

The St. John Standard

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ST. JOHN, N. B., TUESDAY, OCTOBER 7, 1919.

TO THE SUPREME COURT.

In the ordinary course of events the reference to the Supreme Court of the City's case with the New Brunswick Power Company will be taken up in the very near future. The point to be decided deals merely with capitalization and value and upon the decision of the court will depend the fate of the city's much amended bill presented at the last session of the legislature, or such other legislation as may be sought during the coming session. The Supreme Court will naturally base its decision solely upon the evidence brought before it, and the hope may be expressed that the city, with cut unnecessary delay, will take action toward having all available facts lined up for presentation in the clearest possible manner. It goes without saying that the company will not be found lacking in preparedness.

Negotiations between the City of St. John and the Power Company have in the past been marked by a feeling of bitterness which should not exist between two organizations so dependent upon each other. There has at all times been a suspicion that each has been trying to take unfair advantage of the other, a condition which is not conducive to harmony, but which on the contrary has led to ever-increasing prejudice. The City of St. John is not desirous of driving the Power Company into the bankruptcy courts. Members of the Company, most of them our own citizens, should not without good cause be suspected of desiring to profit dishonestly at the expense of the community. The city naturally hopes to keep down to moderate figures the charges for light, heat and power, and for car fares, while the company seeks a fair return on its investment following its ability to conduct its ordinary operations with a reasonable degree of financial comfort. The reference to the Supreme Court will no doubt form the basis of amended legislation which the city will seek from Fredericton and in whole or in part by the Province, reviewing all that had previously been done. This set forth that it was very desirable and greatly in the interests of the Province that the title to wharves and wharf sites specified in this Act should be transferred to the Dominion and the Province relieved of the burden of maintenance. The Act of 1914 was recalled and the statement made that the survey then authorized was about completed. This being the state of affairs it was enacted that all the properties set forth in the schedule to the Act should immediately after the passing of that Act, without any deed or conveyance, be vested by operation of law in His Majesty the King as represented by the Dominion Government. The Act of 1914 was repealed and the comprehensive legislation of 1919 substituted. Schedule "A," wherein is set forth the properties to be transferred, includes every wharf on the St. John River between this City and Fredericton, together with a number in Albert, Charlotte, Gloucester, Northumberland and Westmorland counties. These wharves are still the property of the Province of New Brunswick. The legislation of 1919, which states that the transfer is very desirable in the interests of this province, has not yet been made. The Act which should have come into effect by the ordinary operation of law has not come into effect because the Department of Public Works has so far failed to file the survey under which the transfer may be made. And because of this negligence on the part of the Post-Office Government, the Federal Government quite properly refuses to undertake new construction or repair work on any St. John River wharf or any other wharf of this nature in the Province. The extreme advisability of the transfer as set forth in Mr. Foster's legislation does not seem to have been such a pressing matter after all, in the Premier's opinion at least, but the advisability of having something done to put these wharves in shape is very apparent indeed to the thousands of residents in the river counties and in the other counties who depend on these dilapidated structures for the shipment of their goods.

WHEN THE NEWS FALLS.

Aurora is described by a recognized encyclopaedia as a series of luminous streamers, arches, or patches, of great beauty, seen in the northern skies, varying in shade from a smoky black to brilliant yellow, green or fiery red. Generally, the aurora is accepted as the ascent of positive electricity, from intertropical water surfaces, which flows towards the poles waded by the higher aerial currents. In the region of the poles it descends towards the earth and comes in contact in a highly rarified atmosphere with the terrestrial negative electricity which results in luminous discharge of great brilliancy. Auroras are of frequent occurrence in April and October, but are rare in December and June. Whoever cares to believe what this encyclopaedia says about auroras may do so, but as a matter of fact the encyclopaedia is entirely astray. Auroras from the standpoint of the newspaper publisher is simply an infernal nuisance. Nor is its presence due invariably to highly-charged currents of electricity. When the news wire falls to work, when nothing comes in the way of despatches fit for a front page headline, when the man at the desk is at his wit's end to know what to display in the paper next morning, he finds solace in the ambiguous explanation of the chief operator that the trouble is due to aurora. When the man on the other end of the wire goes to buy a sandwich—to restore his failing strength and let that wire stand idle for a couple of hours while he is overcoming the effect of the mustard, the ham or the lettuce last, aurora is blamed. When any of the operators with a grudge feel that life is not worth living and that the job should bring more money than he is getting, that day the sheets of news master come through slowly, and aurora gets the blame. The news wire which should carry regularly at least fifty sheets of press matter each night falls down to six pages—as was the case yesterday—and the trouble is due to the same old cause. There may or there may not be a bunch of news available in Montreal, possibly storms interfere with the operation of the wire between New York and Toronto, perhaps the Associated Press is on strike, probably the Associated Press is on a holiday, perhaps a train has knocked down a bunch of telegraph poles along the line of the C. P. R.—in any event aurora gets the blame.

