

The St. John Standard

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ST. JOHN, N. B., THURSDAY, MARCH 21, 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.

WASTING THE PUBLIC MONEY.

The guilt of the Foster government in the matter of failure to live up to its pre-election pledges was again exposed in the Legislature yesterday when answers to inquiries asked by Opposition members plainly showed that in practically every department of administration the government nominally led by Mr. Foster, but of which Mr. Veniot is the real directing head, has done the things it promised not to do and has left untouched reforms to which it pledged itself to give early attention.

During the election campaign the members of the Foster party devoted much time and effort to a criticism of the Murray Government for the cost of administering the public services. The Department of Agriculture, for instance, the Foster party claimed was overmanned and the expenditures for salaries much in excess of what it should be. Yet, from information supplied by the Minister of Agriculture himself, which information is supposed to be correct and probably is, it is shown that the department is costing far more than under the former regime and that the very practices which the Fosterites in opposition claimed were wrong are being indulged in by the Fosterites in power.

Back in 1914 the opposition of that day asked for information as to the salaries paid to permanent employees of the Agricultural Department. Hon. Mr. Murray, then Minister of Agriculture, answered the questions and showed that the department salary list totalled in the vicinity of \$19,550 and at once the opposition members and the press supporting that party set up the claim that money was being squandered and that the department was costing far more than it should cost, or more than the work it was doing could justify. Today the Agricultural Department salary list totals \$34,356 for permanent employees and the work of that department is not in as good shape as under the former administration. Thus Mr. Foster's Minister of Agriculture, instead of reducing the departmental salary expenditure as he promised to do, has almost doubled it. The salary cost for the period under review is \$14,806 in excess of what it was in 1914 under the former administration.

But it is not only in the matter of salaries that the present government has shown its utter disregard of pledges. It promised to keep a watchful eye on all details of administration and yet we find that in the matter of departmental supplies the highest price is being paid and there does not appear to be any business-like supervision of the purchases. This was brought out by replies to questions dealing with the purchases of seed oats, which were bought at a price far in excess of that paid by private dealers, in fertilizer, which was purchased at an exorbitant figure and without the necessary analysis to determine its quality, and in gasoline, for which an average price of forty cents per gallon was paid although under proper supervision and bought with the care that would mark any ordinary private business transaction a much better bargain could have been obtained.

Some of the newspapers supporting the government claimed the other day that the Opposition was wasting valuable time in asking questions. The answers to those questions show that the time consumed in preparing and making them is time well spent as they illustrate that the present administration is carrying on the business of the country in a reckless and irresponsible manner. The session at Fredericton is but young and the probe has only commenced. As the days pass and more information concerning the activities of the administration is brought before the public the full measure of incompetency of the men on the treasury benches will be even more apparent. As it is enough has been shown to indicate that the change from a government of business men to an administration of amateurs will cost this province dearly.

A PROMISING NEW WHEAT.

By bringing out Marquis wheat the Dominion department of agriculture did a service to Canada and to the Empire that it would be difficult to over-estimate. On account of its vigorous habits of growth, excellent yield and superb milling qualities this variety which year after year as an exhibit from western Canada has carried off premier honors at the international soil products exhibition in the United States, has largely supplanted the old standard Red Fife that also gained for Canadian wheat an enviable reputation in the flour markets of the world.

A service rendered by the introduction of Prelude a few years later was also of great importance, inasmuch as it extended the wheat-growing area of this country by millions of acres. To these two very valuable accessions to the hard wheats of Canada is to be added a new sort that comes midway between Marquis and Prelude in the matter of yield and ripening. This new sort has been produced at the central experimental farm, Ottawa, by Dr. Chas. E. Saunders, the Dominion cerealist, who gives the following account of the new wheat in the March number of the Agricultural Gazette, the official organ of the federal department of agriculture:

"The new wheat, which has been named Ruby, Ottawa 623, possesses characteristics in ripening and other qualities midway between Marquis and Prelude. It is headless, possesses hard, red kernels, gives a fair yield, and makes flour of the highest quality in regard to color and strength. Bread made from it ranks in the first class. This wheat is the result of a cross between Downy Riga and Red Fife. Downy Riga was produced from two early sorts, Gehun, an Indian variety, and Onega from northern Russia. Ruby is recommended for trial where Marquis does not ripen satisfactorily. A very limited distribution of five-pound samples is being made to farmers requiring an early sort. A sufficient crop will be grown this year on the experimental farms to provide for a generous distribution next spring."

READY FOR A FINISH FIGHT.

Sir John Foster Fraser, a British journalist who is in close touch with the people of Great Britain, is at present in the United States and has addressed a number of audiences across the line on subjects connected with the war. Speaking recently of the possibility of an early peace he said, "I do not mean to say that there is any disposition to quit. On the contrary, the English people are getting what we might call ugly."

