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Semi-Weekly Telegraph

ST. JOHN, N. B., OCTOBER 7, 1903.

THE REASONABLE PROPOSAL.

A certain amount of vituperation on behalf of the provincial newspapers in respect to The Telegraph has been duly noted; but none of these journals has replied effectively to the main question at issue. It is The Telegraph's idea that the Liberal party will commit itself to a most serious blunder if it insists upon constructing the country to the railway scheme which now has the Senate.

The attacks made upon this newspaper by unimportant provincial journals are all along one thing: They avoid the main question. They do not attempt to answer the blunt question of the Hon. A. G. Blair that the government's railway policy involves an absolutely unjustifiable expenditure of public money.

St. John's and certain amount of testimony which it is in respect to the Quebec Monoton line.

All of this testimony is against the construction of any line which means the duplication of the I. C. R.

There is here no public testimony in support of the bill as it stands.

It is not unfair, then, to assume that St. John is in line with not a few other sections of this country in appealing to the Senate to kill the bill which will so surely place the people of Canada in the hands of the Grand Trunk.

MUSIC AND WAR.

Emerson said "once upon a time that courage consisted in the main in what a man had done before. The philosopher who never held a rifle and who never saw a wounded man carried into hospital after a brush with the enemy, but half-stated the case. He was on the right road, but he did not know exactly that of which he affirmed.

There is in our mind, at the moment, the stirring music of the British band which visits us, and which comes to us with the prestige of many hard-won banners from many fields. There can be no question that the public is justified in cheering the national airs played by this organization. It is pleasing to note that the audience is sympathetic under these circumstances, because the music appeals to the feeling that this colony is, of all things, loyal.

It is a good band, it appeals to the martial spirit of this confederation. That spirit is responsive. The fact that it is responsive is of a character and creditable. There is, or there is not, some excuse for the maintenance of the militia. The militia will be of use in emergency only if it is made the skeleton about which an immense force of reserves may be hurriedly raised in time of war. It is a fact that the militia and the reserve must answer certain modern requirements, or the militia system now obtaining is absolutely useless. In this matter Lord Dufferin's advice should have not a little weight.

DISTANCES.

If Colonel Tucker had not participated extensively in the debate on the railway question he at least intercepted a few significant remarks while Mr. Charlton was vainly attempting to answer Hon. Mr. Blair on August 11. Mr. Charlton argued that the government could not properly discriminate between St. John and Halifax and said the G. T. Pacific plan would serve both ports. He said St. John and Halifax both would be accessible from

Moncton, though the advantage in distance would be in favor of St. John.

Colonel Tucker remarked: "It increases the distance to St. John eighty-nine miles." And that fact remains. It is proposed, however, to carry the road ninety-six miles further than is necessary, as Hon. Mr. Blair proved. When he spoke of the St. John Valley route, Mr. Blair pointed out that the government had not only ignored St. John and the most important interests of this province, but had also failed to select the shortest route to the seaboard.

After dwelling upon the advantages and just claims of this port, the ex-Minister of Railways said: "Why is St. John passed over? If the shortest line is the object why do you go 100 miles out of the way? St. John is only 428 miles from Montreal by way of Lewis, Riviere du Loup and the St. John Valley. Buy that road if you want to get to the ocean, or appropriate it if you cannot buy. According to the shortest, statement of Mr. Davey the distance is 190 miles longer by the centre line, but it is really 170 miles, as I shall show you. Why do you want to travel 170 miles further than is necessary? There is no necessity for it in any business interest. St. John is passed by. The distance from St. John to Lewis by the line I have spoken of, as I have said, 428 miles. From Lewis to St. John by the Intercolonial it is 578 miles. By the Davey line, taking his own figures to be correct, it is 601 miles. And from Lewis to Halifax by the Moncton and centre of New Brunswick line, it is 397 miles. You have, therefore, ninety-six miles by the best possible figuring you can make, by the Moncton and centre of New Brunswick line—ninety-six miles further than there is any necessity for going or any justification for doing."

If the government were determined to build from Quebec in this direction why did they not select the route which is shortest, and which would have served the people of the St. John Valley? The government's promise was to provide the shortest and speediest route to the sea. The West was told that would be done, but the government's plan will not do it. For some years to come the I. C. R. can carry all the freight offered. If it were to be extended westward as Mr. Blair advised and the St. John Board of Trade urged, there would now be no talk about the diversion of Canadian traffic to foreign sea ports.

