

The St. John Standard

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ST. JOHN, N. B., THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 1914.

THE CASE OF BENTON.

When Francisco Villa, leader of the Mexican Constitutionalists, stood William S. Benton, a British subject, up against a wall and faced him with a firing squad, he probably thought he was merely ridding himself of an objectionable enemy. But his action may be fraught with far-reaching consequences for, unfortunately for the Mexican, his victim was a subject of that Empire which does not allow to remain unpunished those who molest or harm her citizens. Benton was a British subject. He was done to death by order of a man who has no standing as a recognized belligerent. Whether Villa was or was not justified in his action under Mexican law does not matter. He will be called upon to prove that the laws of the nations of the world give him authority for the shedding of one Englishman's blood.

There is no disposition to be just to the Mexican incident but in the light of the past few months it is worth while to compare the attitude of the British government over this recent incident with that of the United States over the outrages that have been perpetrated apparently with no fear of results. Americans have been harassed and molested by Mexican soldiers both under the orders of the president and his opponent. Life may not have been taken but the subjects of Uncle Sam have been subjected to loss of a few annoyances without much attention being given to their complaints at Washington. The United States has undertaken to protect foreign residents in Mexico but with the taking of Benton's life the matter passes out of their hands. If it is found that Villa was not justified in his action he probably will be brought to a more severe accounting than would have been the case if Washington was the court of last resort. Great Britain may be regarded as slow and behind the times in some matters but better and more powerful men than Villa have found that to spill British blood or molest British freedom is decidedly risky business.

THE ROOT OF EMPIRE.

There is just a suspicion abroad to-day that with all our talk of Empire we have not yet discovered the true secret of its development. Though the problem seems to be one of the most far-reaching in modern life yet with all its diversity we have an instinct that deep down underlying the many varied outward forms there must lie some inward principle which at bottom unites them all. And the duty resting upon the average Britisher to-day is to search out this basic principle fearlessly, throw aside the unimportant outward trappings and penetrate to the very core and heart of the matter.

Sir Francis Youngblood, the distinguished traveller and man of affairs, has made some notes on this problem of Empire and this is what he says: "It is important to attend to defence, to political reforms, to education and to commerce, but infinitely more important is it to make the soul of the Empire sound." And he sees the solution of this problem in great noble-hearted men who have the root of the matter in them. They must be men who can think imperially and always ready to sacrifice self interest for the good of the country.

On every hand today there is a more urgent craving to be united to our fellows and with them reach forward to higher things whether in national or international affairs. This is a hopeful sign of the times for these people, whether they live in high places or not, form one of the chief bonds of Empire. Without them the whole structure would go to pieces. To illustrate this we need only call to mind the fact that the servants of the Crown in India have been the real builders of Empire there. They have been men of such quality as to command the respect of the 300 million natives to whom politics and western theories of life mean very little. And through them we have kept in hand a people no trappings of war could overawe.

At the present time the authorities of the United States are coming to close grips with this problem. They are raising the standard for their would-be citizens all round. Henceforth it is to be quality rather than quantity that will count. The day has passed when the well known comment will satisfy, "God made him; let him pass for a man." For years corner has been satisfied with a money test. Each immigrant proposing to make the United States his home has had to pay a head tax besides satisfying the officers that he was not likely to become a public charge. By this means the immigration department has provided for its upkeep with a fair margin of profit, for last year almost two millions of dollars were turned

into the treasury as a surplus from this head tax. Not satisfied with this, congress proposes to make an educational test as well. It would keep out of the country all who cannot read or write and in this way elevate the standard of the nation's life.

But in the final instance the true test is the moral one. Strong manhood is the chief product of any country. Wealth will destroy rather than enrich us unless we have men who understand the responsibility which it brings. More numbers may prove to be a hindrance rather than a help to a nation's well being. The call is for manhood and in this lies the real root of the problem of Empire.

SPREADING THE LIFE NET

It is not surprising to find that the bought-and-paid-for Telegraph has joined its brethren of the Grit press in spreading the life net, so that some remnant of the party reputation may be caught when the followers of Laurier seek to escape from the fire of tribulation to follow the N. T. R. report. The Telegraph, since its latest turn-over, has supported the urbane gentleman who held the portfolio of Minister of Public Works in the late government and with reason can lay claim to accomplishments in the net spreading line. With Dr. Pugsley well and active in the ranks of a government party, either provincial or federal, one never knew when the net might be needed, and in consequence, it was safest to keep it ready for instant use. The Telegraph usually does it ingeniously, but its efforts to minimize the seriousness of the N. T. R. report are decidedly crude; possibly passable as the bandwaggon of its younger brother, but not up to the usual Telegraph standard.

For instance, in Tuesday's paper, the Telegraph would have its readers believe that the report contains "no specific charges of wrongdoing, its principal features being the setting up of the opinion of one group of engineers against that of another group with respect to the wisdom of building a first class or a second class railway from Winnipeg to Moncton."

