

The Evening Times and Star

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Editorial and European—Frederick A. Smyth, 29 Ledge Hill, LONDON, E.C., England

YOUR RIGHTS IN THE STREET.

Another judge has reminded the Canadian public that the pedestrian has certain very important rights which must not be overridden by drivers of teams, trams, or motor cars, and which will not be overridden if the ordinary citizen afoot knows his rights, and those in authority keep themselves posted in regard to the law and its relation to modern traffic conditions.

The first thing to be noted is that a man who drives a motor car rapidly through traffic and keeps sounding his horn on the assumption that pedestrians are supposed to be away for safety every time they hear the alarm is not relying upon any legal or reasonable fact. A first essential is that those charged with the regulation of traffic should understand thoroughly the rights of all concerned, and should govern themselves accordingly.

We take from the Montreal Mail some portions of a recent decision by Mr. Justice Cross in a case in the Court of Appeal. He was giving judgment in favor of a pedestrian who was injured in a street car collision. Justice Cross said:

"One cannot be impressed with the conviction that conditions of present-day city street traffic are quite unduly adding to the perils of the pedestrian. Formerly, he had not much to fear but butchers' carts and runaway horses. Now he must look out for tram cars and for silently-running motor-vehicles which may come from various directions. Because the great majority of pedestrians, for the sake of bodily safety, run for shelter like hunted animals when they hear the car gong or motor horn, people are in danger of coming to think that such vehicles have some sort of right of way over foot-passengers."

"That delusion may perhaps be strengthened if it be found that traffic-regulating policemen confine their attention to vehicles as if pedestrians deserved no consideration."

"It should be made clear that such an idea will find no acceptance in a court of law; it should be made clear that the King's highways are for the use of all his subjects and all peaceful wayfarers, and that if there is to be regulation at crossings and busy places it should be in the way of giving the greatest protection to those who use it most."

This is indeed most healthful and public-spirited doctrine. The Times would commend it not only to pedestrians, but to owners of vehicles of all sorts, and particularly to the police authorities and those judges who have to do with cases arising from traffic accidents. Justice is the basis of all law—justice and regard for the public welfare. Mr. Justice Cross very properly points out that traffic policemen too frequently overlook the rights of pedestrians, and forget that the drivers of vehicles of all sorts have no more claim upon the freedom of the streets than those on foot. Inasmuch as the street car, the motor car, or the delivery wagon has more motive power than the citizen afoot, the drivers of such vehicles are tempted to take advantage of their superior force. Yielding to that temptation should be checked by traffic policemen in the first instance, and by judges in court if the case passes beyond the sphere of police regulation.

There is no reason in the world why pedestrians should hop about, as Mr. Justice Cross says, "like hunted animals." With increasing traffic there is bound to be more congestion, but modern conditions have in no way abridged the freedom of the individual, and those charged with authority will do well to keep this fact in mind. Since carelessness or timidity with respect to the assertion of the rights of individuals is bound to lead to increased encroachment upon and growing loss of those rights, it is highly important that the average citizen should know his rights and should not hesitate to insist upon them within reason.

Traffic conditions in St. John, have changed very materially during the last few years, and from many recent occurrences it would appear well that the sound doctrine contained in the judgment of Mr. Justice Cross should be given careful local consideration.

NEW USE FOR AEROPLANES.

In the strenuous days through which we are passing, the aeroplane is commanding more and more attention as an adjunct to the armies of the contending nations. Almost daily we read of contests in the air, and on some days these aerial combats on the battle front in France alone have reached as large a number as sixty or seventy. The army aviator has become the eyes of the land forces, for he seeks out the position of the enemy battery and, by signalling to the force below, designates this position and so directs the artillery fire. Much of the recent success of the Allies on the western front has been due to the courage, vigilance, ability and superiority in numbers and quality of machines of the British and French air patrols over the German over-land routes.

In peaceful pursuits we also see the aeroplane coming into more general use. It has already been utilized as a speedy mail carrier; it is used as a passenger transport across the English channel in war work; and now we find it in operation as a fire patrol in one or two of the wooded states in the American republic. The main object in this use of air craft is the prompt discovery of forest fires, and the quick notification of the forest rangers, so that prompt steps may be

taken to combat the worst enemy of the lumberman.