A QUESTION. Says the Toronto News in discussing the financial aspect of the Grand Trunk Pacific:—

The Grand Trunk Pacific is entitled to issue paid-up stock for considerations other than cash. But it is very clearly laid down that these considerations must be bona fide, full value for all that portion of the issue that is not paid for. There is thus no alternative for the future consideration of a stock acquired at any price, save a cash to assume that the whole issue of Grand Trunk Pacific common represents full value received, or else to conclude that the issue was contrary to the charter and a violation of the law regulating the company.

The powers of a Railway Commission are wide, indeed, but he would be a daring commissioner who should set out to punish a group of stockholders for violating the law in accepting an arrangement upheld by the Finance Minister and the entire Cabinet.

No arbitrator is placed over the Grand Trunk Pacific directors to tell them how much paid-up stock is "bona fide value" for a given service or privilege. In the case of a bridge or a right of way, or anything else of an approximately determinate value, an exorbitant issue of stock could doubtless be set aside in legal proceedings. But who is going to settle what is or is not exorbitant as a recompense for a given service, principal and interest? Fair bargain? But there need be no fair bargain between Mr. Hays of the Grand Trunk and Mr. Hays of the Grand Trunk Pacific, particularly when the latter is bargaining privately with the public money. What is the Grand Trunk going to ask?

STILL OBJECTING.

While the Montreal Witness, a strong Independent Liberal newspaper, does not believe in Mr. Borden's so-called alternative railway scheme, it still plainly voices its conviction that the best interests of the country would be served if the Senate were to kill the Winnipeg-Moncton section of the government's railway proposal.

It has been long since the Witness has used as plain language regarding any Liberal proposal as it does now. Here is a specimen:—

"Our own explanation of the imperative necessity which had made it necessary to throw the whole energy of the Dominion into a non-commercial venture was that certain people in Quebec had got possession of a bridge largely a present from the nation and had found it, as we had foretold, an elephant on their hands, which they must dispose of, or come to grief. It was imperative in their case that a better road should be erected for their bridge. This explanation does not lose force from the fact that immediately following the third reading of the bill yesterday, the Prime Minister announced that the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway Company will take over the Quebec Bridge, for which special legislation is necessary."

Again, referring to the petitions against the bill, reference to which has been made from time to time in these columns, the Witness says in part:—

"The petitions referred to contained a summary of the more obvious objections in very much the same form as that on

which the Conservative leader has summarized his position in parliament. These objections were that little that is definite is known about the country between Winnipeg and Quebec and Moncton, but that the cost will probably amount to \$120,000,000; that no evidence has been adduced that the spending of this money will cheapen freight rates or establish more satisfactory communication between the different parts of the Dominion; that, on the contrary, it is to be feared that by pledging the credit of the country to such a vast extent, the government will make it impossible to carry out works better calculated to meet the immediate transport needs of the country, and that the government had no mandate from the country to build and finance a new trans-continental railway and the country ought to have been given a constitutional opportunity to pronounce upon such an enormously important matter."

"Most of these objections are such as occurred to the more than a few people, when the scheme was first announced."

These objections, and the list is by no means complete, cannot be removed by the acquiescence of the Senate in the measure to which they are now asked to irrevocably commit the country.

The country should have a chance to say at the polls what its opinion of this railway legislation is. That the Senate would be justified in preventing the government from adding the country with the G. T. Pacific bargain is plain. At least the Upper Chamber should not hesitate to remove the features which have created such widespread hostility to the project and which have never been successfully defended.

IN BRITISH COLUMBIA.

Although the decision to conduct the political campaign in British Columbia on party lines was generally expected to result in a decisive Conservative victory, the Liberals have evidently developed more strength than was looked for. As far as the returns so far received show, neither side will have a working majority, and something like a continuation of the confusion during the last session is probably to be expected.

