

The St. John Standard

Published by The Standard Limited, 82 Prince William Street, St. John, N. B., Canada. H. V. MACKINNON, Manager and Editor.
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ST. JOHN, N. B., WEDNESDAY, JUNE 25, 1919.

THE HARBOR DEAL.

A meeting of twenty or twenty-five citizens, members of the Board of Trade and others interested in shipping, has unanimously decided that it is in the interests of St. John to accept the proposal now before Parliament covering the transfer of the St. John Harbor to the Federal Government. Apparently the feeling of these citizens is that St. John is no longer able to carry the load which it voluntarily assumed and that it is not in a sufficiently favorable financial position to proceed of its own account with new works which will be required almost immediately. Rather than undertake this responsibility for any further period, the opinion of this meeting was that the city should sell out for whatever price it can get. Messrs. Wignmore and Elkin are inclined to the same opinion, for they have been active in promoting the transfer, especially during the past few months, and now feel that should St. John reject the offer which is made the whole proposal must fail, inasmuch as in their opinion the Federal Government will not increase the price now designated.

In this proposed transfer there are very strong reasons for and against the completion of the deal. St. John has expended \$2,000,000 on the harbor, as well as \$234,000 additional interest charges. It possesses harbor fisheries capitalized at \$108,000, the C. P. R. Wharf, so called, valued at \$200,000, Partridge Island, entered on the books as worth \$75,000, as well as other incidentals which give to this harbor an actual value of \$2,900,000. But in the preparation of the civic balance sheet, the City's entire interest in this property is entered at \$2,500,000, which forms one of the principal securities against our capital debt. It is readily admitted that we cannot afford further expenditures on the harbor. It is equally clear that in justice to this community, St. John should receive not only the amount actually expended, but fair interest on the outlay, in view of the fact that we undertook the development of a national port which has been of inestimable value to all Canada. As a community we have been, and are now, entirely agreeable to any plans of transfer, by means of which we will obtain from the Federal Government the actual cash outlay. Accountants from Ottawa have found that outlay to be as already stated and the responsible ministers of the department interested have admitted our right to return of those expenditures and the interest paid on them. By mutual consent, therefore, the purchase price of the harbor was fixed at \$2,200,000. By accepting a smaller amount than this we are surrendering all control of the harbor, are giving up the revenues enjoyed by the City through the sale of fisheries, harbor receipts and otherwise without fair recompense. While it is true that of late the harbor has not been a money-making proposition, this has been entirely due to the existing low rates, and it is clear that should we increase our rates to a reasonable figure, there would be a net revenue return to the City. By accepting this \$2,000,000 now named we are writing off from our balance sheet half a million dollars of securities and depreciating our credit to just that extent, and we are displaying weakness by apparently jumping at whatever proposition the Federal Government agrees to put up to us.

On the other hand, while no assurance of early construction is given, it is only reasonable to believe that should the Federal Government acquire St. John Harbor, it must in its own interest rebuild certain properties now in bad repair. It must extend its elevator equipment to cover the new berths now in use. It must protect the entire west side by the completion of the Partridge Island Breakwater, and it must provide from year to year such additional wharfage accommodation as may be needed. The transfer will relieve St. John of a heavy financial burden. It will eliminate the ever-present dread of disaster through fire or otherwise and, by eventually leading to nationalization may result in St. John becoming a much more important port than it can ever be under present conditions. In these and on other respects there is much to be said on both sides and, while in principle no objection can be made to the transfer on a reasonable basis, still the action of Ottawa in reducing by \$200,000 the agreed purchase price is small business, and this action, if the deal goes through, will inevitably result in a permanent feeling that St. John has been unfairly treated and that Ottawa has taken advantage of our weakness for the purpose of driving a hard bargain.

CIVIL SERVICE SALARIES.

The re-classification of the civil service provides for generous increases of salary, particularly among those classes of workers hitherto most poorly paid. The tendency is to make the new minimum in many cases equal to the old maximum salary, though whether even this provision, amounting in some instances to more than

fifty-seven per cent., will be sufficient to satisfy all applicants may well be doubted. In the Post Office department, for instance, letter carriers receive a minimum wage of six hundred and twenty-five dollars. This is advanced to eight hundred and forty dollars. Sorters and railway mail clerks will be given eight hundred and forty dollars as a minimum against six hundred according to the present scale. Transfer clerks are advanced from six hundred and twenty-five to nine hundred. The increase through length of service and efficiency are proportionate, so that the older members of the various staffs will enjoy much better salaries than has heretofore been the case. This is equally true with respect to Customs and Inland Revenue, although in the former the advances are not quite so marked. Customs examiners will receive a minimum of nine hundred dollars, and clerks and manifest clerks nine hundred and sixty against eight hundred and nine hundred respectively today. In the Inland Revenue first rate excisemen ranged under the old scale from eight hundred to eleven hundred and under the new classification nine hundred and sixty to twelve hundred and sixty; second grade, one thousand to thirteen hundred old range, and under the new thirteen hundred and twenty dollars to fifteen hundred and sixty dollars; third grade, old range eleven hundred to fifteen hundred dollars and under new classification sixteen hundred and twenty to eighteen hundred and sixty dollars.