"Conservation," a periodical published for dissemination of information relative to the national resources of Canada and their development and proper conservation, has an article in its November issue, dealing with this subject. It recalls an announcement that the dominion government is to expend \$1,000,000 in construction of an aeroplane factory in Toronto and suggests that the testing of machines and training of men be made to serve a doubly useful purpose by trying out the practicability of a forest fire patrol under Canadian conditions. The matter is of interest in New Brunswick, where the forest and its products loom largely in the provincial assets and where there has been a large loss due to fires in the wooded districts. There is something in "Conservation's" suggestion. At least it is worth a trial.

The capture of Monastir is one of the most important recent developments in the war. Mr. Frank H. Simonds says that if Germany loses the road to the east, he does not believe peace would be long coming because there would be little left worth fighting for. In other words, when the Allies have restored Serbia and broken communication between Germany and Constantinople, the war will have entered upon its final stage. Monastir is one step in that direction, but only one. How much progress the Allies will yet be able to make in a winter campaign in the Balkans remains to be seen. If they do not overrun Macedonia and break the Bulgarians this winter, they doubtless will do so early in the spring.

Taxation reform in St. John cannot be introduced by means of anonymous letters. Nor is it likely that those who believe taxation justice would be of great benefit to St. John will be discouraged because certain citizens seek to hide their motives behind a nom de plume. Anonymous letters carry little weight. As a rule a man who does not sign his name to his letter feels that if the public could get one square look at him their worst suspicions would be confirmed. Also, concerning anonymous letters, one individual may adopt many disguises, and write many letters. In fact one or two industrious but stealthy gentlemen might write dozens of such letters. The public goes its way. And when the anonymous letter writers look back over their record at Christmas, or New Year's, or on their birthdays, or early some fine Sunday morning, they usually are not very proud of themselves.

Toronto Mail and Empire—Some day for a change the men in uniform ought to be permitted to line the sidewalks and see the stay-at-home citizens march past to the accompaniment of salutes of cheers that could be heard almost across the road.

There's originality in the suggestion, but it would take a mobilization order to make it effective among the confirmed stay-at-homes.

The longshoremen, coal handlers and shipping concerns have come to an agreement over wage questions that have been pending. All are to be congratulated on the spirit shown in arranging matters that so greatly affect the business of the port, particularly at this special time.

Kelly goes to prison in Manitoba as a result of conviction for wrongdoing in connection with the parliament buildings contract. They are dealing with such cases better in the west than in New Brunswick.

Some Toronto bakers have been brought to court on charge of selling short-weight bread. We can hardly conceive that men would do such things especially in days when the cents rather than the dollars are what count.

Toronto Globe—The Hamilton Spectator calls the late Minister of Militia Sir Sam Hughes. By-and-by, no doubt, The Spectator may elaborate the idea into Sir Sam Old Hughes.

Announcement that Canadian ports are to be used so far as possible for shipments to Europe should mean an especially heavy winter business here. And why not all the year round?

Our armies advance but the price of food necessities keeps pace. Canada is feeling the effects of war.

There is no hesitation or weakness about the enforcement of the customs laws. The Dominion government does not tell the municipalities to investigate charges of infraction of these laws, nor does it leave them to be enforced by the provincial authorities. It has its customs officials all along the border searching trunks and bags for dutiable

goods. It watches the importing merchants, examines invoices and books of account, authorizes its agents to enter warehouses where imported goods are stored. It has keen-eyed detectives looking out for infractions of the law. It has agents investigating the working of the anti-dumping laws, which are intended to prevent the undervaluation of imports. All these laws are thoroughly enforced.

What is the reason? There are two powerful motives for enforcement. First, the Dominion government wants the revenue. Second, the protected manufacturers are keenly interested in preventing the importation of such goods as they produce. If they hear of any infraction of the customs laws, it is to their interest to let the government know, and the government is glad to get the information. But at the same time the government does not wait to receive information—it seeks out offences against these laws. The Star's contention has been that the consumers' interests are entitled to the same kind of guardianship by the government.

AS THE MANUFACTURER IS PROTECTED BY THE DOMINION GOVERNMENT, SO THE CONSUMER OUGHT TO BE PROTECTED. AND THE DOMINION GOVERNMENT OUGHT TO TAKE THE WHOLE RESPONSIBILITY FOR ENFORCEMENT, AND ORGANIZE A STAFF FOR THAT PURPOSE.