One of the strangest things about the terrestrial or inter-tropical business is that it never seems to interfere with sport. On Sunday night when only ten pages of press matter were received, six full pages covering the ball game came along without a hitch. The rest of the night was spent in wiring the other four pages, because of the electrical interference. It will thus be seen that aurora is not in reality a luminous series of streamers, arches or patches of varied shade, etc., etc., as originally described, but is a never failing excuse when the news service fails.

THE WHARF HOLD-UP.

In 1914 the Provincial Legislature passed an Act under which the Minister of Public Works was empowered to authorize a survey of any or all wharf sites in the Province upon which the Dominion Government proposed to construct public wharves, upon the title of which survey the title to properties so described should vest in the Province free and clear from all claims whatsoever. In the same Act the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council was authorized to transfer to the Dominion of Canada any wharf site so vested in the Province, or any other wharf site which might become the property of the Province by any other means, such as carrying a clear title to the Dominion of Canada of the property involved. Shortly after this legislation was passed, an agreement was reached between the Province and the Dominion whereby the cost of construction and maintenance of wharves was to be equally borne by these two governments, and in 1915 this agreement was extended to provide that for the future all wharves constructed in whole or in part by the Province of New Brunswick should be maintained by the government of Canada. In the same Act, in 1918, it is set forth that the Dominion Government, because of its assumption of liability in respect to maintenance was desirous of acquiring control and ownership of the wharves as it already enjoyed control of the sites of these properties. Because of this the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council was authorized to transfer to the Dominion the title of ownership of all wharves constructed by, owned and controlled by the Province of New Brunswick. No definite action followed this 1918 legislation, but during the present year, in order to give effect to what had already been placed on the statute books, a new bill was introduced and passed by the Post-Office Government, reviewing all that had previously been done. This set forth that it was very desirable and greatly in the interests of the Province that the title to wharves and wharf sites specified in this Act should be transferred to the Dominion and the Province relieved of the burden of maintenance. The Act of 1914 was recalled and the statement made that the survey then authorized was about completed. This being the state of affairs it was enacted that all the properties set forth in the schedule to the Act should immediately after the passing of that Act, without any deed or conveyance, be vested by operation of law in His Majesty the King as represented by the Dominion Government. The Act of 1914 was repealed and the comprehensive legislation of 1919 substituted. Schedule "A," wherein is set forth the properties to be transferred, includes every wharf on the St. John River between this City and Fredericton, together with a number in Albert, Charlotte, Gloucester, Northumberland and Westmorland counties. These wharves are still the property of the Province of New Brunswick. The legislation of 1919, which states that the transfer is very desirable in the interests of this province, has not yet been made. The Act which should have come into effect by the ordinary operation of law has not come into effect because the Department of Public Works has so far failed to file the survey under which the transfer may be made. And because of this negligence on the part of the Post-Office Government, the Federal Government quite properly refuses to undertake new construction or repair work on any St. John River wharf or any other wharf of this nature in the Province. The extreme advisability of the transfer as set forth in Mr. Foster's legislation does not seem to have been such a pressing matter after all, in the Premier's opinion at least, but the advisability of having something done to put these wharves in shape is very apparent indeed to the thousands of residents in the river counties and in the other counties who depend on these dilapidated structures for the shipment of their goods.

WHAT THEY SAY

Quitting The Ship.
New York Herald: Who said of the members of the present Democratic cabinet that "few die and none resign?"

Cannot Dispute It.
Philadelphia Public Ledger: Congress proposes to acquire into the Wilson gifts. It will not be disputed that one of them is dishonest.

The Johnson Amendment.
New York Tribune: The Johnson amendment to the League covenant dealing with domination, colony and dependency representation in the assembly is objectionable because it approaches the problem in the wrong way. The United States doesn't want

Condition and Theory.

New York Herald: The case of France, with the willingness of most Spaniards to fight for it on principle, shows that the League of Nations is a fine thing until somebody has the courage to challenge its authority.

Two Kinds of Theatres.

New York World: The mere threat of prosecution of profiteers sent prices tumbling in England. The reason probably is that a threat of that character in England means business, while in the United States it frequently means only a bluff.

Out of the Lighthouse.

Utica Observer: Herbert C. Hoover has respectfully declined the 84 invitations he has received to speak at various places during the coming year. He is not a "spellbinder," and expressing the belief that the public will be pleased to know that a man can retire from office and stop talking. He indicates by this that he does not intend in any manner to mix in politics, that he has no desire to be in the limelight, and that he is a sturdy American who, having given freely of himself for nearly five years, is disposed to return to private life, unaccompanied by the services of a band and not to be led in triumph by his own trombone to beat the Hoover drum.

