

The St. John Standard

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ST. JOHN, N. B., MONDAY, APRIL 14, 1919.

NOTICE

Effective immediately, The Standard office will operate on Daylight time. The business office opens at eight o'clock (Standard time) and closes at five o'clock. Advertisers will please govern themselves accordingly.

MR. FOSTER'S POWER SCHEME.

In presenting what he called an Act for the development of the Water Powers of the Province, Premier Foster on Saturday perpetrated upon the Legislature the most elaborate joke that has been played upon that august body for a considerable time. If Hon. Mr. Foster does not go down to history as the political genius and business statesman who first reconciled the conflicting principles and interests of public and private enterprise, and turned the budding Watlingford's of finance from paths that are devils and vains to the straight and narrow way of uplifters of the public by their bootstraps, it will only be because the muse of history has fallen in a fit of laughter over her typewriter and broken all the keys.

Mr. Foster arose in his place with an air of great importance, and announced that his Government was anxious to foster the development of the water powers of the province. "I am not in favor of municipal operation and construction of public utilities," said Mr. Foster; "nor am I in favor of the Government development and construction of water power plants. I think it has been fully demonstrated that it cannot be accomplished in an economical and business-like manner; nor to the same extent as it can be done by a private company.

"If then such development in this province is to take place it must be done by private enterprise, and it must have some incentive behind it, and that incentive must be in the nature of gain, but such gain should be controlled, and controlled reasonably. Well, then, if I am not in favor of public development, ownership, or operation either by municipalities or this Government, the question naturally arises, what am I in favor of, and what plan do I propose?"

Mr. Foster went on to say that his bill provided that "when any person or corporation shall place before the Lieutenant-Governor in Council a concrete business proposition for the development of a water power, this Government can assist such person or corporation by guaranteeing their bonds to an amount not in excess of three-quarters of such development, the person or corporation, of course, providing the remainder of the capital required, for which there shall be issued to the company preferred stock bearing interest at a rate not greater than seven per cent, but which stock shall rank secondary to the stock guaranteed by the province. By this process there shall be a partnership formed, as it were, and all profits arising over and above:

- "First—the cost of operation.
"Second—the interest on the bonds.
"Third—a reasonable sinking fund.
"Fourth—the interest upon the preferred stock shall be equally divided between the Government and the Company.

"It is proposed that the company shall be controlled by an issue of stock divided equally, forty-nine per cent, of which shall remain in the right and in the name of the Province; forty-nine per cent, in the name and right of the Company, who have provided their proportion of capital; the remaining two per cent, in the hands of the Public Utility Commission to be voted upon by them upon any question which might arise between the Government and the Company. In this way the Government will retain full control. It is also proposed that the Water Power Commission shall be directors of the Company and thereby protect the interests of the Province. This in brief is what is proposed by this measure which I have the privilege of introducing.

In the bill it is distinctly stated that the stock controlling the enterprise is to be issued for voting purposes; it is not required to represent a direct investment and if the Government is to provide for three-fourths of the cost of the development by a bond issue and the company shall provide its proportion of the cost by issuing non-voting preferred shares there is no reason why the stock issued for controlling purposes should represent investment or have intrinsic value. And the control of this controlling stock is to be placed in the hands of the Public Utilities Commission, a body charged with the specific duty of seeing that holders of stocks which do not represent actual investment do not receive dividends at the expense of the people. Is it conceivable that the Public Utilities Commission would so stultify itself as to allow the Government dividends on stocks issued for voting purposes?

only? And how can the Public Utilities Commission allow a private person or corporation to receive dividends on stock issued for voting purposes only, or any return over and above the seven per cent interest on the non-voting preferred shares which may represent the person's or corporation's total investment, when it has laid it down as a principle that no corporation supplying electricity to the people is entitled to more than seven per cent on the actual investment.

Under Mr. Foster's scheme for encouraging water power development no private person or corporation can get a cent more than seven per cent on the non-voting preferred shares they may happen to hold, unless the Public Utilities Commissioners are prepared to increase the public trust reposed in them. Under this plan promoters of water power development who are not usually content with preferred shares have no special incentive, except the possibility of being able to secure big salaries while constructing and operating water power plants; a possibility which is not a probability, for the Water Power Commission and the Public Utility Commission would be able to fix salaries of all officials if so minded.

THE PEACE CONFERENCE.

