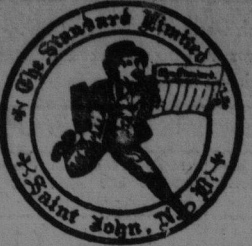


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SAINT JOHN, WEDNESDAY MORNING, FEB. 8 1911

STILL EXPLOITING THE VALLEY RAILWAY.

Few are such adepts in the art of resurrecting an old and impossible scheme by refurbishing it here and there with touches of deceptive coloring, than the ingenious Mr. Pugsley and his able lieutenant, Mr. Carvell of Carleton County. The resolution submitted to Parliament to give effect to an order-in-council to take over and operate the proposed St. John Valley Railway is a worthy example of their skill. The resolution sets forth that the railway when constructed, under a guarantee of the Provincial Government, shall be on a standard that is fully up to that which is required by the Transcontinental Railway, and that the road is to be thoroughly equipped by the company with rolling stock—contrary to the Provincial Act—before it will be taken over by the Intercolonial. The only modification of the original offer, which was made in reply to the Provincial Government, is that instead of taking the standard grade of the National Transcontinental for its full extent, which is four-fifths of one per cent., the standard which is permitted on the section running through New Brunswick will be accepted. On account of the pusher grade in the neighborhood of the Tobique, the standard would be slightly less than that required throughout the length of the Transcontinental.

The offer now embodied in the resolution submitted to the House of Commons, is a bluff on the face of it. The astute politicians, who through their organs the Telegraph and the Times, are loudly proclaiming their own and the Dominion Government's beneficent attitude to the people of the River Valley, are well aware that the terms of the resolution are altogether impossible of acceptance by any responsible company or by the Provincial Government. As pointed out by the Fredericton Gleaner, it is plainly an attempt to place the Provincial Government in a hole for political reasons. It is nothing more than a plausible scheme originating in the fertile brains of Mr. Pugsley and Mr. Carvell to thwart the Hazen Government in their endeavor to meet the wishes of the people of this large and important section of the province, but which will not be successful either from a political or any other standpoint.

A resume of the situation in respect to the Valley Railway up to the present time, shows that soon after taking office the Hazen Government determined to use every means within their power to give the people living along the St. John River Valley those transportation privileges that they had so long vainly sought at the hands of previous governments, both Provincial and Federal. The Government, therefore, declared that the Province would guarantee the bonds of any company which would construct a road of a standard equal to the Intercolonial, to the extent of \$25,000 per mile. At the same time the Dominion Government were invited to take the road over and operate it as a branch of the Intercolonial, paying forty per cent. of the gross earnings to the company who constructed it, or to the Provincial Government, as the eventualities might require.

The Dominion Government replied in an evasive manner that if the standard of the road was made equal to that of the National Transcontinental it would take the road over on the proposed rental. This proposal of the Dominion authorities was at once seen to be impossible, as to construct a road of the required standard would cost at least \$35,000 a mile, while the equipping of the road with rolling stock would require several additional thousands per mile. Where would the company procure the difference between the \$25,000 guarantee and the \$35,000 or \$60,000 it would take to construct the road up to the requirements demanded? The thing was impossible and therefore fell flat.

Since that time repeated but unavailing efforts have been made to endeavor to get the Dominion Government to modify its requirements and allow the standard to be equal to that of the Intercolonial, of which system it was to be a part. In this connection it might be said that to construct a road equal to the Intercolonial, it has been estimated by Messrs. MacKenzie and Mann that the cost would be at least \$45,000 a mile, and the people of the St. John Valley would have been extremely pleased to have such a railway equal in every respect to the Government road. The Intercolonial, as is well known, has a grade which averages about one per cent. If not for political reasons, why should the Dominion Government demand from a branch, which the St. John Valley Railway would be, requirements and standards which are not found on the main line? It is plainly the intention of the Dominion Government to obstruct this project by every means within their power, and their one and only reason must be their desire to block the construction of the railway until such time as their own political friends would have the opportunity and inclination to proceed with the work. But such schemes are built upon unstable foundations, and will go astray. The people of the St. John Valley demand railway connection. If the Dominion authorities decline to aid the project in any reasonable way, then the Provincial Government will take the matter into their own hands and make such arrangements to give the people interested, the facilities they have long looked for, as the circumstances render possible. But if such a thing should happen, which we are well assured will not, that the tactics resorted to by the Dominion Government should retard the construction of the road for a time, the people interested will well know where to vent their displeasure. This railway project has been too long the football of the politicians and from this time forth it must and will be proceeded with as a business proposition.

Is the St. John Valley Railway Company financially in a position to undertake the work of the construction

of this railway on the terms and conditions specified in the proposed statutory requirements of the Federal Government? If not, it will be for them to get out of business, and for the Provincial Government to come to the rescue.

ARE WE FREE?

