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Letters for publication should be written on one side of the paper only and the real name of the author should be attached. This will not be used unless consent be given in the communication.

The publication of any letter does not signify that the Editor thereby shows his agreement with the opinions therein expressed.

ST. JOHN'S, NFLD., FEB. 7, 1914.

OUR POINT OF VIEW.

SMALL POTATO TACTICS.

When the F.P.U. started an agitation last fall for the holding of competitive exams, in filling Civil Service positions The Daily News immediately set up violent opposition to the idea, although it was not so long ago that this same paper supported such a movement and published strong editorials pointing out its advantages.

The motto of The News is evidently "Good Lord and Good Devil." It says "Good Lord" as approbation to every move of the Government and "Good Devil," as a location for every proposition put forward by the Opposition.

If further evidence of the "small potato" nature of the tactics of The News be required, we have it in the manner in which that paper handled the reports of the Debate on the Food Inspection Bill.

The speech of the Leader of Union Party, advocating a more careful and systematic inspection of the milk supply of this city is immediately construed into a terrible insult to the farmers. To suggest that some of them might have watered their milk, a possibility the present system of inspection does nothing to prevent, means, according to The News, that Mr. Coaker stigmatised the city milk-sellers as "rogues."

So small are some people when "dressed" in a little brief authority.

The purpose of the Food Inspection Act is to prevent grocers and others from selling food adulterated or otherwise unfit for human consumption. Sir Edward Morris introduced it. Are we, therefore, to gather therefrom that the Premier thereby expresses his belief that all grocers or even a majority of them are "rogues?"

Certainly not. We applaud Sir Edward for making a move to assure to our people the protection of their food supplies.

Yet when an Opposition member asks to have milk thoroughly inspected he is immediately stigmatised as a slanderer of the farmer and the milk vendor.

The editor of The News by this action characterises himself as one of these small, mean, sneaking politicians who will block the most desirable reform that party ends may be served.

We have, therefore, in our Legislative Council a man who does not scruple to take chances on jeopardising infant lives in order that he may make St. John's farmers believe he is their champion against an imaginary villain.

Impure milk, or milk of low food value, means a high infant death rate. No city is justified in taking chances on such a vital matter. Thoroughly systematic inspection will have no terror for the honest farmer—it will afford him the best possible advertising—but it will have a deterring influence on the man who may have a weakness for getting rich quick by trifling with the food and health of other people.

There are plenty of honest farmers in and round St. John's—the great majority are, we believe, of this desirable class. But a very small minority of vendors—even one vendor, indeed can do an immense amount of harm by dispensing poor or impure milk. And, if a thorough inspection of our milk supply rules out a bare single dishonest vendor a year the expenditure thereon, however great, will be amply justified.

Every city we know of, gives practical consideration to this important subject; takes no chances on milk producers and vendors being honest, or otherwise. It is up to us to do the same. Always the ounce of prevention is better than the pound of cure.

The News states that "the milk supply in this city the past few years leaves little to be desired." We hope, in the interests of our hopeless infant population, that The News is absolutely correct in making this statement.

But we want better evidence than a bare assertion of a vote-seeking Government-subsidised newspaper. We want to get such evidence from properly qualified medical officers after an exhaustive series of tests, before we will regard it as reliable enough to accept in a court of public opinion.

The News is very free with its claims and statements. But the paper reflects the narrow, partisan attitude of its editor who is hide bound, politically to the acts and proposals of the present Government and whose public outlook is so circumscribed that he grasps up even the desirable reforms suggested by the Opposition as fair bait to use in an attempt to catch votes.

NOT WORRYING OVER MUCH.

The people of England do not seem to be worrying over much about the so-called "sure chance" of Civil War in Ulster, if Home Rule becomes law. The result of the bye-election in North Durham seems to prove that the bogie raised by the Unionists has not scared them into changing their politics.

In the recent three-cornered fight in that constituency the Liberal candidate beat his two opponents by good majorities obtaining 1500 more votes than his next highest rival, who was a Laborite.

HAS A CONSCIENCE.

President Wilson has evidently set himself the noble task of rehabilitating the honor of the United States in the eyes of the other great powers. And it is none too soon, for the great American Republic has come, of late years, to be regarded as a nation that regards but lightly the obligations imposed by international treaties.

The honor of the United States was badly besmirched by the Panama Canal Act of 1912, which caused Great Britain to protest most emphatically and, as a further mark of her strong disapproval of the measure, to refuse to exhibit officially at the San Francisco Fair which is intended as a review of the progress of the Anglo-Saxons race.

In 1901, when the United States undertook to build the Panama Canal Great Britain signed an agreement with the American Republic, under which she waived her rights to object to the undertaking. This agreement, which was known as the "Hay-Pauncefote Treaty," stipulated that "the Canal shall be free and open to the vessels of commerce and of war of all nations, on terms of entire equality, so that there shall be no discrimination."

But, in 1912, when the undertaking was approaching completion, the United States Federal Legislature, passed a measure entitled "The Panama Canal Act," which provided that "No tolls shall be levied on vessels engaged in the coastwise trade of the United States."