Party lines were not drawn before, but now the Liberals claim to have elected twenty-one members to the Conservative majority. The returns are that two Conservatives and one Liberal candidate have been chosen and some constituencies are in doubt. The complete returns, however, are not likely to result in giving either party a free hand in the conduct of the province's affairs. The Liberals did not present a united front in Saturday's contest, and while a party appeal was made on both sides many other issues were involved. The Liberal gains are extensive and would have been greater had strong leaders been available.

THE CRIMINALS SELF-PIITY.

In sentencing a youthful offender here the other day, the judge made use of some wholesome language about the tendency of criminals to pity themselves, and to regard themselves as either martyrs or heroes. Three brothers who were killed by electricity in New York state last week for a brutal murder, were permitted to advertise themselves very freely in the local papers. Young and thoughtless American newspaper readers were told by their fate and that friends and even designers regarded them as being victims of injustice.

This self-pity is a common characteristic of the most hardened and dangerous offenders, and it appears most undesirable that it should be exploited in the manner to which allusion has been made. While the state in its worst days should be attended by a certain number of witnesses in addition to the executioners, and while it may be well that such is the practice, the tendency is to give altogether too much publicity to such matters. In cases where the trial has been a fair one, as it generally is, it is not wise that respect for the law should be undermined by such sensational newspaper treatment.

Van Wormen were permitted to make and to treat the more sensational newspapers treated extensively and seriously. Such news appeals to a far from admirable class of readers and perhaps it is the result of increasing the criminal element in the country. It is a matter of opinion whether society is best served by the execution of its worst criminals. As yet, however, public sentiment in most countries upholds that method of enforcing respect for the law. In some communities, and their number is increasing, it is believed that life-long imprisonment is more effective than the death penalty. Whatever punishment is best, society's interests are served in a higher degree when there is as little offensive notoriety as possible. Criminals under sentence should not be permitted to issue manifestos from their prisons once their cases are beyond appeal.

UNANSWERED CRITICISMS.

In assuming that the Senate will pass the Grand Trunk Pacific bargain the Toronto Globe says it "would be unfair to the body to assume that it will give that approval as a matter of course, but as there has been ample time for the individual members to become acquainted with the bill, and as the measure is a statesmanlike and attractive one it is not probable that the Senate will adopt it within a reasonable time."

In attempting to show how statesmanlike and attractive the bill is the Toronto journal says among other things that "in New Brunswick it will afford a chance to test the value of the interior of that province for purposes of settlement. It will be and do all this at an insignificant cost to the Dominion."

There is very little to be said in favor

of the proposed Quebec-Moncton line as a colonization road and its construction cannot be excused by the value in that direction. The man who made the Intercolonial a modern railway and a valuable national asset, and who has studied more closely than most public men the railway requirements of New Brunswick, announced from his place in Parliament that the Eastern section would be a wholly unjustifiable waste of public money.

The Senate, in considering the bill now, will doubtless take into consideration the convincing arguments to which Hon. Mr. Blair subjected the whole plan, and particularly the proposed route from Quebec to Moncton. Let us recall Mr. Blair's opinion of this road for purposes of colonization and as a matter of practical railroading: He said it:—

"Well, Sir, where is it proposed to locate this line? I understand, from the plan that I have before me, that the other day the road is to run back from Lewis across the height of land until it gets somewhat to the right of the St. John boundary and between the heights of land south of the Intercolonial; then it is to run easterly by some route to be hereafter determined until it reaches Edmundston; and from Edmundston it is going to pass by us direct as far as possible through the centre of New Brunswick to Moncton. I know nothing about the section from Lewis east to Edmundston. I do not think the government does; that is my impression. I have a suspicion it is a little more than a suspicion, but I cannot verify it convincingly, though it has taken a strong hold upon my mind—that if any honorable member of the Senate is now contemplating the rail project which I have just described, I believe it will be found that in order to build a line at all capable of carrying any traffic, they will have to slip into the St. John valley, run down a bit, and come back into Canada, before they get through."

In the province of New Brunswick the great body of the population lies either to the north, along the Gulf of St. Lawrence, or to the south, along the Bay of Fundy, and along the valley of the St. John river in the west. So that this railway, in going through the centre of the province, is leaving the population far removed from it on either side. There are a few settlements here and there on the rivers which are crossed, but these settlements are mostly all reached by railways constructed along these rivers. The country which is to be traversed is largely a wooded country, or has been wooded. Very much of the timber has been cut away. The lumbermen have been forced to leave the back of the province, and the lumbering business, because lumber would not be taken by the railway, but by the rivers, as it is today. You would have, therefore, a railway crossing the river and the heights of ground at right angles, and you have to cross a great distance from the St. John river and the other western on the west. You can imagine what the difficulties will be in constructing a railway under these circumstances. You can imagine what it is likely to be the expense, the character of the grades, and the disadvantages under which such construction will labor."