Sir John's statement foreshadows an early offer of peace from the German government and predicts that what he calls the "mob-hunt" of the people will lead to its rejection while the sober reflection of many thoroughly patriotic Britons might be in the way of desiring its acceptance.

The German offer will be to give up Belgium and all French territory, and to arrange for a vote of the people of Alsace-Lorraine as to the government under which they will continue. Germany would keep the Baltic provinces which she has seized from Russia. As for the giving to Germany of a free hand in the East, David Lloyd George warned Russia that if she made a separate peace she must take the consequences; that the Allies would wash their hands of her.

But Sir John removes all ground for the suggestion that the British people are growing tired of the war. In the sense that they are ready to accept anything short of a satisfactory peace. On the contrary, they are "getting what we might call ugly." That is, they are getting into a mood that is dangerous for Germany; a mood that will not stop short of the crushing of the enemy no matter the cost.

WATER IS WEALTH.

In the February issue of the Scientific Monthly there appears an article of more than ordinary interest by Dr. Andrew H. Palmer of the U. S. Weather Bureau on "Snow and Its Value to the Farmer."

In the course of this paper the learned scientist outlines in detail the many beneficial influences of the snow and sums up the thoughts of his thesis in the following words, which are of wide interest. "To the farmer the benefits derived from snow far outweigh the disadvantages. As it falls, the density of snow is about one-tenth that of rain, but upon lying on the ground it soon acquires a density of about three to four tenths that of water. Under certain conditions it may solidify to the consistency of ice. As a blanket or covering, snow on the ground checks winter killing. It protects vegetation from extreme temperatures, from excessive evaporation, and from destructive winds, at the same time permitting the penetration of sunlight, and allowing the uninterrupted respiration of plant tissue. On twigs and buds it conserves cellular moisture which otherwise might be sacrificed at too rapid a rate during sudden changes of temperature. It mellows the soil, replenishes the ground moisture, checks the run-off from winter rains, furnishes most of the water used for irrigation and power purposes, provides an easy means of transportation, and prevents

destructive prairie and forest fires. Grass is benefited by abundant snow, and winter wheat is largely dependent upon it for success. All in all, the recurring snows of winter form one of our most important agricultural resources."

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

THE PROPOSED CHANGE IN THE RULE OF THE ROAD.

To the Editor of The Standard.

Sir,—Your correspondent "British Canadian" does not give his address. If he did I think he would write "Charlottetown." If I am wrong in my guess, and you tell me so, I will gladly give a bag of flour to any charitable institution you may like to name. If the bag of flour is not called for by your readers will understand that I am right, and the absurdity of the position will be at once apparent. A P. E. Islander attempting to discuss a progressive measure relating to the use of roads!

And then, the tone of his letter belies both members of his nom de plume. To utter thinly veiled sneers at friends and allies at any time, but at a moment like this! Well, to put it mildly, is not good form—is not British—and I imagine, is not likely to appeal very strongly to any of us on the mainland. As to "Canadian." The practice of going to the right, which is sound and is re-introduced in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia is most distinctly Canadian, and in opposing it your correspondent shows that he is in reality anti-Canadian.

There never was any other practice in old Canada, and our American friends got it from there, instead of the reverse of this. It is stupid then to go on calling it "American," even if that were any real objection to it.

I use the term "re-introduce," above, advisedly, as regards the Maritime Provinces for undoubtedly "to pass to the right" was the earliest practice in these provinces. A very able historian (Judge Savary) writing to a local paper quite recently stated that the present use came in with the Loyalists. So that for the first century and three-quarters of our history we had the rule which we now seek to restore, and which will bring us again into line with the mainland of the country and of the continent, to which we belong. A very desirable thing, in the writer's humble opinion.

Our Islanders may be as peculiar and as insular as they like—that is expected of them. We on the mainland, if we want to progress and to have traffic with our neighbors, ought to have one rule with them in regard to the use of the roads.

All this is just plain common sense and it has nothing whatever to do with any "interests," except the interests of the country generally.

Yours, etc.,

NOVA SCOTIAN.

A BIT OF VERSE

SOMEWHERE IN FRANCE.

(By LeRoy C. Henderson in Cartoons Magazine.)

She stands alone beside the gate,
 Where oft with him she stood before.
 And seems to hear his voice relate
 Life's sweetest story o'er and o'er:
 A hand she feels upon her own,
 Unconsciously a tender glance
 She gives, then starts and stands alone.

The lover sleeps—Somewhere in France.
 She could have kept him if she would—
 His heart and soul were all her own—
 But true love knew and understood
 That honor is its own true throne.