Many people who dislike the proposed Reciprocity arrangements are appeased by the assertion that it is not binding, and that we can get out of it whenever we wish. Theoretically that is a fact, but practically it wears another and different aspect. The Government has made a pact, and has in that pact bound itself to use its "utmost efforts" to make it effective. The Government has also declared in that agreement that the arrangement if approved "will remain in operation for a considerable period." The United States administration through Mr. Knox has made similar declarations.

But note the difference. The United States administration may use its utmost efforts to get the approval of Congress, but it does not hazard its official existence or that of its party if it fails. Congress may refuse approval and the administration remains in power and the party intact. In the United States there is no cabinet representation in Congress, nor any cabinet responsibility thereto, which would necessitate the fall of the administration and the transference of power to the opposite party in case of failure.

In Canada it is different. Here the Government has committed itself to the pact. The party must uphold it, or both Government and party go out of power. Therefore, so long as the Government retains power it is pledged to both pass and retain the measure intact. Before it can be changed or abandoned the Liberal Government and the Liberal party must be overthrown. Under these conditions the freedom of deliberation, the freedom to accept or reject the measure now, or to change it hereafter involves the defeat of the dominant party and a general election. The so-called freedom is, therefore, practically a myth. The measure must pass, and must pass as it is, without the change of a line, and when passed it must remain without the possibility of amendment in a single particular so long as the present Government and the Congress are agreed. The time to take objections and to press them is NOW—before we are bound hand and foot.

Once passed and in operation for a term of years, with old channels disused, at great loss, and new channels opened up at great cost, our freedom to change will be certainly curtailed; most likely destroyed. The time for thought and action is now, before we are bound either by pact or the new affiliations.

SIDELIGHTS ON DREDGING HISTORY.

From the fact that, usually, all references to dredgers and dredging are strictly excluded from the columns of the Times, the following remark which slipped into Monday's issue is of all the more interest:—"Because a 'certain dredge,' says the Times dailly, 'was not employed or purchased at a high price by the Public Works Department, the St. John Standard makes a loud noise. The public understands the situation.' It may add to the Times' meagre store of knowledge on dredging matters to learn that the dredge no doubt referred to was offered to the Dominion Government, through the inspector and the late Mr. McCordick, for an amount which covered the price of the dredge, two large mud scows and \$30,000 worth of new extra parts of steel and wood, newly imported and never used, also all customs duties paid in full. All these items of cost were furnished, and the officials could easily have ascertained whether they were correct or not, as the schedule was made out and given to them."

But what happened? The inspector was sent to Ottawa without completing the inspection of the dredge, leaving word that he would return "next week." He never returned to inspect the dredge, and the election was held shortly afterwards. As every one knows, had this dredge been purchased and put to work by the Government Messrs. Moore and McAvity could not have had their three dredges in constant use, which has since been the case, although two are but apologies for the type of dredge required for the Beacon Bar.

Prior to this Mr. McAvity made the contractor pay to him \$26,000 for, as Mr. McAvity states, securing the contract. Of course, when the contractor refused by letter to pay any more to Mr. McAvity, other methods had to be resorted to. Consequently, this finely equipped plant is still laid up while Mr. Pugsley's middlemen continue to enrich themselves at the public crib; and the Times is happy. If, as the Times says, the public understands the situation, what does the public think of it?

Mr. Berryhill in a letter to the secretary of the Board of Trade, gives much interesting information on the good points of the commission plan in Des Moines, but he forgot to mention that the result of introducing the primary under this system was the election of a mayor, "who had, as head of the police court, been a prominent factor in maintaining a virtual license system for prostitution," and lived "fines on fallen women"; neither is there any reference to the candidate known as the "adroit politician," nor to the gentleman who stood for a "wide open town as to gambling, saloon restrictions, and the social evil," both of whom secured election as commissioners. These facts are supplied by Mr. Hamilton in his book "The Dethronement of the City Boss."

"It is interesting to note that most of those who oppose the commission plan are politicians or those that have privileges that the majority have not got," is a remark by Mr. Sherman, which the Times quotes with smug complacency, conveniently forgetting the slates, tickets and combinations which, ably supported by the Telegraph, it has vainly attempted to elect in recent years to control the Common Council. Now the Common Council must go.

Current Comment

(Toronto Mail and Empire.)

Alfred Russell Wallace in his latest scientific work, "The Way of Life," speaks favorably of pain, and represents its effect as beneficial. Evidently the distinguished writer has never experienced the toothache. He adds that animals do not suffer pain to the extent that we do. Thus when the oyster is swallowed all it knows is that it is enjoying a degree of warmth to which it has hitherto been a stranger. In fact, the swallowing of an oyster is rather pleasurable to the victim of that operation. This is a gratifying discovery. The pleasure is certainly mutual.

(Chatham World.)