A BIT OF VERSE

FAIR TIME.

The first crisp frosts of Autumn
Call back our distant joys
Of days we still remember
When you and I were boys.
The cool-hunts and the corn-roads
The juicy grapes and pears
Had honored place in Autumn,
But oh! Those country fairs!

There were the people crowded, And wondrous great we saw We heard the loud band playing Old "Turkey in the Straw." We bought a bag of peanuts And chewed a stick of gum. We felt we owned the fair-ground— Let everybody come.

We watched the horses prancing Go gallop round the ring And gazed upon the judges As though each were a king! We reverenced their judgment, We knew they must be wise— Their glory has departed Now, from our grown-up eyes!

But wouldn't it be pleasant When fair day comes around To go with friends and neighbors Out to the old fair ground, And oh, it would be splendid Instead of being men If we could drop our burdens And just be boys again!

I'd love to see the racing And talk to all the girls, For some of them have ribbons And some have curls. I'd see the crowds of people— The most I ever saw And hear again the old band Play "Turkey in the Straw!"

—Nina Moore Jamieson, in Mail and Empire.

A BIT OF FUN

Feeling the Pests.

"What can I do," asks smallholder, "to keep the birds from destroying my plums, apples and pears?" The best way is to sell the orchard when they are asleep. The simple creature will go on destroying someone else's plums, apples and pears without discovering the deception that has been practised upon them.

He Missed the Suggestion.

"Cholly—Miss Amy prefers to go in the surf with me because she says she feels so safe with me."
"Jacks—feel no matter what happened, she knew your head would always float—Baltimore American."

Misunderstood.

"I have dropped eggs for breakfast."
"You have nothing on me. I dropped everything except oatmeal and coffee."

Disappearing Hair.

"I think the baby has your hair, ma'am," said the nurse, looking pleasantly at her mistress.
"Disappearing!" exclaimed the lady, planting up from the sofa. "Has it to the nursery and take it away from her. She will ruin it."—London Dialect.

Catty.

Mildred—think I'll have my beauty nap now.
Maud—Well, take a good long sleep.

THE EDITOR'S MAIL

To the Editor of The Standard:
Sir,—Replying to Messrs. Moore, Tobias & Purdy's letter in The Standard of the 4th. let. As to backbiting, thirty years ago I was taught by my father, who was a reliable contractor, that I could backbit with plenty of water within a foot of the surface and let it settle, then I must splash dry and use the powder to make a good piece of work that a team can drive over at any time. The City Hall rule has been for years in backbiting that there shall be two men pounding to one man shovelling, and an inspector has been over the contractor to see that this is done, and when the work was finished in this way there were no holes in the trench backbiting after a rainstorm. If anyone starts work in the new modern way I have not seen any water or powder used, and by-standers see shovelling operations by one man while the contractor has been away.

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to have six votes in the assembly, or two votes in the council, in case Canada or Australia is made a member of the council. We are not anxious to have the Philippines or Porto Rico initiated into the league. If we asked for six seats in the assembly France would be entitled to demand six seats. So would Italy and Japan.

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Little Benny's Note Book

BY LEE PAPE.

Pop came home today and started to hang up his hat and coat, and I said, pop?

You bet you are the original pop here, and pop meaning in always saying pop, and I said, do you know much about joggity, pop?

O, I suppose I could tell an equator from a peninsula if I had to, and pop, and I said, do you know how much wattir it takes to make a food?

Well, as the folks said, that all depends, and pop.

Well, do you think if it rained all day and all night and all the next day and all the next night and all the next day do you think it would make a food? I said,

That sounds joggity like a small food, and pop.

Well, do you think if somebody left 4 fire plugs turned on for 2 weeks do you think that would make a food? I said,

I wouldn't trust it, and pop. Meaning it nite, and I said, Well, pop, suppose a bath tub got so full it couldn't get any taller and ran over the sides, would that make a food?

It would make a confounded mess, and pop.

Yes sir, it did, I said.

Wat did? The doose it did, and pop, and I said, Yes sir, I was going to take a bath without anybody even telling me to just because it was time I needed one, and I started to read and forgot the wattir was running in the bath room, and by the time I remembered, the floor was all wet.

Confound you and your foods, and pop. And he quick went back in the hall and looked up and there was a big wet mark on the ceiling where it had come through the bath room floor and still was, and he gave me 3 cracks some place with his hand and wouldn't leave me go out after supper.

done right. Perhaps if other contractors felt they could do work the same as it has been done in Brussels street and using these modern methods would not injure their reputation for doing good work, they might be able to bid as low as these contractors and the city foot the bill.

Thanking you, Mr. Editor, for your kindness in permitting me to take up this so-called modern method.

Respectfully yours,
CHAS. J. CAIN.

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