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THE EVENING TIMES AND STAR, ST. JOHN, N. B., FRIDAY, JANUARY 3, 1919

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PROVINCIAL FINANCES.

During the period of the war every government, whether civil, provincial, federal or imperial, has been compelled to find new sources of revenue. Everything that governments have to deal with has been costing more. There was no way out except to raise more money from old sources or from new ones. In this city taxes have increased, and we are told a further increase in the assessment rate will be necessary. Salaries, cost of materials—everything calls for a larger expenditure.

When the Foster government came into power in this province it found an empty treasury, an enormous and growing debt and the Valley Railway. It found also a group of scandals to be probed, showing where money had gone which should have been spent for the good of the province. The very first problem to be faced was the financial problem. More money must be raised, not only because everything was going up in price and every service costing more, but because of the reckless waste and graft that had been practised or tolerated by the old government.

It is well to have these facts in mind when we review the financial statement for the province for the last fiscal year, the first full year for which the present government is responsible. The statement shows that both revenue and expenditure were larger last year, and that ordinary revenue exceeded the ordinary expenditure by \$36,048.18; but that paying Valley Railway interest out of current revenue would not only wipe this out, but create a deficit of \$38,494.64. And unless the Valley Railway is taken over by the federal government the interest charge on that account will be still heavier this year. This interest last year was \$175,469.62, and the receipts only \$99,272.19, and this year the interest on the Gagetown-Westfield section will also become a charge. It is the duty of the federal government to relieve the province of this burden, make the Valley Railway part of the new transcontinental system and give it the earning capacity which would result from that through connection.

Leaving the Valley Railway out of the count, the provincial revenue last year was \$2,253,397.67, and the expenditure \$2,283,592.46. The revenue in the previous year was only \$1,972,813.75. The increase was in territorial revenues, patriotic assessment and other forms of taxation. The government had no choice but to get the money, and it did so without undue pressure in any direction. The territorial revenue jumped from \$544,101.54 to \$791,978.78, although the cut of logs on crown lands was 60,000,000 feet less than in the previous year. New sources of territorial revenue contributed to the increase, the world land tax yielding a large amount.

Consider some of the charges the government must provide for out of its limited revenue. The item of ordinary interest alone last year amounted to \$452,968.40, to which was added \$175,469.62 on Valley Railway account. Public works called for \$228,782.73; education, \$296,257.83; provincial hospital, \$127,298.21; agriculture, \$53,274.54—and so on. It is clear, upon a careful scrutiny of the accounts, that the amount of controllable expenditure is not large, and even if the public services were started there would still be need of a large revenue.

The government was faced with an extremely difficult financial problem when it assumed office, and the statement now issued proves that it grasped the situation in a business-like manner. It will hardly be charged that too much money has been spent on the public services, but rather it will be contended there is need of much larger expenditure for public health, education, agriculture, the roads and other services. The Foster government has made an excellent beginning. There are no charges of graft or misappropriation of funds, or of wasteful expenditure. It is giving the province a business-like administration. Possibly it does not always accomplish what it would like, and no doubt mistakes are sometimes made, but this government is making an honest and successful effort to serve the best interests of the people of New Brunswick.

Toronto Globe.—The German rich lived well while the German poor starved. As the German poor stood this for four years without lifting a hand in self-defense, and applauded all the infamies of German warfare, their woes cannot now bring tears from other countries.

It would be a typically German trick if a lot of Austrian soldiers donned Jugo-Slav uniforms to foment trouble among the Jugo-Slavs. A nice little thing party should be arranged for their benefit.

What's this? Cold weather in California? Come east, young man—come east.

President Wilson is today in Rome. Much interest attaches to this visit.

A LEAGUE OF RELIGIONS

Is it not time there was a league of religions? A league of nations is about to be formed, and great benefit to the world is anticipated as a result. Wars between nations are regarded as proofs of barbarism. We are told that there are certain great principles underlying human welfare which if all the nations adopt them, working in co-operation, will make war impossible. It is not contended that any nation must necessarily adopt a new religious faith, with the exception of Germany, whose spurious religion caused the great war. It is agreed that she must be enlightened and converted before her people can take their place in a real league of nations. Her Kaiser claimed to be God's representative, holding power by Divine right. He has been judged, not by what he claimed to believe, but by the fruits of his religion.

His Holiness the Pope hopes for a new world-order, with a league of nations. Why not also a closer co-operation between the Catholic and Protestant churches, with less of prejudice and misunderstanding? Suppose it involved mutual concessions, so for example a frank and open avowal by each that the other does not get its inspiration from below but from above, and perhaps also an admission by both that much of the talk of past centuries about the utterly lost state of all outside the pale, commonly described as the heathen, might have been due to a human misconception of the character and purposes of God? Looking back over the whole realm of human history, and considering the extremely small proportion of all the inhabitants of the earth for thousands upon thousands of years who have belonged to any particular sect arrogating to itself the special guidance and favor of God, the thoughtful mind of today is not disposed to be dogmatic. There can be no question about the superiority of the Christian ideal of service and sacrifice, but why all these divisions, and especially the one great division among peoples of the Christian faith? If there is to be a new world-order it might well be founded on a larger measure of brotherly love among Christians and an attempt at a better mutual understanding among peoples of all religions. Many things people believed to the point of bloody conflict a few hundred years ago are no longer considered of sufficient importance to be made the subject of an argument. The world moves on. It has grown almost incredibly smaller with the discoveries of science and the means of quick transportation. The league of nations will be to some extent a compromise on the part of each participant for the general good. Is there any valid reason for a stiff-necked policy and sharp divisions in religious matters where there is an agreement on fundamental principles? Let us have a league of religions.

WE MUST CLEAN HOUSE.

Mr. F. A. McKenzie said in an interview in the Times-Star yesterday:—"I can give some of our public men—the petty politicians and the grafters, wherever they may be found—fair warning that the soldiers will give them short shrift when they return. I do not know that you have any men of this type in New Brunswick but if there are they may as well prepare to retire to private life."

The soldiers, he says, have new standards of life, and will not tolerate those things in public life which do not measure up to them. It would indeed be strange if this were not true. To our shame be it said that while these men have been risking their lives in the struggle for better things there have been those at home who went on playing the old game of petty partisanship and political graft. Our lofty professions are as sounding brass if we continue such politicians in representative positions.

There has been a heresy trial in Ontario. It would be difficult to conceive of any form of trial that would excite less public interest.

Michigan has ratified the bone-dry amendment to the constitution of the United States.

Sure to Come.

"Oh, mamma, I'm frightened!" came from little Tommie, in bed.

"What are you frightened about, my son?"

"I hear somebody on the roof."

"Oh, well, go to sleep, my boy; it's only your father taking off his shoes before he sneaks through the scuttle. He's just got home from the club in his slippers."

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LADIES' COATS Worth \$30.00.. For \$20.00	LADIES' SUITS Worth \$35.00.. For \$22.00
LADIES' COATS Worth \$25.00.. For \$14.98	LADIES' SUITS Worth \$32.00.. For \$20.00
LADIES' SILK DRESSES At Less Than the Goods Would Cost Today	LADIES' SUITS Worth \$22.00.. For \$16.00
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