W. H. Taft, was at this time President of the United States and, owing to his public pronouncement on the desirability of maintaining the world's peace, it was believed that he would veto this bill, even after it had passed the Senate. He signed it, however, and this evoked a storm of protest from the British authorities.

The Act was a direct violation of the international agreement of 1901 and its effect was to put most of the commerce passing through the Canal in the hands of the U.S. shipping interests, which really meant the great shipping trusts. It was generally understood that President Taft assented to the measure, hoping thereby to gain from interested parties political support that would gain for him a second term in office.

The international prestige of the United States suffered greatly by this gross breach of international faith and it had almost come to be regarded as a diplomatic axiom that nothing but force would keep the republic to an agreement, the observance of which was likely to prevent the United States from securing possible profit from any undertaking.

If President Wilson secures, according to his declared intentions, the repeal of this Act he will do much to restore international faith in the honor and integrity of the United States in its dealings with the other great powers of the world.

SOUTH AFRICAN TROUBLES.

The labor troubles in South Africa are having a marked effect on the general affairs of the British Empire. The deportation of the strike leaders has been the subject of acrid comment in the Imperial House of Commons and may lead to a breach between Premier Asquith and the Laborite wing of his party. If this happens the down fall of the Liberal Government is likely to occur.

Heretofore Premier Botha has been most successful as a leader of the Government of United South Africa. In no other Overseas Dominion of the British Empire has the racial labor problem caused administrators so much trouble and anxiety. Yet the erstwhile Boer General has for a long time succeeded in maintaining peace and some semblance of harmony between the opposing factions.

This being the case, the whole Empire is led to believe that Botha regarded himself as justified, in the interests of the common good of South Africa in deporting the men who head an agitation that necessitated the call to arms of a greater force than took the field on behalf of the Boer republics during the late war.

The Minister of Defence declared in the South African parliament that the deported men were undesirable and that their continued presence in the Dominion constituted a menace to the Country.

The act of deportation, however, has all the appearance of an autocratic move and as such is little likely, what ever the reasons that actuated it, to be regarded with any degree of favor, by the parliament of the British Empire, the most democratic of modern times. Hence the protests of the Labor members of the British House of Commons. Hence, too, an unwelcome addition to the already heavy burden of administrative difficulties that Premier Asquith has to bear. Will it be "the last straw" breaking the overburdened political "camel's" back?

AS OTHERS SEE IT.

Blind in Spots Too

Hamilton Spectator—It must be admitted that justice is kind, in spots, when a Toronto thief gets but five years for appropriating \$50,000.

Contest of Judgment

Toronto Star—Manitoba offer \$7,000 reward for the capture for a criminal and in British Columbia a court awards a husband \$1 damages for the death of his wife in an accident.

Wanted at Home

Montreal Herald—Ontario papers almost unanimously condemn the idea of appointing Hon. Adam Beck as Lord Strathcona's successor. The reason they assign is that Ontario needs Mr. Beck too badly to spare him. And this isn't flattery, either.

Graft in Japan

Ottawa Journal—Graft has been discovered in the Japanese navy, an admiral taking big sums of money to secure contracts for a certain firm. While we do not approve of graft the Japs have been help up to us as so blamed virtuous that the story brings a feeling almost of pleasure.

The Blight Spreads

St. Thomas Journal—"Divorced women denied sacrament by Anglican church," say a heading. Right and proper that it should be so, especially since it tends to curtail the blight, that is spreading to Canada from across the line. That is one thing we do not ask reciprocity in.

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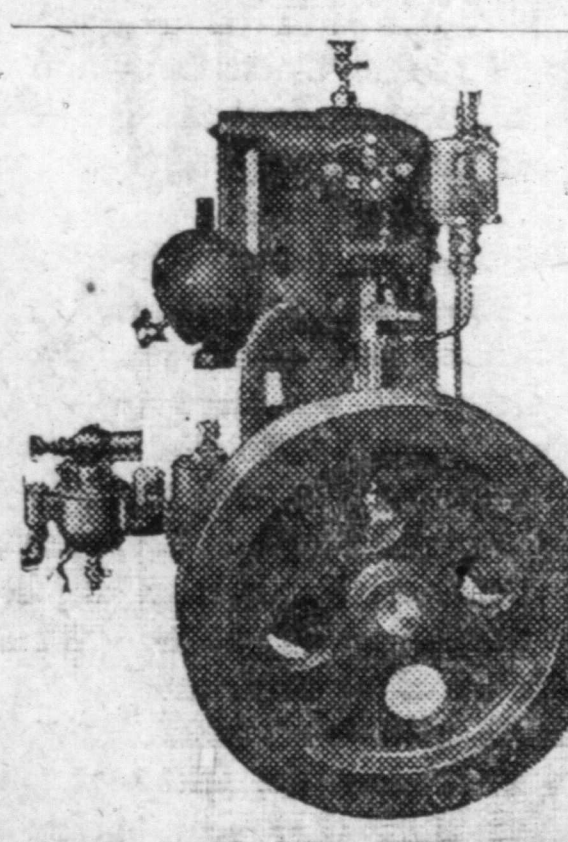
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