Perhaps after all it would be a blessing if President Wilson had carried out the threat with which he is credited and left the Peace Conference to get along without him. Certainly the rest of the world is by this time pretty well disgusted with Mr. Wilson's constant posing, his tiresome presentation of affairs, and his holier-than-thou attitude towards those nations which have done the work. The Sunday School picnic which the million or more of American soldiers had in France does not entitle the President of the United States to dictate the terms of peace, nor do the enormous profits made by American contractors and others on orders from devastated Europe give the representative of those contractors unlimited authority in settling the affairs of the world. If Mr. Wilson, who should realize that he has become a public nuisance, were to take the notion to leave for Washington, where it seems that his presence is more desirable than it is in Paris, there would be a great sigh of relief from the statesmen of other nations who are endeavoring to get ahead with their work. Yet Mr. Wilson is not wholly to blame for the failure of the Peace Conference to command general respect. The astonishing activities of that assembly apparently run in circles and have their being in a world of magic where harmony and discord together hold high revel, where extremes meet and where distinction makes no difference between the sublime and the ridiculous. Watching the proceedings of that conference through the medium of the daily press is very much like crystal gazing, and it is fortunate for most of the people that they have other distractions.

WHAT THEY SAY

Song of Other Days.

New York Herald-Examiner. It seems safe to predict that the revival of "Ten Nights in a Barroom"—to be given without charge—will not set the east side whistling "Father, Dear Father, Come Home with Me Now." That one-time classic has passed beyond recall.

Moscow or Paris.

Westminster Gazette.—Moscow or Paris? This is the question which I hear being asked in the corridors, and putting of the Russian question, day after day, week after week, month after month, in the Moscow-like attitude of waiting for the signal to turn, runs the risk of being wrecked. There can be no peace without pacification. This elementary fact seems to have been overlooked.

Criticism of Action.

Edmonton Herald.—The action of the government in seizing the Grand Trunk Pacific as a means of breaking the Grand Trunk is reminiscent of the time and the ridiculous. Watching the proceedings of that conference through the medium of the daily press is very much like crystal gazing, and it is fortunate for most of the people that they have other distractions.

The Demobilized Man.

London Chronicle.—What public attention has been concentrated on the miner, the railwayman, and the trade unionist in general there has been a tendency to overlook the position of the demobilized soldier. Yet no one is likely to suffer more from the rise in prices, the scarcity in houses, the economic position as a whole. On Sir H. Norris pointed out in the House of Commons that the charges for furniture are from 200 to 300 per cent above the pre-war standard. Scores of thousands of soldiers have married during the war, and now hope to set up households. On the other hand, the thousands who were disbanded when they enlisted.

Preparing Curtain Lectures.

Quebec Mercury.—About one hundred young girls from a Toronto school are in the gallery of the House nearly every day to learn parliamentary procedure and incidentally how not to transact public business. After hearing some of the alleged legislators' attempts at orating it's not to be wondered at that women are driven to suffragism.

Potato Problem for Paris.

New York Herald.—According to the decision of the Council of Four at the peace congress, as specially called by Mr. Truman H. Talley, France is to get the "entire underground wealth" of the surface will be Germany's. But, in addition to coal, France needs food, especially potatoes. Here is a new problem for the congress.—Are potatoes underground wealth and will France get the tubers while Germany gets only the leaves of the plant? Settlement of such a vital question may again delay peace.

The Naval War-History.

Westminster Gazette.—We are being kept waiting a long time for the official Naval History of the War, but it must be expected that, even when it appears, it may not be very intelligible to the layman, since there are few writers who can satisfy both classes of readers in describing naval engagements. At present the Admiralty gets no further than a pious hope that the first volume will be published before the end of the year, and one of the things that will be included in the volume, and that the whole will be completed within a reasonable time.

"Greenwich Mean Time."

Belleville Daily Intelligence.—But wait a minute. The Toronto legal lights who have been digging into the

Little Benny's Note Book

BY LEE PAPE.

Weather. Nites getting shorter out of revenge for the days getting longer.

Family Suddenly Made Larger. The Pottess yellow cat Fluffy has a yellow kitten, being a grate surprise, to everybody because she generally has many more.

Big Mistake. Some man asked the fellows last Saturday if they had saw a lady go past with a promulator, which they all said they hadn't and didn't find out till later that he meant a baby carriage, which they had.

Intriguing Packs About Intriguing People. Three men are painting the front of Leroy Shooters house on a scaffold, but they won't leave him climb out on it with them, so they mite as well be painting somebody else's house as far as Leroy Shooter is concerned.

