

The Standard

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ST. JOHN, N. B., TUESDAY, MARCH 19, 1912.

FROM BEHIND THE SPEAKER'S CHAIR.

Our Guardians of the North.

"All money in despatch bag, and bank, clothes, etc., I leave to my dearly beloved mother, Mrs. John Fitzgerald, Halifax. God bless all."

"F. J. FITZGERALD, R. N. W. M. P."

It is a unique occurrence for a last will and testament to be read in Parliament and for the House to unite in paying tribute to the testator's memory. The occasion arose last Friday. The House laid aside party strife and politics for a while to do honor to the men of the Northwest Mounted Police who, in the discharge of their duty, perished from exposure a year ago in the far North on the Dawson and Macpherson patrol. The will of Inspector Fitzgerald, written with a piece of burnt wood but a few hours before his death, and eloquent in its simplicity and pathos, was read by the Prime Minister in the course of his speech. Canadians will welcome Mr. Borden's statement that he feels very earnestly the desirability of making some recognition to the bereaved families of the men who died in the service and that the matter will receive the attention of the Government before the end of this session.

The incidents of this disaster, the first serious accident in this annual patrol, are two well known to need recalling in much detail. On December 21, 1910, Inspector Fitzgerald, Constable Taylor, Constable Kenny and Special Constable Carter left Fort Macpherson with the mail for the Mackenzie River. Not one of the four was seen alive again. On March 21 and 22 their bodies were recovered some 30 miles from Macpherson frozen to death. Lack of a competent guide and an insufficient supply of provisions were the causes assigned for the disaster. Inspector Fitzgerald's will leaving all of which he died possessed to his mother was found in his pocket.

The subject was brought to the attention of the House by Mr. A. K. Maclean, junior member for Halifax. After reviewing the circumstances he suggested the desirability of voting an annuity to the mother and sisters of Inspector Fitzgerald and to the relatives of his companions in death. He made the suggestion, he said, because the Prime Minister representing Halifax County with himself, and which was the home of Inspector Fitzgerald, while in full sympathy with the proposal might feel reluctant on that account to establish a precedent.

Mr. Thompson, member for the Yukon, endorsed the suggestion. "It would be a most fitting thing," he said, "for this Parliament to recognize the services rendered to Canada and the Empire by Inspector Fitzgerald, who 'laid down his life in those Northern wilds in the discharge of his duty which he considered to be his simple duty.' He mentioned that the Inspector carried despatches from the police post on the Arctic Ocean and custom, revenues for the Government."

A tribute to the sterling merits of the Northwest Mounted Police came from Sir Wilfrid. He foresaw the day when the police posts would have to be extended further North. With regard to the tragedy, while the suggestion was, perhaps, a little irregular, he would be very glad, he said, to see recognition given to the bereaved families. Such an occurrence was not likely to happen anywhere else.

It is one of the great virtues of Parliament that men of all ranks and professions assemble together. The next speaker was an old member of the Northwest Mounted Police, Mr. White of Victoria, Alberta, and a personal friend of the late Inspector Fitzgerald. Mr. White had much to urge regarding the need of increased pay and better recognition for the men who guard the Northern frontiers of the country. He suggested that the Government might well give the mother of such a man as Inspector Fitzgerald the pension that he earned for the 20 years he served, as a bounty as long as she might live, and that the other relatives should also be given consideration.

Mr. Borden in reply said the Northwest Mounted Police would always receive fair play and a square deal as far as he was able to give it to them. The Government had by order in council increased their pay recently to the extent of 25 per cent. He agreed with the Leader of the Opposition that the posts would, probably, have to be extended further North and foreshadowed a possible increase in the force to meet the changing conditions.

Coming to the subject of Mr. Maclean's suggestion, Mr. Borden reviewed the work of the patrol and placed on record the names, ages and length of service of the men who lost their lives in the country's service. After reading the will to the House he said: "Inspector Fitzgerald bore his part in that journey to the grave in a way that will inspire the respect and admiration of every man in Canada. I feel especially proud because 'he was born and brought up in the constituency which my hon. friend and myself have the honor to represent in this House.' Mr. Borden closed with the assurance that he fully realized the desirability of recognizing the claims of the families bereaved and that the Government would give the matter attention before the close of this session.

The Royal Northwest Mounted Police were organized in 1874 and by their bravery and resource have earned a world-wide reputation. It is fitting that the Government should take cognizance of this lamentable disaster. It is no new thing for the country to be stirred by some deed of heroism in which members of the Mounted Police were successfully engaged. In the record of the death of Inspector Fitzgerald and his companions lies the secret of this success—an unwavering obedience to the rule which governs the force—at the call of duty there is no option.

THE BUDGET.