The Senate, no doubt, will consider also the statement of Hon. Mr. Blair, supported as it is by the opinion of engineers, that the Intercolonial is capable of carrying all the traffic which will be offered for several years to come, and that to spend \$15,000,000 to duplicate it is a proposal which must be regarded as unnecessary.

So much has been said in condemnation of the scheme and so few of the arguments against it have been answered, it is impossible to see how the Senate can honestly give its assent to the bill in its present form.

On the other hand, should the Senate look solely at the interests of the country and strike out the offensive features of the measure, its course would be amply justified.

THE FRIENDS OF THE BILL.

Ever since the government's railway bill was introduced and the Hon. A. G. Blair opposed to it the weight of argument which commanded the instant attention and conviction of the country, a desultory attempt has been made by earnest friends of the measure to justify the government's action in the eyes of the people.

The bargain may be passed in the Senate this week or next, but it still is the privilege of any newspaper to ask what answer has been made, by friends of the bill, to the objections urged against it by men who hesitate because they have not in their possession the information which the country should possess in detail today.

Since the measure was introduced in Parliament this newspaper has opposed it as one utterly inadequate to answer the transportation requirements of this country. But, in the main, our arguments, as have all arguments in opposing this bargain, have been but repetitions or enlargements of the arguments advanced by the ex-Minister of Railways because in the speech in which he abandoned his cabinet position and announced so boldly and so convincingly his disapproval of the bargain, he went over the proposed transaction from coast to coast.

If he has, this country is not aware of it. There have been but two—possibly three—possible speeches in relation to this proposed railway which is bound to have so vast an influence upon the future of Canada. The first was the address made by the Premier in introducing the bill. It was marked by all the eloquence which is at the command of that distinguished leader and which serves so well to give to his position in a time of need.

There is a friend or admirer of the Premier who will say that this great speech contained more facts than eloquence; probably not.

He was followed by the ex-Minister of Railways. When Hon. Mr. Blair arose

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There is no doubt that absolute patriots heard his lectures with displeasure. Yet all must have admitted that whereas ordinary had commanded the ear of the House before the crowd, Mr. Blair held his audience by the business-like and all-embracing analysis of the measure, from the first paragraph to the final sentence.

Government arguments in defence of the bill, then, have been in general, an attack upon the arguments advanced by Hon. Mr. Blair. Have they been effective?

Opposition thundering against the bill, too, has in the greater part consisted in a repetition of the case made out against it by the one man in Canada then best fitted to defend or dissect the plan put forward. Friends of the bill have not seriously attempted to answer the opposition, but they have seriously attempted to answer Mr. Blair, realizing that his attack was most effective—that here was the attack upon the centre. The ex-Minister left scarcely a point unovered. To him and his argument, then, turned those ardent friends of the measure which the Senate of Canada is now asked to enact as expressive of the will of the people.

Have these friends of the bill answered Hon. Mr. Blair effectively? Have they explained why an all-Canadian road should be preferred in the early stages of discussion, and the all-Canadian feature of the road subsequently destroyed through the weakness of an agreement with a corporation which is tied to Portland by the chain of self-interest?

Have they answered Hon. Mr. Blair when he asserted that the shortest line to this Atlantic seaboard had not been chosen, and that it was proposed to expend \$15,000,000 in duplicating a now satisfactory line, in which \$70,000,000 had been invested and to the success of which, under Liberal control, the party in power has contributed so steadily and so wisely for the last five years?

Friends of the G. T. Pacific scheme are bold and eager in their advocacy today, but have they answered the vital objections which have been made to the measure they endorse so enthusiastically? The Senate, which now has in its power the future of the country, in so far as the railway measure is concerned, may well take these matters into consideration.

MR. BALFOUR'S POSITION.