Pfome by Skinny Martin—"ENUFF ENYHOW."

I ate in a regular restaurant once.

From a regular bar things.

But I only ordered about things.

On account of my mother being there.

Sisistly. Mr. Charles (Puds) Sinkins had company for dinner last Sunday at his house consisting of his uncle, his aunt and his cousin, Mr. Charles (Puds) Sinkins saying he enjoyed their visit but he wishes they would cum wen there was something for dinner he don't like much instead of chicken.

English statutes for light on Greenwich.

of the day, and daylight time is adopted, he can make these hours

Mean time is common time, or the time commonly used. English time is called Greenwich mean time.

and English time was advanced one hour last Sunday. Canada time is fixed by statute, made and provided soon English time known legally as Greenwich mean time. If that is a fact, what is called daylight-saving time is the real legal standard time as far as Canada is concerned.

A BIT OF VERSE

The Purging.

(By Florence Tucker Osman, in New York Herald.)

Whatever of worth a nation hold Shall this great war of world's unfold; To live today for self alone This time and hour shall not condone.

The strength of heroes long confined Hath risen mightily. Behind Gods weaker ones with latent power Have found themselves in this great hour.

How many women in despair, Who loved Him not, now bend in prayer!

As loved ones reached the Great Unknown In seeking them they found His throne.

What myriad millions put to test Showed talents rare, none would have guessed!

The timid brother, cowed by fear, Hath learned to brash away his tear.

Have found Life's meaning through a war.

A new-born spirit from out the throes Of pain and agony and woes

May rise in future might and power. Some day and prove our precious savior.

Perhaps O Lord, what seems earth's loss Has been Thy purging of its dross.

A BIT OF FUN

Absent Treatment.

Mrs. Newrich took her young niece abroad with her. Everything went well until about two months after their arrival when the girl became ill and a physician was sent for.

"The child is suffering from nervousness and nostalgia," said the physician. "Take her home and she will be all right."

"She has nostalgia," said Mrs. Newrich, "but she has never seen her home, except the name of her home doctor."

"Teetotaler—Stay, my friend! Do you think that glass of vile filth will ruin your thirst?"

The Fatigue A. B. (forty-two)—"Good heavens, mate! I jolly well 'ope not!"—Passing Show.

Left Behind. "So you've been to France?" "Yes, ma'am."

"And now you're back home with your comrades?" "No, ma'am. I left my comrades over there."

"How did that happen?" "I took over a shipload of mules, ma'am."

The Gardener. All summer he labored for six un-tilled lines.

Each all he could grow was a kink in his spine.

THE EDITOR'S MAIL

TIME.

The Editor of The Standard: Sir,—It is to be hoped this time middle will be ended without further delay.

"The object of civil time is to produce harmony."

Now we know that among the so-called workmen there is a large percentage of true gentlemen at heart as there is in any other classes, and as such are ready to respect the rights of others, if not imposed upon.

The average man is quiet and does not say much in public, and the fellow that makes the most talk does not necessarily represent the best men.

Now, in every one's day who does not have fixed hours, time is the only guide by which work may be done.

To the workman who works 9 hours a day, 10, 12, to 5, are the only ones he has to meet, and if he wants to keep his hours in the same part

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THE LIBRARY

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THE ART OF DRESS

Few items of personal adornment, at appropriate prices, beautiful so much as

KNOX HATS

FROM NEW YORK Silk Plush Straw The Acme of Good Taste.

ON SALE EXCLUSIVELY IN ST. JOHN BY D. Magee's Sons, Ltd. 63 King Street

VITAL STATISTICS.

Twenty-five deaths were reported to the Board of Health last week as follows:

- Pneumonia 6
Influenza 2
Malaria 2
Bronchitis 2
Typhoid 1
Paralysis 1
Menigitis 1
Tuberculosis 1
Acute Alcoholism 1
Broncho-pneumonia 1
Gastro-enteritis 1
Tubercular Meningitis 1
Angina Pectoris 1
Metral Insufficiency 1
Whooping Cough 1
Arterio Sclerosis 1
Aortic Stenosis 1

W. H. Kettle, deputy registrar of vital statistics, reports that 12 marriages have been recorded this week also 13 births—9 males and 4 females.

Mistaken. Maud—Your friend, Miss Blank going to be married? Why, I had the impression that she was a woman in her declining years. Ethel—Oh, dear, no; she's in her

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