The country has every reason to be satisfied with the record of prosperity and development made public in the budget speech of the Finance Minister last week. In revenue, in trade, in growth of population, in all the outward evidence which indicates that a country is going ahead by leaps and bounds, Mr. White was 'able to show that the Dominion today occupies a position never previously attained. It was no light task for a man new to parliamentary experience to deliver a budget speech five months after taking office. Mr. White gave evidence of a careful study of the situation and of a thorough knowledge of his subject. The facts and figures he presented were set forth as succinctly as if he had been addressing a business corporation. He was privileged to

present a statement of the Dominion's financial affairs which was the best ever submitted to the Canadian Parliament.

With a revenue estimated at \$136,000,000 for the year which ends on March 31, a new record has been established. With an expenditure of \$97,000,000, there is a surplus of consolidated fund revenue over consolidated fund expenditure of no less than \$39,000,000, the greatest surplus the country has ever known. With this surplus, as the Minister pointed out, not only will the capital expenditure of the year be provided for, but there will also be five millions available for the partial payment of the obligation of ten millions for implementing the Grand Trunk Pacific bonds, an entirely unexpected expenditure, and more than a million to spare towards the reduction of the National debt.

In view of the legislation of this session to create a Tariff Commission, Mr. White announced that there would be no changes in the tariff. The Government will await the report of the Commission in order that this question of customs duties may be considered in the light of the evidence and data which will then be available. For the same reason the much debated question of the bounties on iron and steel is left in abeyance. The wisdom of this decision will be generally recognized. The Finance Minister stated that there had, of course, been many requests for changes in the tariff and much could doubtless be said in favor of legislation with regard to certain articles and commodities either by way of reduction or increase of tariff rates, but in the opinion of the Government there was no case of such urgency that could not without hardship await the consideration of the Commission.

Optimism was the prevailing note in Mr. White's speech. He made it clear that while public expenditure must keep pace with the development of the country, its steadily growing trade and commerce make certain a large increase of revenue every year. The value of the National policy has once more been vindicated. It is questionable if any country in the world can display a budget so satisfactory in all respects as that submitted this year to the people of Canada.

A RELIGIOUS PARTY.

(Ottawa Citizen.)

The determination of Manitoba Roman Catholics to launch a new political party devoted to the interests of the church in national affairs is a step to be regretted and one which, it is hoped, will be reconsidered before being definitely decided upon. In a country such as Canada and in a country at such a particular stage of development as the Dominion at present finds itself, there is not and cannot be any place for a political party devoted to the interests of any one religious belief. The fact that proposed new organization is a Roman Catholic movement is not material in the discussion. The same objections apply to all religious organizations designed to influence political parties.

Some twenty years ago the Equal Rights movement developed in Ontario and for several years was productive of much bitterness and angry sentiments between Catholics and Protestants. It was a political development with a generous admixture of bigotry and all its accompanying meannesses. As a political movement it was a failure, but as a means of stirring up religious strife, it was an unfortunate success. Time, however, has charmed away much of the bitterness and Canadians in this part of the Dominion count the Equal Rights agitation as one of the experiences which in a new and vigorous development are inevitable, and somewhat in the nature of growing pains.

But we are past the growing pain stage, or we should be. Of course, it is too much to expect that religious bitterness, engendered too often by badly informed controversialists, will become a thing of the past in Canada. It survives and as long as humanity is cast in its present mould will continue to the end of time. But it is a reactionary development to organize religious differences, to consolidate the individual prejudices of a section of the community against the remainder. It is our own business if we disagree individually with our neighbors in religion or politics or concerning the merits of race horses, but it is a matter of public concern if we organize for the purpose of forcing our particular theological or even medical beliefs of how things ought to be done upon the rest of the community.

It is significant, however, in the present instance that the Roman Catholic Church as an organization has taken no part in the rumored formation of the new party in Manitoba. However opposed to the principles and doctrines of the church Protestants and others in general may be, it is, nevertheless, a fact that few political errors are made by the church as a church. In our own country the Roman Catholic hierarchy has thus far refrained, in spite of the splendid organization which characterizes the church, to become openly identified with any political movement against the existing parties. It is reasonable to suppose that this attitude will be maintained if only from motives of policy.

The Winnipeg promoters of the movement would do well to consult the authorities of their own church before taking a step which can do no good but, rather, a vast amount of harm to those responsible for its adoption.

Current Comment

(Ottawa Citizen.)