SOLDIERS OVERSEAS.

General Turner in a special order issued to Canadian troops overseas expresses deep regret with reference to the recent riots in Witley Camp and at Epsom. He advises the men that these disturbances must cease, but that should there be further disorder all present at the time will render themselves liable to severe punishment. His intimation is that hereafter there will be no such thing as innocent bystanders, for according to strict military discipline it is the duty of spectators to prevent violations of the regulations. In view of the deep respect in which General Turner is held by the men it is possible that his warning may prove effective to a certain point, but that it will be sufficient to overcome dissatisfaction created through what those men regard as unfair treatment is very doubtful. Soldiers still overseas are possessed with only one idea, that of getting back to their homes at the earliest opportunity. And they are not inclined to make allowances for lack of steamship accommodation, for delays due to labor troubles, or for other causes which interfere with the government's programme of demobilization. The men are homesick and tired, and while all Canadians will regret that our soldiers are laying themselves open to criticism by reason of disorderly conduct, yet there will be a great deal of sympathy with those overseas, and a hope that the military and naval authorities will do everything in their power to expedite the return of these men to Canada.

SOLDIERS' PENSIONS.

Although Canada has been more generous in its treatment of soldiers that has any other of the nations engaged in the war, there will be little criticism of the report presented by the special committee on pensions, which advocates a decided increase to all soldiers of lower ranks, or to their relatives. It is the recognized duty of this country to take the best possible care of the families of the dead fighters, and of the men who in the service of Canada have been deprived of the ability to earn for themselves, and it is equally clear from this report that the feeling of the committee was opposed to perpetuating the very marked difference now existing between the amounts of pensions to private soldiers and non-coms. and those granted to officers or their families. The tendency of the new schedule will be to overcome this difference to a considerable extent by providing those now in receipt of the smallest pensions with material increases. While in certain cases, even the new scale seems insufficient in view of the present high cost of the necessities of life, it must be remembered that these high costs will not continue indefinitely and that with return to normal conditions the value of the pensions will be enhanced.

A GENEROUS GIFT.

In establishing five scholarships for New Brunswick Lord Beaverbrook has given additional evidence of his continued personal interest in his native province. He has in this gift suggested to those who will administer the fund certain conditions which will make those prizes available to students whose families may not be sufficiently well off to provide for them the higher education which they desire, and yet there is nothing in the terms of the gift to prevent brilliant scholars from participating in the advantages to be derived from such scholarships. This

is a matter which will undoubtedly be left more or less to the decision of the trustees. And in his selection of those who will administer the funds during the experimental period Lord Beaverbrook has acted with discretion.

WHAT THEY SAY

Labor Emancipation.

New York Tribune.—The action of the American Federation of Labor in voting, with but one dissenting voice, to admit negroes into all trade unions when there is no express exclusion and to organize negro unions by direct charter when there is exclusion marks one of the greatest practical victories for the negro since Emancipation Day.

One Relative to Other.

Edmonton Bulletin.—The regulation of food prices without a corresponding regulation of wages would make food still scarcer. The higher the cost of producing in the city what the farmer has to buy, the higher the cost of producing on the farm what the city dweller has to eat. Unless, therefore, the ministers are prepared to undertake the all-round regulation of both wages and food prices, regulative efforts are not a hopeful avenue of escape from the increasing cost of living.

The Shower of Honors.

Westminster Gazette.—Everyone will welcome the bestowal of the Order of Merit on Sir Douglas Haig and Sir David Beatty. This rare and honorable distinction, limited to a membership of twenty-four, is well deserved. So is the long list of military decorations in the birthday honors. For the rest we can only be surprised that so many people can be found who welcome decorations which no longer carry distinction, and hope that this will be the last thunder-shower of "war honors," and that after it the somewhat muted waters will be allowed to subside.

True Happiness.

Ottawa News.—Did you ever read the "Book of Kings"—Ecclesiastes—written by Solomon, the richest, wisest and most powerful man of biblical times, keeping in mind that it is the story of a man searching for happiness?

Try it, if you haven't. There was a man who had but to raise his hand in token of a wish and that wish would be fulfilled if it were physically possible. And yet he was the unhappiest of men. He tried pleasure, labor, the attainment of knowledge, etc., only to find them of no avail in bringing happiness to his heart.