There would be an additional motive for energetic enforcement if all excess profits were taken for public purposes. The Dominion government would then be as eager to collect the revenue from profits as it is now eager to collect the revenue from imports. The collectors would vie with each other in their zeal for big returns.

Not only so, but the taking of excess profits would discourage the making of such profits. There would be no object in piling up big profits if it were known that every dollar of them went into the public treasury instead of into the pockets of the manufacturer or middleman. In this way profits would be automatically reduced, and the consumer would get the benefit of lower prices. The cheaper the goods, the bigger the sale, and the manufacturer would rather sell a large quantity at the lower price than a small quantity at the higher price. The higher price would be of no use to the seller, because the difference would go into the public treasury.

Let the Dominion government take the whole of the excess profits in taxation, and organize a staff of agents to collect the money and enforce the law. And let it be as keen about prosecuting and punishing offenders against the law for the protection of the consumer as it now is about prosecuting and punishing smugglers.

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WILSON'S POPULAR VOTE

His Remarkable Gain Over His 1912 Figures—Hughes Exceeded the Vote of Both Taft and Roosevelt

(Robert C. Brooks of Swarthmore, Pa., in the Philadelphia Public Ledger.)

In 1912 Taft and Roosevelt together polled 7,609,942 popular votes, or only a few thousand less than the popular vote of the Republican party in 1908 and 1904. This year Mr. Hughes polled 8,160,401 popular votes, an increase of only 550,459, or 7 2-10 per cent. over 1912.

Mr. Wilson's vote in 1912 was 6,286,214, or less than Mr. Bryan received each of the three times he ran for the presidency. This year Mr. Wilson's popular vote rose to 8,568,718, an increase of 2,277,499, or 36 2-10 per cent. over 1912.

In other words, while the Republican party has taken a feeble step forward, the Democratic party has gone ahead with seven-league boots.

Mr. Wilson's gains in the separate states are amazing. To cite first those which he carried, the figures in thousands are as follows: California 288 to 466; Idaho, 84 to 88; North Dakota, 29 to 54; Ohio, 428 to 578; Utah, 86 to 77; Wyoming, 15 to 25. In the states where women voted for the first time his gains over 1912 are even more amazing, thus, in thousands again: Kansas, from 145 to 215; Mon-

tana, 27 to 81; Arizona, 10 to 29; Washington, 97 to 137.

All the states whose electoral votes he lost tell the story of Democratic gains on the popular vote of 1912, with the single exception of South Dakota. Thus, in Connecticut, Wilson's popular vote jumped from 74,000 to 99,000; Indiana, 282,000 to 388,000; Massachusetts, 173,000 to 247,000; Minnesota, 106,000 to 176,000; in Pennsylvania itself from 298,000 to 510,000. In the only two woman suffrage states which he lost, his vote, nevertheless, increased as follows from 1912 to 1916: Illinois, 405,000 to 869,000 and Oregon 47,000 to 116,000.

In every presidential election from 1868 to 1912, inclusive, the Republican popular plurality in Pennsylvania has exceeded 288,000. This year it is only 184,987, a falling off of more than 100,000.

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000. Wilson's popular vote in Pennsylvania this year shows a gain over 1912 of 116,110, or 29 1-10 per cent. Hughes' popular vote in Pennsylvania actually fell below the combined vote of Taft and Roosevelt in 1912 by 22,610 votes a decline of 8 1-10 per cent.

All over the country, therefore, there was a mighty upward surge of Democracy. Everywhere it broke through the crust with volcanic violence except in the northeastern quarter of the country and even there it produced a ground swell that has shattered old political landmarks.

The Hour of No Regrets.

(A Sunday Morning Review.)

No smile too sweet, no kiss too long, No fib too neat, no sip too strong, No costly dower of dainty debts, Besmirch that hour of no regrets.

No blighted troth, no worthless shares No speeches worth, no nested mares, No soul to secure, no boastful bets, Mar that brief hour of no regrets.

No trumpet nose, no nightmare shock, Broke bounds from 2 to 8 o'clock, Nor penance waits, nor sorrow frets My holy hour of no regrets.

How black so'er my past may be, I did no sin from 2 to 8. Time in a golden circle sets That jewelled hour of no regrets.

—A. W. in the London Chronicle

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