A very nice conclusion and, on the face of it, plausible, but like most of the Telegraph's contentions, it will hardly bear close scrutiny. The facts are that Hon. W. S. Fielding, minister of finance in the Laurier government, stated in the House of Commons that he had been advised by experienced railway men that the cost of such a railway from Winnipeg to Quebec, 1,324 miles, would be \$25,000 per mile, or \$33,000,000, and from Quebec to Moncton, 460 miles, at \$31,250 per mile, or \$14,375,000, a total of \$47,375,000.

Compared with Mr. Fielding's estimate, it is interesting to note that the cost to date has been more than \$109,000,000, and when completed, with interest added, will exceed the astounding sum of \$234,000,000, or almost four times the Fielding figure. The Telegraph's little difference between groups of engineers. It can be seen, has already cost the country more than \$44,000,000 and will prove much more serious than that.

But no difference between groups of engineers can explain downright dishonesty. Even the Telegraph, skillful as it is in the art of net spreading, cannot escape the arraignment of dishonesty that made it possible for it to firm to tear up the sum of \$740,000 on two sections of the road without doing anything to earn that vast amount. The Telegraph cannot explain away the circumstances under which the contracts for certain sections of the road were awarded to firms who, the commissioners believe, had advanced information as to estimated quantities and used this information to their own profit. Such methods are not honest, and yet they were the methods adopted on much of the road. The Telegraph net is carefully spread, but the mesh is too large. The reputation of the Liberal party cannot be saved by such means.

A GOOD JURY.

Coroner Roberts evidently intends that the enquiry into the death of the two victims of the Grand Union Hotel fire shall be more than a cursory examination of surface evidence. There has been a disposition in the past, and we do not say that it has been confined to St. John, to regard a coroner's inquest largely in the light of a formality that must be observed but from which there is seldom much useful result. Those familiar verdicts, "by the visitation of Providence," "by his own hand," "through being struck by a train," and others of their ilk have become almost old friends, but it is not often that the men selected to deliberate upon the evidence actually carry their work to the point of probing beneath the surface to discover the more or less obscure causes for the fatalities they are considering.

The coroners are not to blame for

this condition. They present the case and carefully direct the attention of their jury, but there their function ceases. It is one of the features of the jury system that the judge, while he may influence his jurors, cannot direct with absolutism the nature of their decisions. The fault in most cases lies with the selection of the jury and it is in this that Coroner Roberts has made a radical and commendable departure. It is doubtful if, in the history of inquests in St. John, a coroner's jury has been composed of as representative or intelligent citizens as the men who will probe Tuesday night's fire. Their finding will be awaited with much interest.

The world's richest man, John D. Rockefeller, shovels snow for exercise. The world's poorest man shovels snow for a living. And between the two extremes are rafta of men who wield the snow shovel to keep peace in the family.

Mr. Borden's Courtesy.

(Sydney Post)
 Mr. Borden's prompt and courteous acquiescence in Sir Wilfrid Laurier's suggestion that the committee of redistribution should consist of nine members instead of seven, although the Premier's view was that the smaller number would give the best results, is an striking contrast with Mr. Fielding's dictum that the Opposition in the House of Commons "are only entitled to such rights as the majority give them." The difference between Mr. Borden's attitude and Mr. Fielding's is the difference between a broad minded, courteous, gentleman and an arrogant politician.

Diary of Events

HISTORIC DAYS IN CANADA

It was at Paardeberg that the Canadian Contingent in South Africa had the first important opportunity to show its mettle, and the men from the Dominion covered themselves with glory in a conflict in which twenty Canadians were killed and four times as many wounded. On the morning of February 25, 1900, just fourteen years ago today, the Canadians took up their position in the trenches at Paardeberg, in Orange Free State, where Cronje and the Boer general, had been brought to bay, and surrounded by troops from Canada and England. The Canadians succeeded in the trenches within 500 yards of the Boer lines. In this advanced position the untired Dominion soldiers spent the day in deepening and extending the trenches. Early the following morning, at a little after two, the Canadians were ordered to leave the shelter of the trenches and advance upon the Boer position. Holding on to each other to prevent themselves from becoming separated in the darkness, the Canadians in a deep point within sixty yards of the Boer trenches before they were discovered. A few scattering shots broke the stillness of the night and a concerted rifle fire from the line upon the attacking party from a line of Boer trenches, 600 yards long. Lyndoch's trenches were the Boer position. While the front rank fought, the rear rank worked feverishly on a new trench, and by the coming of day the Canadians were firmly entrenched in a commanding position. The white flag went up from the enemy Boer trench, and the Canadians, Cronje surrendered to them. It was useless to fight longer, and on Feb. 27, the anniversary of Majuba Hill 1881, he surrendered to Lord Roberts.

THE HUMAN PROCESSION

BUFFALO BILL.