The departure of the Duke of Devonshire from the Balfour cabinet, while to a certain extent it has been discounted, tends greatly to increase the difficulties with which the government is confronted. Mr. Balfour, if it was thought, might retain the support of this powerful factor in the situation once it was announced that Mr. Chamberlain had removed himself from the government ranks by his resignation.

But it now appears that the connection maintained by Mr. Balfour with Mr. Cham-

berlain, in spite of his departure from cabinet circles, and the evidence that, though officially apart, the Premier and the ex-Colonial Secretary are really in fiscal sympathy, has been a very real force in the minds of the public. How much of a following he has in the centres of population, and how great therefore, is his loss in this situation, is a matter which cannot well be determined now. The announcement of the new cabinet names, together with the latest utterances from the Chamberlain and Balfour forces, show that the new protectionist party is not at all dismayed, and will begin with no little hope the extraordinary fiscal campaign now before them. Mr. Chamberlain's speech at Glasgow tomorrow will lend new fire to the war he inaugurated some months ago and has since continued so vigorously. No man can safely forecast the outcome of the struggle.

NOTE AND COMMENT. The people now rely upon the Senate. Can anybody explain why it is necessary to expend \$15,000,000 to duplicate the I. C. R.?

Sir Sandford Fleming says there can be no better line than the Intercolonial. The government proposes to duplicate it. Why?

The government of this country has invested \$70,000,000 in the I. C. R. It is now proposed to destroy that investment. What is the excuse?

These terrible tremors in the Ancient and Honorable of London have captured Boston and the entire cordiate was never so flourishing.

Senators know where St. John stands on the railway bill. The measure is very unpopular here and the business men are on record as opposing it.

There is only one body which can stand between the people of this country now and the Commons in its determination to place the railway measure on the books. The bill should not be passed.

The value of intricate maps in the Alaska boundary dispute is shown by the fact that the American lawyer was detected holding one of them upside-down the other day.

The death of Dr. Landers leaves four seats vacant in the Senate. The mortality

in that body has been unusually great during the last year, no fewer than six Senators having been removed by death.

Pictures of the Grand Trunk terminal facilities together with an article praising Mr. Hays appear in the Bangor Commercial. The Americans do not believe that Canadian freight will all come to Canadian ports, evidently.

The gentlemen who have had in charge the arrangements for the horse show and carnival have devoted much valuable time and energy to the matter and are deserving of high credit. The public should now reward their efforts and make the show a splendid success throughout.

Mr. Kipling's last verses have brought down upon his head more adverse criticism than usually greets the publication of any new work by him. The New York Evening Post regrets that for the present the poet in him has given way to the exhorter. And yet it still seems that the man who has written "Kim" within two years may do anything.

The New York Sun appreciates Canada more and more every day. In place of the annexation talk we were accustomed to hear from the Sun it now speaks in this way:—

Last year we sold to our immediate neighbors more than \$200,000,000 worth of goods. Canada, Cuba and Mexico bought from us fifty per cent. more than we sold to the whole of Asia, Australasia, Oceania and Africa. These neighbors are all of them lands of incalculable possibilities and endless resources. The wealth of Mexico is even yet unknown. The richness of Cuba is proverbial. Canada's vast possibilities are being opened up by an energetic people who are our own kin and kind.

Better late than never. Speaking of our young men, the Boston Transcript says:—

Students of Toronto University say that the student there is not British so much as Canadian. From students at Upper Canada College, which the governing body deliberately attempted to make extremely British and imperialistic through the late headmaster, Dr. Parkin, one receives the same report. It appears true of McGill University at Montreal, and is certainly so of Laval and the French colleges generally. That the younger schoolboys are as Canadian in their sentiments as Yankee schoolboys are Yankee in theirs is patent to anyone who has the privilege of familiar converse with them. The maple leaf is the cherished emblem of the young all over the Dominion; you see it in stick pins, brooches, and decorative buttons galore. An intense patriotism marks the mark of young Canada. Being shared by both it promises to affiliate the two main races of the country. It is not dissociated from affection for Great Britain, but is in no degree favorable to any degree of continued subordination to the Old Country. It appears perfectly consistent with loyalty to the Crown, this being more or less loosely regarded as a symbol of Canada, rather than of British Government. There is very little republican sentiment, and none for annexation to the States.