

THE EVENING TIMES-STAR, ST. JOHN, N. B., FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 29, 1924

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THE TARIFF ISSUE

The Speech from the Throne at Ottawa will be satisfactory to all Liberals who believe the Liberal policy should agree with the platform of the party, for it points to at least some tariff reductions. The Progressives also will welcome the announcement, while the Conservatives it will be a challenge they will not be slow to take up; for their policy is a higher instead of a lower tariff.

The country at large will be glad of the assurance that the state of employment in the country has improved and the volume of business increased; and the people will heartily agree that reduced taxation and reduced cost of production and transportation are desirable. In obvious reply to a good deal of criticism it is announced that the Government anticipates a balanced budget when the present financial year closes, and the country will welcome the announcement. Believing that some immediate reduction in taxation would be justified, the Speech forecasts tariff charges which would lessen the cost of the instruments of production in industries based on the natural resources of the Dominion. This no doubt refers especially to what the farmer of the west needs, but it may have a wider scope. We can imagine what the manufacturers of Ontario and Quebec will say, but east and west of them are provinces which have no love for a high tariff.

There will undoubtedly be a great deal of lobbying from now until the budget is brought down. Since there are to be tariff changes, many interests will want to be heard, and in Parliament the traditional high and low tariff parties will line up for battle. There is every indication of a lively and perhaps prolonged debate on the tariff issue. The President of the Canadian Manufacturers' Association has made many speeches in support of more protection, and is vigorously supported by the Conservative party press. High tariff talk, however, makes no appeal to the Maritime Provinces.

TO US ARE THE PROMISES

"Every effort will be made still further to develop the policy of Canadian trade via Canadian ports."

This promise is made in the Speech from the Throne. Sir Wilfrid Laurier declared he would never be satisfied until all Canadian trade went through Canadian channels. Sir Robert Borden made a similar declaration. Now we have it again, in a modified form, while a great volume of Canadian trade is pouring through Canadian channels and a new American port has been added.

The Canadian National Railways are carrying cargoes to New London, Connecticut, to be taken on board steamers of the Canadian Merchant Marine. St. John and Halifax meanwhile, plead in vain for business they ought to have, and even for such facilities as business now available demands.

To us are the promises. To American ports goes the traffic. If the present sort of thing can go on with safety to the Dominion it is not well advised.

We hear a lot about the business of making a railroad pay. There is, however, another and more important business, which is that of holding the country together. There is discontent in the extreme east, and it is not recognized and is growing. We must have more than an unfulfilled promise of many years' standing.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCILS

Provinces which long since discovered the uselessness and unnecessary cost of a Legislative Council have wondered why the people of Nova Scotia clung to this archaic institution. Whatever may have been the original conception of its value, its record, in New Brunswick at least, from the days of the struggle for responsible government down to the time of its abolition was one of obstruction of the popular will. As a Home for the Aged in Politics it might appeal to the charitably minded, if it would mind its own business, but as a necessary part of government it has no value whatever, and may easily prove an objectionable influence.

Of course the members are not to be expected to show a violent zeal to efface themselves. In New Brunswick it was necessary to appoint members pledged to abolition before the thing could be accomplished. That was in Hon. A. G. Blair's time. Attempt after attempt had been made either to alter or to abolish the Council, but without success. By appointing members who favored abolition and pledged themselves to vote for it the problem was solved.

In 1891 Hon. Mr. Blair introduced a bill to abolish the Legislative Council, and it was heartily supported by Hon. D. L. Hanington, leader of the opposition. It passed the House, and the only amendment the Council itself

made, and this the House agreed to, was that the act would not come into effect until the dissolution of the existing Legislature. The bill provided that all powers vested in the old form of government should pass to the Lieutenant Governor and House of Assembly, but that the members of the Legislative Council then living should retain the honor and dignities of such membership for life. The following was the pledge Mr. Blair exacted of persons appointed to the Council to bring about its abolition:

"To the Attorney General and Leader of the Government: 'Sir—Having been notified that the Government has in contemplation to ask my acceptance of a seat in the Legislative Council and to appoint me thereto at an early date, I beg to assure you that in case my appointment shall take place I will accept the same upon the understanding that I will at all times vote for any measure or measures introduced and promoted by the Government for the purpose of bringing about the abolition of the Council, and I hereby pledge myself to vote accordingly.'"

There was a time when the Governor and Legislative Council were all powerful. So independent was the original Council that it sat with closed doors for nearly fifty years, and no record of its proceedings was published until 1880. The House of Assembly grew more insistent as years passed, and many times when a resolution of the Council rejected needed legislation an appeal was taken to the foot of the throne. Gradually concessions were secured and the powers of the House strengthened. In 1881 a bill was passed in the House providing that the Legislative Council be made elective, but the Council defeated it. The House thereupon refused to vote the grant to pay the members of the Council. The latter retaliated by refusing to vote the money to pay members of the Assembly, and the latter had to recede from their position. As late as 1870 there was a bitter quarrel between the Council and Assembly, over the appointment of an official, and on this occasion the Assembly had its way. As time passed it was made more and more clear that a Legislative Council was not needed as a check upon the House of Assembly, but was often a reactionary body preventing the enactment of progressive measures.