Then he turned to the helping of others and found therein the true happiness which had eluded him in all other trials. It is true today as it was in Solomon's time—the only real happiness is in service to your fellowmen.

Germany Already Plotting.

London Chronicle.—The "Morning Post" published yesterday a long secret letter written last April by Herr Erzberger to some fellow-countrymen. If genuine (and it bears strong internal marks of genuineness) it is a document of great importance, for Herr Erzberger is certainly among the two or three most influential members of the present German government. The gist of it is that Germany's plight is not so bad as it looks, and she may hope for revenge and triumph in ten or fifteen years. The Associated Press says that the letter is not true, but Germany is well on the way to nip Polish prospects in the bud by her propaganda.

Little Benny's Note Book

BY LEE PAPE.

The Park Ave. News.
Weather. Warm winds were none. Sincerely Notes. Mr. Sid Hunt took a book out of the library last Thursday morning on account of it having exciting looking pictures and Thursday nite he took it back again knowing his mistake.
Short Story.
The Answer.
"Can I take 2 apples to school to draw dooring the drawing lesson if I bring them back again?" said Roger Fearless to his mother.
"Yes," replied his mother.
"Can I have 2 more?" said Roger Fearless.
"No," replied his mother.
The End.
Intriguing Facks About Intriguing People. Puds Simkins felt so sick once that somebody offered him a piece of candy and he sed no, being sorry ever slinks.
Sparta. Ever sints sumboly told Maud Jonson that she throws like a boy she has bin going around throwing all the time, including bails, stones and apple cores wen she gets thru with them.
Pome by Skinny Martin
It Cant Be Proved.
A monkey likes to imitate
Wait other people do.
But if his actions get too bad
You can say he's not imitating you

A BIT OF VERSE

TODAY.

Douglas Malloch.
Sure, this world is full of trouble—I ain't said it ain't.
Lord! I've had enough an' double Reason for complaint.
Rain an' storm have come to fret me, Biles were often gray;
Thorns an' brambles have beset me On the road—but say,
Ain't it fine today!

What's the use of always weepin' Makin' trouble just?
What's the use of always keepin' Thinkin' of the past?
Each must have his tribulation, Water with his wine,
Life it ain't no celebration, Trouble? I've had mine—
But today is fine.

A BIT OF FUN

"How was your speech received at the club?" asked one of Chumley's friends.
"Why, they congratulated me heartily. In fact, one of the members came to me and me that when I sat down he had said to himself it was the best thing I had ever done."

The Young Profiteer.
"Now, Charles, if you're a very good boy I'll give you a penny."
"I'm afraid I can't afford to be good for less'n a nickel, gran'ma—not the way prices is today."

Made a Hit.
Judge—You say this man was at the performance last night and that he took aim and fired an egg at you?
Actor—Yes, your honor.
Judge—And was it bad?
Actor—The egg was your honor, but the aim was not.

Dry Up!
A young man who persisted in whispering loudly to the lady who accompanied him at a symphony concert, telling her what the music "meant," what sort of passage was coming next, and so on, caused seri-

ous annoyance to every one of his immediate neighbors.
Presently he closed his eyes and sat in the seat in front of the young man twisted himself about and said gravely:
"Young man, did you ever try listening to music with your mouth shut?"

A Hard Stroke.
First ribbon clerk (after receiving a glassy stare from the girl he met on his vacation)—And she did not even speak to me. Look at the way she holds her chin up.
Second R. C.—And remember the hours you held that chin up teaching her to swim last summer.

Satisfied.
"Betty," he whispered, as they sat together on the fence surrounding Mrs. Filigan's pigsty, "how beautiful you be! Jes' think of it, Betty! When us be married us will have a pig of our own. Think of that, Betty!"

"Jan," she whispered, a note of resentment in her voice, "what do I care for pigs? I shan't want a pig when I've got you!"
Then all was silent once more, save for the musical frolics of zephyrs already mentioned.

Appropriate.
There are drawbacks even to being the wife of a wealthy man, as Mrs. Millyns found out.
Although they have only been married a few weeks, she hardly ever has a quiet half-hour with her husband. It's business from morning till night, and in the evening he only begs for peace and rest.

So the other day she came down to dinner in a sombre black frock.
"Why on earth, dear, are you wearing that frock?" asked Mr. Millyns, eyeing her gown with distaste.
"Why, it's almost half-mourning," replied the lady, with much meaning.
"Don't you always say, when you come home from the office, that you are half-dead?"

RESIGNED POSITION.
Owing to pressure of his duties as secretary of the local Board of Health, T. M. Burns, for the past twelve years agent for the Bishop of St. John, has resigned that position and will be succeeded by J. Joseph Mitchell, who will take over the duties of the office on July 1.

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