

### The St. John Standard

Published by The Standard Limited, 52 Prince William Street, St. John, N. B., Canada. H. V. MACKINNON, Manager and Editor. THE STANDARD IS REPRESENTED BY Henry de Clarke, Mallers Bldg., Chicago Louis Klebahn, 1 West 34th St., New York Freeman & Co., Fleet St., London, Eng.

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 \$2,008,000 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 depriving 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 interests 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 in 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

is a matter which will undoubtedly be left more or less to the decision of the trustees. And in its 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 Relates 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 will come to 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.

##### True Happiness.

Omnibus 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. 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.

##### SOLDIERS' PENSIONS.

Although Canada has been more generous in its treatment of soldiers than 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 may seem 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

### Little Benny's Note Book

BY LEE PAPE.  
The Park Ave. News.  
Weather. Warm winds worse than none.  
Society Notes. Mr. Sid Hunt took a book out of the library at Thursday morning on account of it having exciting looking pictures and Thursday night 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 1?" 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 set no, being sorry ever again.  
Sports. Ever sints sumboly told Maud Jenson that she throws like a boy she has bin going around throwing all the time, including balls, stones and apple cores wen she gets thru with them.  
Pome by Skinny Martin  
It Cant Be Proved.  
A monkey likes to imitate  
Wat 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's 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,  
Skies 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 last?  
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.  
It's today that I am livin',  
Not a month ago,  
Havin' losin', takin', givin',  
As time wills it so.  
Yesterday a cloud of sorrow  
Fell across the way;  
It may rain again tomorrow,  
It may rain—but say,  
Ain't it fine today!

#### A BIT OF FUN

"How was your speech received at the club?" asked one of Chumley's friends.  
"Hearty," they congratulated me  
"Why, in fact, one of the members  
came to me and told 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-

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