In 1891 Hon. A. G. Blair added enough to the narcotic atmosphere of the sleepy old chamber to bring about its final dissolution. It has never been missed, having long outlived its time. A resolution to abolish the Legislative Council is now before the Assembly of Nova Scotia, and its fate will be awaited with interest.

The through rate on freight via New London, St. John and Halifax is the same. Why should the C. N. R. and the Canadian Merchant Marine handle business through the American port? The rate through our ports and Portland is the same. Why use Portland to the detriment of our own ports?

Hon. Arthur Henderson, Secretary for Home Affairs, won by a large majority yesterday in the Burnley by-election. He got the bulk of the Liberal as well as the Labor vote. The Labor Government has no fault to find with the measure of its success thus far.

WORLD'S RICHEST SPOT.

The richest spot in the world will be just around Wembley, London, when the British Empire exhibition is opened in the spring. More than \$50,000,000 will be spent on exhibit buildings, apart from the pleasure grounds and railways within the area, and when one adds to this the priceless exhibits which will be brought from all quarters of the earth, it will be no exaggeration to say it is the richest spot on earth. The palace of engineering occupies 19 acres, and would easily swallow the four largest railway stations in the world. More than 12,000 tons of concrete, and 1,200 tons of reinforcing steel have been used. The great sports stadium which dominates the exhibition will accommodate 125,000 people. The authorities are catering for upwards of 30,000,000 visitors during the six months the exhibition is open.

Capitalizing a Misfortune. A clerk in a retail clothing store stayed out so late at night that he felt compelled to snatch naps during store hours.

Being a relative of a member of the firm was all that saved him from being fired. The manager, becoming exasperated, enlisted the aid of one of his assistants. The next day, the jehargic clerk found himself in the pajama department. On the counter before him was a sign that read:

"Our pajamas are of such superior quality that even the man who sells them can't keep awake."—Printers' Ink Monthly.

Got His Dates Mixed. Boss—Sir, what does this mean? Someone just called up and said that you were sick and could not come to work today. Clerk—Ha, ha! The joke's on him. He wasn't supposed to call up until tomorrow.—Showme.

Press Comment

AN INDEPENDENT VIEW.

(Ottawa Citizen.)

The Conservative party in the House of Commons is getting ready to hammer on some weak places in the Government from this session. Some of Premier Mackenzie King's followers seem to be aware of what is coming. They want to get out while a retreat can be made in safety. Others are merely hanging on in a state of apathy. They seem incapable of giving any support to the Prime Minister, or even of defending their own part of the line, in the difficult task of holding the Government together.

The Prime Minister is not getting the support that he needs from colleagues and members who sit behind him. He could profitably let a few more conservatives on the Government side follow Sir Lomer Gougeon into retirement. There are younger men in Parliament who more truly reflect Canadian public opinion. Union of the liberal and radical forces in the House is one obvious way to offset Conservative party gains which are coming to the opposition merely by default on the Government side.

WARNS THE SENATE.

(Vancouver Sun.)

If the Mackenzie King Government is sincere in its resolution to again introduce measures in the House of Commons to authorize the building of Canadian branch lines on the Canadian National system, it must be prepared to fight reactionary terrorism in the Senate even to the point of nullifying the powers of that body.

Notwithstanding the fact that provision is made for a Senate in the British North America act, for Canada Senate is not and never has been an integral part of the Government of Canada. The sovereign electors of this Dominion recognize only government by popular choice, and will not tolerate any impediments thrown in the pathway of national progress by a legislative body that has only existed by courtesy and a worn-out theory that elderly statesmen should be retained in an advisory capacity to government.

If the Senate is going to stand consistently in the way of national progress, the Senate must go. And the Prime Minister of Canada can easily acquire the necessary power to see that the Senate does go.

THE DEFENSE OF THE FRANC

(Toronto Globe.)

The Senate of France is confronted with a great task and a great opportunity. It is asked by Premier Poincaré to lay aside party politics and to support the efforts of the Government to maintain the value of the franc, which is in danger of following the German paper mark into bankruptcy. M. Poincaré, with unflinching courage, has presented and sponsored a measure that, if adopted, will increase the taxation of the French people materially to provide money with which to balance the Budget. It is more than ten years since the ordinary revenue of France exceeded the expenditure. The war was financed in large measure on foreign and domestic loans. The latter, and particularly the issues on account of reconstruction in the Departments of the North, it was hoped, would be retired quickly upon payment by the Germans of the reparations provided for under the Versailles Treaty.

It is now evident that Germany cannot be set upon her feet financially and that reparations payments will be secured until 1926 or 1927. France's debt meanwhile continues to increase, and this threatens still further the stability of the franc, already worth less than a fourth of its pre-war value as compared with the dollar.