A bright political campaigner has done much to cast public discredit on Roosevelt's main plank in his presidential platform, by suggesting that it is analogous to the case of an umpire giving a close decision in a baseball game, only to have the crowd on the bleachers stop the game until they are allowed to vote on the umpire's decision. It is one of those illustrations that is very likely to appeal to the great mass of the voters, the more particularly because it seems pertinent in its application. Roosevelt proposes that if a law is passed, which on submission to the Supreme Court is declared unconstitutional, the people may be allowed to declare by their votes that the law shall be law whether the courts think it is constitutional or not.

(Victoria Colonist.)

Mr. Theodore Roosevelt, be it most distinctly understood, is not a candidate for the presidency. No, sir, not at all. He is simply within call in case the nation wants him. He believes that the office should seek the man, and not the man the office, but at the same time he has not the least intention of being where the office cannot find him when it starts out to look for him. We have a somewhat strong suspicion that the office will find him, and that he will be the next president of the American Republic. And after that—well we must simply wait and see.

(Aylmer Express.)

It is a long time since we have printed any news of so joyful a nature as the fact that the price of eggs has taken a drop. At the same time, our joy is somewhat tinged with grief and sorrow for the poor farmer, whose meager income will thus be severely cut into. We are also bothered somewhat over the fact that our hens are just beginning to lay and do not know whether to be glad of the fact, or mad because they did not start earlier.

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ROOSEVELT AS THE CANDIDATE OF PROGRESSIVES

Washington, Mar. 18.—Clifford Pinchot, in a telegram sent to Frank L. Talcott, at Fargo, N. D., has made specific denial of the statements credited to Walter L. Houser and others that Col. Roosevelt pledged his support to Senator La Follette as a progressive candidate for the Republican presidential nomination and declares that Mr. Houser, manager of the La Follette candidacy "was himself among the first of La Follette's supporters to urge that the senator should abandon his own candidacy in the interest of the progressive cause and join with others in urging Col. Roosevelt to accept the nomination, because Roosevelt could alone carry these policies to victory."

No matter what his age may be. Most always will his heart feel a thrill when he perceives his love. The lady on the cart-wheel.

THE Plain Dope

Bo, I'm strong for the guy who's square. But not for the mucker who claims to be. Whenever I hear a gink declare that he's the honestest living Goe I chain the safe to a pillar—see! And hide my wad in a vault of steel. For here is the dope direct from me. The guy who's honest don't need no spiel!

When a duck sings out that he's always fair. And a regular model of honesty. You watch him close with a steady stare. And bite the coin that he hands to ye. For brother, I'll whisper this to thee. He'll trim you proper right off the reel. Take it from Archibald, frank and free. The guy who's honest don't need no spiel!

Of straight-out crooks you had best beware. But I'd take a chance with two or three. Rather than fall in the tangled snare. Of the guy who says to you constantly, "The honest man of the day—that's me. Always there with the squarest deal!" That duck would swipe all your clothes with glee. The guy who's honest don't need no spiel!

Envy. Beat it, brother, from such as he. Who says he's honest from head to heel. When you see him coming—climb a tree. The guy who's honest don't need no spiel!

Most Anything

The Allies' faces wear a grin. At the thought of the glories of Peking. And the feet of the Allies soon will ring. On the cobbled streets of old Peking.

For whatever way you spell the name, With a G or not, it's all the same: When the Allies' bugles sound "toot-toot!" What they really mean is "root-for-oot!"

For the ugly idols of Chinae. Are made of gold and are fair to see; And the shrines are wrought of pearl and teak. The kind that burglars always seek.

Lots of short-armed men can pat themselves on the back. But we don't want any strong-armed men patting us on the back.

If you are wise. You'll take no dare. To lay off winter underwear.

Thus singeth Doc. Brom, the sweet singer of Peoria, than whom there is no more disinterested pursuer of the muse. Think of a doc knocking pneumonia.

The new bridge across the Tiber at Rome, with a span of 328 feet, is the longest reinforced concrete arch in the world.

Please, Mr. Burbank. No one has invented a seedless congressman.

"Folks go to Palm Beach," Willie said. "To be lanned by the sun till they're red."

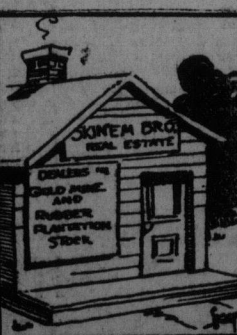
But don't go so far. To be tanned by my par; He does it quite well in the shed."

Chicago is 75 years old. And spry for her age.

Did you ever notice the grace and delicacy with which a man threads a needle?

Joe Bailey is against the third term. Some people wonder why Texas isn't.

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Dr. Chase's Nerve Food will help you wonderfully if you only give it a reasonable chance. As the system is built up you will find such symptoms as headache, sleeplessness and indigestion leaving you. You will find the old energy coming back. The mind and body will better serve you and you will see a new pleasure in life.

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