution of the system of protecting trade by convoy, and that without this help Great Britain could only have been able to use convoys to a sufficient extent to meet

the submarine menace by abandoning some of her overseas expeditions." As this tribute was not addressed to Washington, and comes from the highest authority, it can hardly be regarded in the light of a mere international expression of politeness; although it may not altogether refute the whole criticism Admiral Sims is levelling against the Washington Navy Department under the administration of Secretary Daniels.

### THE TREATY IN PRESIDENTIAL POLITICS.

President Wilson has escaped by the narrow margin of seven votes in the United States Senate from the necessity either of renegeing in the ratification of the Treaty of Peace and the League of Nations with reservations which he says would nullify the covenant of the league, or else of sending the amended treaty forward for acceptance or rejection by the other signatories of the pact.

The Mail and Empire points out the first consequence of this action by Democrats defending the President from seeming responsibility of defeating the peace treaty is to place that responsibility where it doubtless belongs, upon the shoulders of the Republicans. The real result is to send the issue into the Presidential election campaign, and to compel the nation to fight the issues of the war over again, insofar as their own internal affairs may be concerned.

What the outcome of this political bitterness may be is not easy to forecast. Will the people rise above their political preferences to declare themselves upon the League of Nations? If they do, then they will send back to the White House a President and to the Senate a majority charged with sealing the pact without further political meddling and side-stepping. Because the nation has already declared itself, in effect. The sentiment of the United States, before politics began to stir up differences, was unquestionably favorable to the acceptance as a whole of the Treaty of Versailles.

While politicians of the United States are taking all summer to fight over their petty and selfish hair-splitting the world at large must continue in unrest and uncertainty. Assuredly the responsibility, upon whosever shoulders it may properly rest, is a heavy one, and one whose evil effects not even the United States will escape.

In the course of the discussion on the amendments to the Registry Act in the Legislature on Tuesday afternoon, the Attorney-General said the Lieutenant-Governor-Council had the power to increase the salaries of the County Registrars. Have they indeed? Where and how did they get it? Apparently they did not have it last year, for it needed an Act of Assembly to raise the salary of the St. John Registrar from \$5,500 to \$4,000. As a matter of fact, the salaries of the various Registrars are fixed by Section 71 of the Registry Act, and this section has never been repealed, or altered so as to permit the Lieutenant-Governor-Council to change the salaries already fixed. If it has, the amending Act is to be found in the published volumes of Statutes.

When the Provincial Government a few weeks ago had some St. John and Quebec Railway Bonds to sell, they called for tenders for the same from some selected brokers and not by public advertisement. In the Public Accounts Committee, yesterday, Mr. Fred Magee, the Minister of Finance, criticized the Government's method of operation and expressed the opinion that when the Province had bonds for disposal they ought to be sold in a more popular manner than had been adopted. Mr. Magee seems to be disposed to act as a friendly critic of the Government, but the trouble is that he backs away when it comes to a showdown.

France's new big gun is credited with a range three times as great as the Germans' famous big Bertha. If the armament designers and builders keep on perfecting their engines of destruction, the stage may yet be reached when countries will be in a position to make war on each other by merely staying at home and shooting from long distance into each other's territory.

It may be news to the average reader to learn that the American army of occupation in Germany still numbers 18,000 men, and that the other Allied countries are represented by some 23,000 troops. If the U. S. Senate is balking at the League of Nations proposal, the country is represented at the possible danger point in Europe by quite a respectable force.

Mail and Empire: President Wilson having signified the French Government as "militaristic" and the United States Senate having declared for the independence of Ireland, it remains for the House of Representatives to kick Belgium on the shins, and move a vote of confidence in Germany.

Praise, like gold and diamonds, owes its value only to its scarcity.—John.

### WHAT OTHERS SAY

Germany's Blunder.)  
 Toronto Telegram: German blunder rolled through an undetected country in 1914 only to retreat. German stupidity sacrificed 500,000 men against the impassable Verdun. Now German ambition sought to crush the British nation at arms, in battle array, and unaided. Blunders of a similar nature were capped by a more super-blunder than that last offensive of the German arms. The great gamble of one million lives was thrown away against an army, undetected, that faded not away. Its battered remnants brood disconsolate today in German homes, bitter survivors of a million sacrifice.

Affects All Alike.  
 Montreal Star: Reduction of the high cost of living is a common responsibility. The problem concerns alike capital and labor, the farmer and the city dweller. High-priced necessities mean a greater cost of living to the increasing extent. The farmer must feel the reflected handicap, through the cost of an employer and from the greater cost of everything he buys. Capital feels the high cost of living in the continual restlessness of employees. This pronounced condition, observable from some time past, tends towards decreased production.

No "Direct Action."  
 Bangor Daily News: British labor, after all, remains conservative. It has refused to adopt the policy of "direct action," and decided to seek accomplishment of its purposes entirely by constitutional means.

The World's Unrest.  
 Charlotte-Guardian: It would be useless at this stage to try to account for the universal unrest agitating and disturbing practically every country in the world. It is unquestionably an aftermath of the war as the war was an aftermath of a harvest of other sowing. That this unrest will eventually subside, as the storm subsides, need not be questioned; what it may in the meantime result in is as uncertain as is the effect of the storm.