Col. William Frederick Cody, the famous scout and showman, who has been the hero of boys throughout the world, was born in Iowa sixty-six years ago today. His father was a settler in the "border war," and in the Kansas-Nebraska territory he took up the support of the "border war," and in the "border war," he became a scout, and at sixteen he became a scout in that capacity by the government. When the Kansas Pacific railway was building, the young plainsman contracted to supply enough buffalo meat to feed the laborers employed, and in a year and a half he killed 4,200 buffaloes, and the name of the man who was so successful in operations against hostile Indians, he entered the show business in which his amusement enterprise has been in the world, are contributed by him to the competition of the "movies."

A FAMOUS FINANCIER

Thomas William Lawson, millionaire broker and master of a vigorous English which he used to lambast "frenzied finance" and the "system," was born in Charlestown, Mass., fifty-seven years ago today.

FIRST THINGS

CHINA'S ENCYCLOPEDIA
 The first European encyclopedia was probably the work of Abulpharagius, the first volume of which was published 672 years ago today. To published 672 years, however, belong the credit for having originated the encyclopedia idea, and China boasts of having the largest of all encyclopedias. The Great Encyclopedia of China is by far the most stupendous literary accomplishment in the history of the world. The work of completion has been carried on for centuries, and has engaged the labors of over 2,000 scholars. The volume contains 22,000 volumes and is bound in 11,100 volumes, each half an inch in thickness. The work contains a total of 17,450 books 450 feet in height. There are only a few complete sets of this gigantic work in existence. The first English encyclopedia was issued in 1620. The Great French "encyclopedia" of Diderot and D'Alembert, whose daring writings are believed to have hastened the French revolution, was published in 1751 and succeeding years. The Encyclopedia Britannica was first published by William Smellie in 1771.

IN LIGHTER VEIN

AND HE DID



"These political job hunters hate to work."
 "Do they?"
 "Yes. I just read of a fellow turning down the Secretaryship of Labor because the name sounded ominous."

Vain Man

"What I am today I owe to my wife," he said, proudly.
 "Well, what are you?" asked the cynic.
 "I'm the husband of the best bridge player in my neighborhood."

Why He Turned Pale

"Wretch!" exclaimed his wife.
 "Show me that letter!"
 "What letter?" replied the innocent looking husband.
 "The one in your hand. It's from a woman. I can see by the writing, and you turned pale when you saw it."
 "Yes. Here it is. It's your dress-maker's bill."

Realizing His Importance

"Yes, sir," said Philip. "I've come to the conclusion that I amount to something, after all. There have been times when I was disposed to believe that I was a mere cipher in the world, but I can never have so small an opinion of myself again."
 "What has caused this sudden change in your estimation of yourself?"
 "I have just been talking to a man who wants my vote."

PILES

Dr. Chase's Ointment will relieve you at once of all the pain and itching of Piles. Sample box free if you mention this paper and enclose 2c. stamp to pay postage.

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Perfect Eye-Sight

Only those with perfect sight can do perfect work. The skilled worker therefore has vital need of good sight—it behooves him to care for it, to preserve his skill.

Good sight has a cash value because it affects the quality of one's work, and also because imperfect sight means imperfect health. Many nervous disorders are due to defective sight, and all skill quickly deteriorates when the nerves are affected.

If you are a skilled worker don't take for granted the condition of your eyes. Have them examined. If they are right, well and good; but otherwise you can take steps to avoid trouble. We will tell you just what your eyes need.

L. L. Sharpe & Son,

Jewelers and Opticians
 21 KING STREET, ST. JOHN, N. B.

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He Did
 When Skimmerplate arrived home an hour later than usual he was nibbling a clove.
 "I stopped in a concert hall for a few moments," he observed. "The music was intoxicating."
 "That's right!" exclaimed his better half. "Blame it on the music!"
 Eleven Others
 "So you claim to be a literary man, eh?"
 "Yes, sir; I wrote that book, 'A Dozen Ways to make a Living.'"
 "And yet you are selling shoe-strings!"
 "Yes, sir; that's one of the ways."

Week Day References Required
 "I have her," began the applicant, "a letter of recommendation from the pastor of my church."
 "That's very good, as far as it goes," replied the head of the firm, "but we won't need your services on Sunday. Have you any references from anybody who knows you the other six days of the week?"

VERY QUARRELSOME NEIGHBORS.

Names of the parties are Corns and Toes—both were unhappy till the trouble was remedied by Putnam's Corn Extractor. Any corn goes out of business in 24 hours if "Putnam's" is applied—try it, 25c. at all dealers.

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New adjustable "Model B" with adjustable Guard, permitting a light, medium or close shave at will.
 This new model Stops, Shaves, Cleans, without detaching blade.
500 Shaves from 12 Auto-Stop Blades or 2 mills per shave guaranteed.
Sets—\$5.00 Up

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