The only adequate remedies are more taxation and the utmost economy in expenditure. Both are unpopular, the first among taxpaying citizens, the second in the ranks of the great host of the bureaucracy which draws its sustenance from the public till. It is proposed to reduce the civil list to the extent of a billion francs. Even at the depreciated value of the franc, this reduction will cut from the French Budget a sum great enough to pay the salaries of all of Canada's Federal civil servants. So drastic a measure of economy must have roused to active enmity tens of thousands of French "functionnaires" who have been favorable to the former Poincaré policy of

making Germany pay and leaving the Budget unbalanced till she did.

HARDING DOUBLE-CROSSED

(From New Republic)

When the oil investigation has bored down to sand and salt water, and there are no more cabinet officials, assistant secretaries of navies, "cows," notes and romantic Colorado newspaper owners to be pumped up to the surface, while the mood lasts we ought to dig pretty deeply into the Veterans Bureau.

Colonel Forbes, who was placed by President Harding in charge of a government service which spent more than \$400,000,000 a year, of which any-where from 25 to 50 per cent. is said to have been graft, seems, after the event, one of the last people one would have picked for the job.

At 12 he entered the marine corps as a drummer. At 14 he was honorably discharged, with his travel pay in his pocket and some fancy tattooing on his chest and arms. At 22 he deserted. Once in the period of his desertion he was Fourth of July orator at Goffstown, N. H. Four years later he was caught and put in jail, but reinstated on his promise to be good. After his second discharge he drifted to Honolulu, where he rose to be commissioner of public works.

He had, above all things, the trick of personality, so that when Senator W. G. Harding visited Honolulu Forbes won him completely, so completely that President Harding put him at the head of the Veterans Bureau, with what results we do not know as we should like to, except for the farewell at the White House, when, says Mr. Will Irwin in the New York World, "the best natured of our presidents shook an erstwhile friend as a terrier shakes a rat and cried: 'You yellow-belly! You've double-crossed me again!'"

THE ABSENT HUSBAND

(Helen Fraser Bowles)

Here in the room that cleanliness has made still Hy heart cries out for papers on the floor And books stacked high upon the window-sill. Crowding the light for space, and three or four Half sharpened pencils, pregnant with desire To spend themselves in words . . . And I, who claimed Disorder was a vice, beside the fire Dreaming, I linger, lonely and ashamed.

My neat, well ordered chamber mocks me now With vague suggestions of a wonder gone; And every corner waits remembering how It echoed to the certain tread of one Who walked here once . . . And through the dusk, the keen Cold comfort stabs—too silent and too clean.

LIGHTER VEIN

Owner—"What will it cost me to have my car fixed?" Garageman—"What's the matter with it?" Owner—"I don't know."

Garageman—"Forty-eight dollars and fifty cents."

The Remedy He—"This cold weather chills me to the bone."

She—"You should get a heavier hat."

A Suggestion He—"I was an intimate friend of your late husband. Can't you give me again?"

something to remember him by?"

She (shyly)—"How would I do?"

Proof Ethel—"Are you sure he has never loved before?" Edith—"Yes. He told me to go round to the jeweller's and pick out any ring I wanted."

Very Bright Bluster—"Do you mean to say that I am a liar?" Bluster—"I hope that I could not do so ungentlemanly a thing; but I see you catch my idea."

The Great Defeated

Returning from Washington, the lame duck wandered around town for several

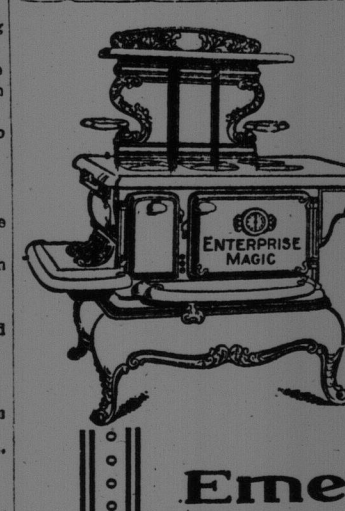
GOOD NEWS FOR PORT OF HALIFAX

Montreal, Feb. 28—Inauguration of a regular passenger and freight service from Havre to Halifax, in addition to that recently instituted from Bordeaux, was forecast here today by F. Laches-

nez-Heude, passenger traffic manager of the French Line, who arrived in Montreal to begin a coast-to-coast tour of the Dominion. The service will be provided by the one-class-cabin ships of the French Line, which will call at Halifax before proceeding to New York.

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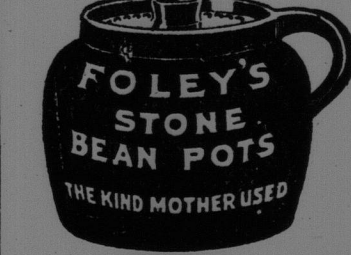
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