She heard the bugles' blaring sound,
 And whispered, "Go and take your chance!"
 There mid the scenes of war he found
 Eternal peace—Somewhere in France.

She knows not where that spot may be—
 On barren plain, in hidden dell.
 On wooded hill, or in the forest deep,
 The lips that would will never tell.

She knows not what his last words were,
 The thoughts that came with death's advance,
 And yet, she feels they were of her,
 Those last fond thoughts—Somewhere in France.

A BIT OF FUN

Encouragement.

A young probationer was preaching his trial sermon in a church in one of the inland villages of Scotland. After finishing the "discourse" he leaned over the pulpit and engaged in silent prayer, an act which surprised the congregation, who were unaccustomed to such procedure. Suddenly the young preacher felt someone slapping him gently on the shoulder, and on turning around he beheld the deacon, who said: "Hoot, mon, dinna tak' it as a mickle ta heart; ye'll maybe dae better next time."

Answered.

"Water,—hic—bring me a dish of prunes."
 "Grieved, sir."
 "Now, thash none of your business."

Proof Positive.

Two fair munition workers were discussing their personal affairs.
 "Got a chap yet, Liz?" enquired one.
 "Yes; and he's a regular toff: He's a munitioneer at—"

"You don't say so! Why they tell me he's real refined."

"Father! Why, he took me to a restaurant last week, and when we had coffee he poured it into a saucer to cool it, but he didn't blow it like common people would—he fanned it with his hat."

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Little Benny's Note Book

BY LEE PAPE.

We was eating supper today, and pop sed, Well, well, how time flies, if I may be permitted to coin a phrase.

It serteney does, jest think, its Thursday already, sed ma.

Im thinking of sumthing much more important than that in the worlds history, sed pop, Im thinking that a week from today Ill be 40 years old.

Goah, pop, how does it feel to be that old? I sed.

Every time you open your mouth you show ignorants, sed pop, dont you know that 40 is the prime of life, the heyday of existence, as one mite say?

Can you remember wen you was a boy? I sed.

Say, look a heer, telling you sumthing seems to be about as much good as pouring information on a ducks back, sed pop, wy, you poor little dunt, 40 has always bla the age of conquest, the age of achievement, Columbus was exactly 40 wen he discovered America, Washington was exactly 40 wen he crossed the Delaware and Shakespeare was exactly 40 wen he rote Hamlet, Mack Beth and King Lear, you dont begin to realise that youre alive till youre 40, wy, at 40 youre jest beginning life.

Well, do people generally live much longer after theyre 40? I sed.

Are you finished your suppur? sed pop.

I havent ate my dissert yet, I sed.

Im glad to heer it, you march yourself rite out of heer without it, and if I heer so much as a peep out of you on the way, you wont know wether the house fell down or bloe up, but youll probably think it was both, now march, sed pop.

Wich I did.

RUSSIANS DO NOT OPPOSE

MARCH OF GERMAN ARMY

Another Report of Pending Teutonic Drive in the West—Petrograd Practically in Hands of Germans—Intense Aerial Fighting on British Front in France and Belgium—Nineteen German Machines Destroyed and Nine Tons of Bombs Dropped.

London, March 20.—Occupation of Petrograd by the Germans is only a matter of hours, according to despatches from Petrograd to several of the morning newspapers. The Russian capital is said to be assuming a waiting attitude and is not displaying the slightest sign of organized resistance.

The Germans are reported in a Ruster despatch from Petrograd to have reached the vicinity of Dno station, about 150 miles south of Petrograd. The Austro-German advance in southern Russia has been resumed on portions of the railway lines near the Baltic held by the Germans.

The Russian Orthodox church has presented a demand that the Russo-German peace treaty prescribe its authority over the Orthodox populations in the territories lost through the peace treaty.

The Austro-German advance north of the Black Sea recently has been in the provinces of Poltava, Tchernigov and Kharkov.

A German Advance.

Zurich, March 20.—Another of the reports of an impending German blow in the west appears in the Koenigsche Zeitung. It says the German headquarters staff is organizing a series of conferences, to be held in Cologne, Berlin, Karlsruhe, Hanover and Leipzig with representatives of the chief newspapers, for the purpose of preparing the German press for operations on a great scale on the western front.

Italian Aerial Fighting.

London, March 20.—Intense aerial fighting on the British front in France

and Belgium continues. An official British statement reads: "Nine tons of bombs were dropped on Monday on enemy rest billets and ammunition dumps and also on the Busigny railway station and two air-dromes, one of which was occupied by large bombing machines."

"Aerial fighting was exceptionally intense, encounters occurring between large formations. Nineteen German airplanes were destroyed and nine were driven down out of control. