

The St. John Standard

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ST. JOHN, N. B., THURSDAY, APRIL 11, 1918.

"We are fighting for a worthy purpose, and we shall not lay down our arms until that purpose has been fully achieved."—H. M. The King.

TO THE PEOPLE OF THE EMPIRE—Every fighting unit we can send to the front means one step nearer peace.

HONEST GOVERNMENT.

That the first duty of any government is to give an honest and economical administration of public affairs, with an absolute return to the people for every cent of money expended on the services of the country, will be admitted by even the most hardened partisan of either political party. Honesty is a trait of character that should be present in every man or every government. It may not always be possible to secure the quality of statesmanship in the men who conduct our public business, but it should always be possible to get honest administration. The Foster government cannot be complimented upon this score. True, none of its members have been accused of a dishonest action, but we find that the government record even during the short period of seven months, to which it claims its responsibility should be limited, does not give promise of any departure from the old plan followed by those who held office prior to 1908 and by which the funds of the province were lavished on political factors who were given opportunity to dip into the public chest and receive sums for which they rendered but indifferent return.

Mr. Foster has not had the reins of power long enough to enable his government to be judged on an absolute equality with that headed by Mr. Robinson or the gentleman who preceded the genial member for the city of Moncton. But Mr. Foster has made a good start and if he continues in the same line he will give any of them a close run for the distinction of careless prodigality. During its seven months' time the present government has not forgotten its political friends.

There is the case of Harry M. Blair. This gentleman was dismissed from the public service because of a transaction practically dishonest in character. After he left the employ of the former government he became one of the most active of the agents working against it and during the Carleton county by-election developed into a particularly offensive Fosterite spell-binder. In due time there came a change in government, and one of the first acts of the Foster party was to re-employ the man who had been dismissed from his former employment, not because of political partisanship, but on account of conduct so reprehensible that he could not longer continue to serve in the important position which up to that time he had held.

The new government was not unmindful of Mr. Blair's efforts in Carleton nor was it slow to reward him. As soon as it could be done without altogether outraging public decency Blair was added to the pay-roll of the Public Works Department and given a special mission in connection with the collection of automobile fees. For this he was paid \$400 per month, and his employment lasted three months, giving him the tidy sum of \$1,200 from the public chest. In return for his remuneration Blair collected something like \$900 in auto fees and was paid at the rate of \$133.13 for every dollar he collected. Was that an honest transaction?

Another particularly glaring case was that of Mr. J. M. Scovell, the necktie king, and one-time political boss of Charlotte county. Mr. Scovell, although a man of means, hired himself out to the Department of Public Works as a sort of boss supervisor of roads. He had no previous experience in road making, and as far as known, was not required to have any. His job was to purchase material and labor for the road work in the county in which he resided. For this he drew from the public treasury several hundreds of dollars, although there is no attempt on the part of the government to deny that another man could have been secured who would have done the work better and to whom the salary would have been more welcome. Yet Mr. Scovell was the one chosen, while returned soldiers in Charlotte who could have been employed had the government desired to carry on the work solely in the interests of the province and according to the lines laid down by the Dominion Government would have been given the opportunity and would have given good service. Was that transaction in the interests of the province? Was it honest in the light of the government's pre-election pledge to administer the affairs only in the best interest of the province and without regard to partisanship?

Again there is evidence all over the province to show that Mr. Veniot in his thirst for vengeance upon all those whom he suspected of being opposed to him made a clean sweep of the outside employees in his department. Experienced road-builders were discharged on all sides and their places

filled by men whose sole experience was political in character. Was that honest? Was it in the best interests of the province, or solely in the interests of the Veniot-Foster party? Under such circumstances it is idle to suppose that the province can get anything like value for the money spent. Small wonder that the auditor general's report shows the heaviest deficit in the history of New Brunswick, or that the public services today are not in as good shape as when the administration, headed by Hon. James A. Murray, went out of office. If the people of this province still adhere to their desire to obtain honest and competent government at Fredericton they must make a change and that at the first opportunity.

SALARY AND POSITION.

Addressing a patriotic meeting in the metropolis of the Empire Rt. Rev. Dr. Ingram, Bishop of London, made the astounding confession that although he receives a salary of ten thousand pounds per annum he is often without funds. In order to suppress any suspicion in the mind of the reader that His Grace of London regarded his condition in the light of an accomplishment rather than a hardship it may be said that he proceeded to explain that his chronic impetuosity was practically forced upon him by the circumstances under which he was obliged to live. He must keep up an establishment of forty-four bedrooms and it is presumed, other accommodation on an equal scale of magnificence, maintain it in good condition and give generously to charitable objects. Consequently he was poor.

The case of the Bishop of London might find its parallel in that of other gentlemen who occupy a large place in the life of the nation, give of their best-ability to the public service and yet are required on a scale quite inadequate to the demands upon them. The greatest statesman Canada ever produced, Sir John A. MacDonald, died a poor man and it became necessary for a public subscription to preserve for his widow the home in which he had lived and where much of his very finest work was produced. And doubtless there are many other instances in our history where a similar condition obtains.

Why should it be regarded as necessary for men or women occupying certain positions in society to live according to certain standards of luxury, or to be plain about it, extravagance? That false idea is responsible for a large share of the misery and discontent in the world and a bar to much happiness that mortals might otherwise enjoy. In the case of the Lord Bishop of London it probably is quite true to say that he cannot regard his financial condition with anything like equanimity on the contrary, unless he possesses a mind absolutely philosophical in its bent, his state of impetuosity must give him concern and detract in some measure from the quality of his work.

We look forward to the reconstruction period after the war as a time when many false standards will be swept away and many long standing inequalities righted. One of the first reforms should be to provide that so long as men in public positions are forced by the conventions to adopt a certain style of living their remuneration shall be sufficient to enable them to maintain that style in comfort. Otherwise there should be general recognition that a man's financial ability and his own tastes shall be the sole arbiters of the standard upon which he shall gauge his household expenses.

TITLES IN CANADA.

The levelling effect of war was never more forcibly illustrated than in the debate before the House of Commons this week on the motion of W. F. Nickle for the abolition of hereditary titles and distinctions. The title has never been very popular in Canada, but it is doubtful if its unpopularity was ever so apparent as today. As a mark of appreciation of a man's services to his country or his Sovereign the title might be defended, but when a distinction is handed down from one generation to another it loses what significance it originally possessed and, as often as not, is a source of embarrassment to the possessor.

Just why a man should have a handle to his name because, perhaps, hundreds of years ago one of his ancestors raised a company of servants to fight the King's battles, or provided a superior brand of entertainment to one of the King's hunting parties, has never been quite explained, all that can be said for it is that it represents a custom of long age but, measured by modern standards, a custom that

has little or nothing to commend it. This is a democratic country in which it is the proud boast that every man is entitled to an equal chance to attain the successes of life. It is true that the possession of an ornamental title will not always take from that man's chance provided he possesses the ability and strength of character to overcome the handicap, but neither will it assist him—therefore, why persist in a custom that has no advantages and is oftentimes a direct hindrance. John Smith, plain and poor, can, for instance, do many things at which Baron De Smythe would be forced by the conventionalities to hesitate. Yet if the Baron had no such handicap his success in life might be equally marked.

There is a little story, told in Ottawa, to illustrate this contention. One of the foremost members of the Laurier cabinet, Mr. W. S. Fielding, was offered a title many times and always refused it. Pressed for a reason he said "plain W. S. Fielding could stand off his tailor when he lacked money to liquidate the bill, Sir William S. Fielding could not." And Mr. Fielding's place in Canadian life would not be added to by a handle.

The debate in the House of Commons is illuminating as indicating the changed standard of values that has come as the result of the war and the disregard in which many conventions of the past are now held. Canada is a young country and during the next few years will be an exceedingly busy country. The need here is for the plain John Smiths and if Mr. Nickle has his way there will be little else. That is a satisfactory condition. If John Smith desires a title let him earn it by outstanding service.

A BIT OF VERSE

LES BLUETS.

I was creepin' on me crutches out o' Fleet Street yesterday,
Feelin' gay as any sparrow jest to be about at last;
I'd quite forgot my crippled foot, me care, as you might say,
When over on the Law Courts' side three laughin' Frenchies passed.

An' I haven't felt the same again since those three Bluets passed.
For the houses all grew misty with a faint horizon-blue,
While I thought o' cornflowers peepin' in from a blackened harvest land,
With many a weary Frenchie fightin' where these cornflowers grew;

An' I've got a kind o' homesickness I cannot understand
Since I saw those little Bluets goin' laughin' down the Strand.
Oh, cottages with gapin' roofs a-starin' at the sky,
Oh, ruined gardens on the Somme and trampled banks of Alsace,
There's a little left the Frenchies but to 'beat the Bosch or die.

I'd go back to all we hated so, the noise an' filth an' pain,
Jest to help those cheery Bluets win their little homes again! —Punch.

A BIT OF FUN

Worry Today.
Jones—You're looking rather below par. What's the trouble now?
Robinson—I'm worrying about what we'll have to worry about when the war's over.—Punch.

Making Himself Solid.
"Why don't you buy your Liberty Bond, me sir? Some other girl was prettier, I suppose."
"On the contrary, I wanted to buy of a firm plain enough so that I might have some little credit for being a patriot."—Life.

What About the Janitor?
"We haven't any lords over here to rule with autocratic sway over the people."
"Haven't we? What about the apartment house landlords?"—Baltimore American.

