

The Evening Times and Star

ST. JOHN, N. B., MAY 27, 1919

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VOCATIONAL TRAINING

St. John is at last to make a real beginning in the matter of vocational training. There can be no doubt, after last night's meeting in the board of trade rooms, and after the addresses delivered and the resolution adopted, that the city council will make the small grant requested and ask the school board to appoint a vocational training board for this city. That will be a beginning which will lead to most important results for the benefit of the boys and girls of St. John.

It was impossible to listen to the addresses of Mr. Fred Magee, M. P. P., and Director Fletcher Peacock without being oppressed with a sense of guilt, so far as this city is concerned, that such action as is now proposed had not been taken long ago. The charts submitted by Mr. Peacock should be exposed in enlarged form in the most public places in the city, to show all the citizens the neglected field in our educational work.

The address of Mr. Magee, who is the chairman of the provincial vocational training board, and to whom more than any other man thinks are due for the fact that there is now an act relating to vocational training on the statute books of the province, was admirable in its clearness and force. With clear vision he sees a system which begins with pre-vocational training in the public schools, then vocational high schools scattered through the province, and finally a technical college to do for the industrial student what the present university does for the classical student. He does not criticize the classical course, but since only the merest fraction of the pupils pursue that course through the high school he would provide others for the ninety per cent and more who do not enter the high school, but give up their studies in the fifth, sixth, seventh or eighth grade. Mr. Magee pertinently asks why the child of a poor man, desiring to enter commercial life, should not get a free course in at least book-keeping, stenography and typewriting, or why one going into industrial life should not get direct and proper training to fit him or her for their vocation. His proposition is so eminently fair that we can only confess that the reason this system is not in operation is that we have neglected our plain duty to ninety out of every hundred children in our schools.

There was some criticism last evening of the smallness of the grant asked for, but, as Mr. Peacock pointed out, experience elsewhere has shown the wisdom of going forward step by step. He might have cited the example of Nova Scotia, which established a costly and splendid technical college in advance of any general introduction of vocational training in the schools. If that province had it to do over again it would begin with the schools and work up to the crowning institution. Let us in St. John lay a good foundation. That does not necessarily mean delay, but it does mean greater efficiency in the end. It would indeed be a great thing if we had at this moment beside the present high school building a vocational high school with the most up-to-date equipment, but along with it there should be some change in the course of studies in at least the seventh and eighth grades of the common schools, to provide a certain amount of pre-vocational training. This last is coming because it must come, and so is the vocational high school; but in the meantime let us have next winter a large number of working boys and girls, who have left the public schools, and also any adults who desire it, gathered together in evening classes to receive vocational training and so increase their efficiency and earning power.

The spirit of last night's meeting was unmistakable. Eighteen different organizations or societies who it was assumed would be interested, had been asked to send representatives, and it may be assumed that everyone was represented. The resolutions calling for action passed unanimously, and will be followed, no doubt, by prompt action by the city council and school board. Mr. Magee pointed out that St. John cannot now be the first to take action since that honor goes to the town of Woodstock. It cannot be long until the movement is general among the cities and towns of the province, and let us hope, among the municipalities as well. Wherever the vocational training act is brought into operation there must be compulsory school attendance, and that in itself is a great gain to communities which have not adopted or already put it in operation.

It must have been a great source of pleasure to those who have been actively interested in getting action in St. John to see last evening how unanimous is the sentiment in favor of the movement. But especially important was it to have a large number of representative citizens hear such addresses as those of Mr. Magee and Mr. Peacock. It was regretted that Dr. J. Roy Campbell, M. P. P., was unable to be present also, for he was a member of the original provincial committee, visited Massachusetts as well as Halifax, and collected a fund of most valuable information on the subject of vocational training. Indeed he strongly favored having one or two experts from

Massachusetts come down and address the legislature and the citizens of St. John on the whole subject of vocational education. Last night's discussion, however, traversed the field very fully and the citizens are indebted to Mr. Magee and Mr. Peacock for the clear-visioned, illuminating and inspiring messages they brought, touching a matter of vital importance to the welfare of St. John.