### A BIT OF VERSE

THE LIMIT.  
 When butchers raised the price of bread,  
 And butchers raised the price of meat,  
 A lot of words we left unsaid  
 Including "crook" and "bilk" and "thief."  
 We merely stifled down a sigh  
 The things they kept upon their shelves  
 Were things we simply had to buy,  
 And which we couldn't make, our selves.

But when the barbers of the land  
 Advance the hair cut to half a dollar,  
 We'll take a firm, decided stand,  
 And make a loud and ringing holler.  
 We've stood for raises, goodness  
 On rents, and light, and coal and such,  
 On shoes, and shirts and ties and hose,  
 But half-dollar hair-cuts are too much!

Perhaps we'll let our hair grow long,  
 Like Mr. Percival Macdonald,  
 And though we see the passing through  
 Inspect us with deriding eyes,  
 And think that we're a poor, poor lot,  
 (And that's an awful thought to harbor);  
 It's something that we'd rather do  
 Than pay half a dollar to the barber.

Or we shall take the sugar bowl,  
 And place it firmly on our dome.  
 Like grandma did, dear kindly soul,  
 What time she clipped our hair,  
 Back home.  
 And cut our tresses in the style  
 That in the dear departed days,  
 Made all our little playmates smile,  
 But anyway, we'll beat that raise!

### THE LAUGH LINE

"Never," said a wise woman, "ask a man if he cares about anyone, 'ave' before he met you. He will lie—or you will cry."

Proving it.  
 Doctor:—There is absolutely nothing the matter with you, my dear lady.  
 Lady:—Nothing the matter with me? Suzanne, enough for the doctor the way I coughed last night.—Edna.

Knew by Experience.  
 "So our dentist friend has purchased a mining prospect."  
 "Yes."  
 "Well, he ought to win out. That fellow can hit a gold streak with the least drilling of anybody I know."

The One Who Suffered.  
 "Sun," said old Keesman, "you must give up smoking; it affects the heart."  
 "That may be, but it gives me palpitation every time I see you light one of those expensive cigars."

Debtor Sat On.  
 Poorpaps—I've brought that last pair of trousers to be repaired. You know I sit a lot.  
 Tailor—Yes, and perhaps you've brought the bill to be repaired, too. You know I've stood a lot.

Nicely Caught.  
 They were sitting out a dance. He: "Here comes the young parson. I wonder if he means to join us?" She (triflingly): "Wouldn't it be advisable for you to propose first?"

### MIDDLEMORE HOME

A party of children expected to arrive from England, those desirous of applying are requested to forward applications at once. Address all communications, Middlemore Home, Fairview Station, Halifax, C. N. S.

## Benny's Note Book

BY LEE PAPE

Me and pop was taking a wawk, before supper yesterday. Jest taking a wawk, and who came up the other way taking another wawk, but Sid Hunt and his father, me saying, G. pop, sint that a coincidence, jest wen me and you are taking a wawk, Sid and Mr. Hunt are taking one too.

The world is a small place after all, sed pop. And him and Sid, pop and Mr. Hunt starting to argue about politics, Sid sed, I don't know it, and I sed, Wat do you know about Teddys latest trick, he shakes hands with his hine legs now, and I sed, Aw, wats that that sint anything, I knew a dog once that could snap its ears just the same as you snap your fingers.

Me jest saying that on account of Sid allways bragging about Teddy, and Sid sed, Aw, go on, youre jest making that up. Making anything up, jest because Teddy cant do it that dont say no dog cant, I sed, and Sid sed, I dont believe it, and I sed, Youre jellias, thats wry, I knew another dog once that could stand on its frunt legs and shoot a Roman candle up in the air with its tale.

Yes you did, like fun you did, sed Sid, and I sed, All rite, then I didnt, who doled you a Mar and be done with it? body better habest, neither.

Wich jest then I hard pop still arguing with Mr. Hunt, saying, Im not saying anything about you personally, Hunt, understand, but your party is a gang of crooks.

I understand exactly, dont tpologize, and I mite add that your party is a pack of liars and scoundrels, sed Mr. Hunt.

Rats, rats, comp on, Benny, sed pop. And me and him kepp on wawking, pop saying, That man Hunt is a genuwine jackass and a 14 carrot boob, and me saying, So's that fello Sid.

One Scottish M.P. has not made a speech in the British House of Commons for nearly twenty years.

### Daily Fashion Hint

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186 Erin Street

## St. Peter's Y.M.A. Scored Success

Large Audience in St. Vincent's Auditorium Last Night Delighted With Production of "What Happened to Jones."

A packed house greeted the comedy of players under the leadership of that veteran actor J. B. Haggerty in presenting "What Happened to Jones" under the auspices of the St. Peter's Y. M. A. in St. Vincent's Auditorium last night.

Mr. Haggerty and Miss Gormley were well up to their usual standard and with the assistance of Mr. Kennedy were largely responsible for the success of the play, and the numerous witty sallies were presented in an excellent manner and caused many a laugh. The play was staged under the direction of Mrs. A. C. D. Wilson.

The two specialties between acts were well received. Between act one and two, Miss Lydia McCloskey sang "Follow the Boys" from Little Sam, and the play was staged under the direction of Mrs. A. C. D. Wilson.

The other specialty was by James J. Duffy, who sang "When You Look in the Heart of a Rose." The setting

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