There was a considerable fall in Canadian stocks on the Montreal Exchange, when the terms of Mr. Fielding's Reciprocity arrangements were made known, but prices were sent up again by the conviction that Congress would not ratify the agreement. It is not very flattering to Mr. Fielding to note that the business man's confidence in Canadian prosperity is based upon want of confidence in the success of his Reciprocity negotiations.

The Standard's Old Reporter

"Reformers are queer folk," said Uncle Josh, as he threw up his paper. "Take the leader of the movement for a plebiscite on the commission form of government. First time he gets the opportunity he uses his influence to defeat a proposal for a plebiscite on a question affecting the people more intimately than changing the form of government would do. And yet, if the advocates of the commission believe in anything, it is in the virtue of the plebiscite—the advisability of trusting the people to reach a satisfactory decision on all issues of any public importance. It is rather inconsistent of the adherents, after affirming their readiness to give way to a commission, to turn round and repudiate the essential feature of the commission form of government."

"But they, or some of them, pleaded ignorance of the single tax," says I. "Well, all I can say about that," says Uncle Josh, "is it's a mighty sorry confession for the city fathers of a great progressive and intelligent city like St. John. Men who aspire to civic honors should be awake, and know something about what is going on in the world. The single tax is not a new thing by long shot. Any Sunday school superintendent or preacher ought to be able to tell the adherents that the principle of the single tax is embodied in the laws of Moses. One does not have to read books on modern civic economy to learn about the tax on land values, though one would imagine that is about the first thing a man thinking of becoming a city father would do. And he wouldn't have to go to the States either to get information about the working of this tax."

"Anyhow it was no excuse for the adherents to plead ignorance of this proposed innovation as a reason for sidetracking the move for a plebiscite on the matter. How many of them knew anything about the commission when they voted for a plebiscite on that question? The mover of the resolution for a plebiscite said he raised the issue just to give the people a chance to discuss and study the question of government by commission."

"Well, don't you think that if we paid five men a good salary they would study things enough to know their own minds for a month at a time?"

"Maybe they would. But about the time they found out anything worth knowing about the technical operation of the civic services, and asked for money to improve them the chairman of the committee on the question of office. The only logical argument for a commission is that men giving constant attention to city affairs ought to be able to secure better results than men only giving a few hours each month to the public affairs. And each month to the public affairs. And that argument overlooks the fact that we now pay good salaries to experts to manage our civic affairs. How long would it take a commissioner without engineering training to acquire the technical knowledge of the water service possessed by Mr. Murdoch for instance?"

"But there are frequent complaints about the water service, and the conduits seem to be always in need of repairs."

"That's right. And if you ask any man familiar with civic affairs the reason for this he will tell you that the unsatisfactory condition of the water service is due to the fact that the enlightened journals which are now insisting that we need the American Commission form of government insisted that an expert be brought in from the outside, with the result that Mr. Murdoch's plans for the water works were ignored. The result of that, bad results of their unintelligent clamor in connection with the construction of the water works, ought to make them a bit more humble, and not so sure that they need to go outside of this country to find a system of satisfactory civic government."

Pastor Russell's Sermons

To the Editor of The Standard.
Sir—In a report in the city papers of a meeting of the Evangelical Alliance, held recently in St. Andrew's Presbyterian church, I notice your paper comes in for some adverse criticism in regard to the publication of Pastor Russell's sermons on the Dawn of the Millennium.

I trust you will not allow such intolerant denunciations of these most interesting and instructive sermons to influence you in regard to the continuance of their publication. I have no doubt that hundreds of your readers appreciate this department of your paper and enjoy reading them as well as myself. Dr. Hutchinson feels that the faith of his people may be undermined by the reading of these sermons and in his panic-stricken fear would have them suppressed.

If Mr. Russell's views will not stand the limelight of reasonable argument Dr. Hutchinson need have no fear of their baneful influence. Christians have too long been spooked with dogmatic hoary with age, by their ecclesiastical fathers, not stopping to consider whether they are substantiated by the Word of God. This is an age of thought and reason and Mr. Russell in his sermons gives us something to think about at least; please continue to publish them in your paper.

Yours truly, ONLOOKER.
St. John, Feb. 7, 1911.

PROPOSE TAX ON CHURCH PROPERTY

Bill in Ontario Legislature Provides That All Churches Will Have to Contribute—Toronto Churches Worth \$4,107,957

Toronto, Feb. 7.—Charles R. McKeown, M.P.P. for Dufferin, will introduce in the legislature a bill providing that all church property in Ontario should pay taxes. At present all such property given over to religious use is exempt from taxation. The church properties in Toronto exempt from taxation total \$4,107,957. Mr. McKeown instanced the case of Montreal, where an enormous portion of the property of the city was non-taxable since it was owned by the Roman Catholic Church.

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