THE STRIKE SITUATION

The strike situation in the west has taken a more serious turn. The general strike in Winnipeg has been followed by similar action in Calgary and Edmonton, and a general strike is called for ten o'clock tomorrow in Toronto. One of today's despatches says it is expected the Calgary and Edmonton newspapers will have to suspend publication, and the general press service is crippled so that we may have to depend on bulletins from Ottawa concerning the situation. In Toronto the break appears to have come over the question of collective bargaining, which, the minister of labor says, in case of dispute might place all industry in control of a central body that might be entirely outside the industry or craft affected. The Toronto metal trades employers are prepared to concede the eight-hour day, and time and a half and double time as demanded by the men; and bargaining with the representatives of a union or the unions representing the respective trades. This does not carry the principle of collective bargaining far enough to satisfy the men, and so a general strike is called. Indeed, one despatch says that at a hearing before the industrial relations commission in Toronto yesterday "red revolution was advocated." The situation therefore has an ugly look.

In Winnipeg trouble is expected as a result of an attempt on the part of the authorities to resume certain important services. The latest advices from Calgary are that as yet the strike is not general, though many services are crippled. There is also trouble at Regina, Saskatoon, Lethbridge, and some other points; and the agitation has spread to British Columbia, with threats of a general strike in Vancouver and Victoria. The federal, provincial and municipal authorities are agreed that the principle of collective bargaining which would place control in a central body that might be outside of the industry affected, cannot be accepted. The minister of labor said that such a plan in Winnipeg would put a few local labor leaders in control of the industries of the city.

What do the federal authorities propose to do? That is a question of increasing interest. The situation would seem to be one calling for prompt action. The longer the delay the more difficult the situation will become. There can be no doubt that the influence of alien agitators is making itself felt in the western centres and in Toronto. It is wise to be tolerant to a large extent, but when the interests of the whole people are gravely threatened a firm stand is necessary. The unions do not lack leadership, but what of the great un-unionized public whose interests are so seriously involved? The federal, provincial and municipal authorities must speak for them. We are told that Sir Robert Borden immediately on his return to Ottawa went into conference on the whole situation and some news of importance may develop today.

MAJOR HOOPER.

Those who contributed to the funds to enable Major (Rev.) E. B. Hooper to do the more successfully his work in the hospitals in England for three years, after he had been returned on account of ill-health from the front, are the more glad they did contribute since they have heard from his own lips the story of his ministry to the bodies, minds and souls of the men who suffered in our stead. The beloved padre not only gave the men needed comforts, but he linked them up with the khaki university, and ministered to their spiritual needs as only one whom they had learned to trust and honor could do.

It was especially inspiring to hear Major Hooper tell of the breaking down of denominational barriers among the men. Matters of greater import had absorbed their attention at the front, and minor differences could no longer keep them apart. The influence of these men at home will be healthy, and here, too, the spirit of sympathy and unity will grow.

Major Hooper tells us that experiences such as his tend to feelings of humility, and to a broad tolerance in judging men who suffered and endured as did the soldiers at the front. He is deeply interested in the work of helping soldiers in hospital to fit themselves for productive industry or a profession, and the appointment he has recently received will give him the opportunity to forward that very important work. His heart is in it and friends will rejoice with him that he is in a position to go on in the performance of what has become to him a labor of love.

A mass meeting to discuss a new municipal building would probably put the quietus on proposals to patch up and potter along. Let us have something worthy of the city and its future.

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WANTED MILLIONS TO BRIBE A PRINCE

Man Backed by Berlin to Get Peace With Russia Charged With Turning Traitor for \$1,000

Berlin, April 20—(Associated Press)—An alleged attempt to bribe a Prince and Princess of Montenegro with \$15,000,000 to \$25,000,000 in order to induce the prince to intercede with the Grand Duke Nicholas of Russia for a separate peace between Germany and Russia, featured the close of the trial yesterday of Captain Count Nayhaus on a charge of treason.