Conciliatory Son.
Look here, Charlie," said one young collegian to another who had been asked to run his eye over a letter which his friend had written to his father in which there was the inevitable request for money, "you have spelled just right."
"I know," said Charlie, "but you see I need the cash, and don't want the old man to think I'm putting on airs. That's how he spells it."—London Tid-Bits.

He Was Not An Athlete.
Two Irishmen, who had been boys together in the same village, did not see each other for several years.
"You remember my brother, Michael?" said Pat. "He's turned out a fine athlete and has just won a gold medal for a 100-yard sprint."
"Good for him," replied Dennis, "but do you mind my uncle Maguire at Ballybentley?"

Pat was not quite sure that he had ever heard of him.
"Well," resumed Dennis, "he's got gold medals for half a mile, five miles and 10 miles; three silver cups for swimming, a marble clock for wrestling, two silver belts for boxing, and a heap of prizes for cycling."
"Sure, he's the champion athlete, indeed," said Pat, with enthusiasm.
"Not at all; not at all!" exclaimed Dennis. "He keeps the local pawn shop."—Exchange.

ENEMY SURPLUS FUNDS FOR LIBERTY BONDS

Washington, April 9.—All surplus funds of enemy owned corporations will be invested in Liberty Bonds or out of such funds directors must declare a dividend for the purpose of investing in such bonds. Instructions to this effect have been sent to directors of boards of enemy-owned corporations.

MARCONI DIVIDEND.

New York, April 10.—The Marconi Wireless Telegraph Company of America today declared an initial dividend of five per cent.

Little Benny's Note Book

BY LEE PAPE

Pop was smoking and thinking in the setting room after supper, and I sed, Pop?

Did I hear my first name mentioned? sed pop.
Do you know what the epiglottis is? I sed.

Wy yes epiglottis, sed pop, wy yes, do you mean the epiglottis between North and South America?

No sir, its in fazeology, everybodys got one, I sed.
O, to be sure, that epiglottis, sed pop, I thawt for a moment you mite be referring to the geographical one, wy yes, let me see, the epiglottis, the epiglottis is, let me see, the epiglottis is that part of the body wich is extreme cases has to be removed.

How do you mean pop, removed ware? I sed.

That depends on the whereabouts of the patient, sed pop, but no, on 2nd thawts im rons, the epiglottis is that comparatively unimportant portion of the anatomy rite next to the, that is to say, rite between the—I'll tell you wat it is, pop, I sed, the epiglottis is the little thing in your throat that keeps the food from going down the rong way wen you swallow.

Well blast it all, if you knew all the time, wat in the name of Germiny did you ask me for? sed pop.
I wanted to see if you knew, I sed.

You go on with your homework, sed pop, and if I hear another peep out of you I'll wake you up at 6 o'clock tomorrow morning and remind you that youve only got 2 more hours to sleep.

And he kept on smoking and thinking and I kept on doing my homework.

CONGREGATION OF ST. DAVID'S CHURCH MET LAST EVENING

Plans for New Building were Approved—Tenders will be Called for at Once—There is \$70,000 Now Available for Construction.

At a meeting of the congregation of St. David's church held last night plans for the new building were approved and tenders will be called for at once for the construction of the new church home to replace that destroyed by fire last winter. The report of the building committee was in two sections dealing with the erection of the church and Sunday school separately.

The plans for the church as recommended by the committee call for a building faced with either brick or granite without towers and the estimated cost of this building is \$70,000. The new will be circular and the floor will be sloping for a portion of the length. It will provide seats for 778 on the ground floor, an increase of about one hundred over the old church, and 185 in the gallery, a total of 963. There will be three entrances at the front and four at the rear of the building, this giving a total of seven exits in case of fire. The floor will be of spruce with birch aisles. In answer to a question as to why the plan did not provide for towers, it was explained that the cost could be lessened considerably without impairing the beauty of the structure and it had been thought advisable to do without the towers. This section of the report passed unananimously.

In connection with the Sunday school building the committee submitted three plans. That of a two and a half story completed building at a cost of \$40,000, to contain gymnasium, kitchen, class rooms, etc. on the basement floor, on the ground floor the main schoolroom and a number of class rooms, and pastor's vestry, and on the third floor a number of class rooms; the second plan called for the completion of the basement floor covered with a temporary roof and the third plan the completion of a part of the three floors with one false wall to be removed when the time came to complete the building. The second plan would cost \$17,000 and the third \$27,000. The committee recommended that the entire building be constructed if the finances of the congregation would warrant it, and failing this the committee have the power to select whichever alternative seemed best in the circumstances.

T. H. Somerville opposed the passing of this section, claiming that it took the matter out of the hands of the congregation, and he also contended that before this was passed the finance committee should take the congregation into their confidence and tell where the money was coming from to pay for the building. He said the cheapest plan called for an expenditure of \$58,000 and to meet this there was on hand about \$64,000, this left

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