The bribery evidence was contained in a deposition made by Minister Erzberger. Erzberger testified that he became convinced during the war that Nayhaus was intensely anxious to serve his Fatherland in some capacity. Questioned by Nayhaus how this might best be done, Erzberger said he told Nayhaus to bring about a separate peace with one of Germany's enemies, preferably Russia. Any one who could do that, Erzberger told him, would earn the gratitude of the Fatherland.

Nayhaus told Erzberger that Nicholas was the only man through whom the plan might be accomplished, and the only person who was not afraid of the Grand Duke who was the necessary, however, to gain the assent and confidence of the Montenegro Prince, who at the time was in straitened circumstances. The deposition continues that Nayhaus suggested the Prince could be won over for \$15,000,000 and that Erzberger replied that money was no object, that \$25,000,000 would be forthcoming if needed. Erzberger said he pointed out to Nayhaus that the government must

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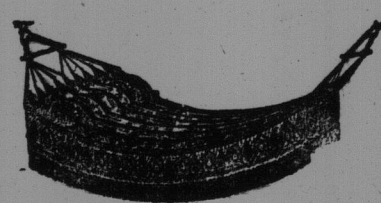
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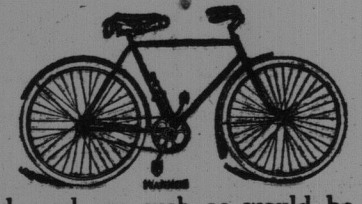
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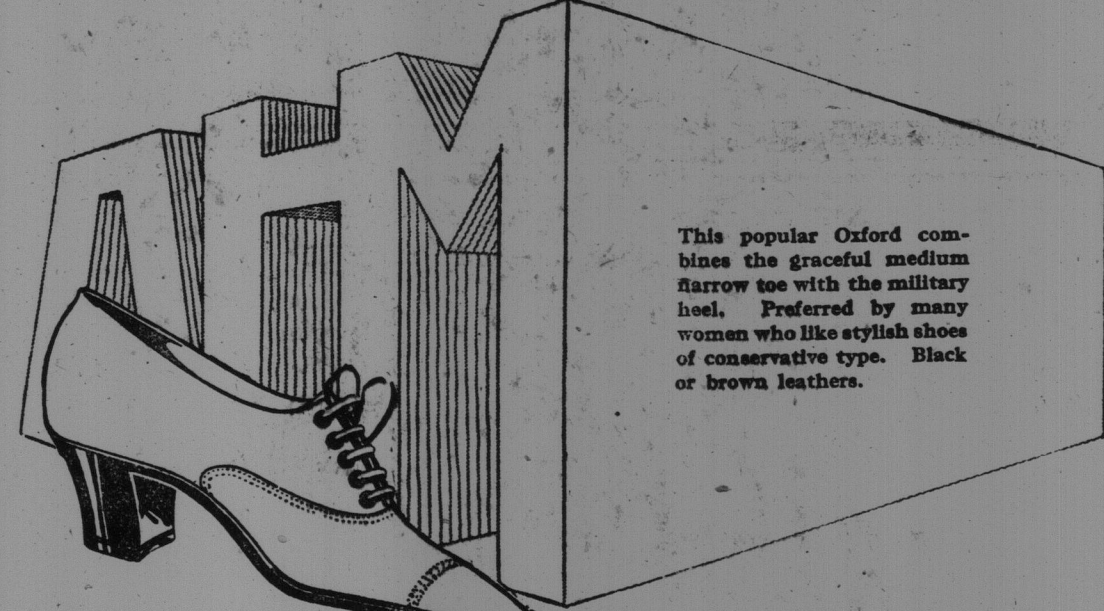
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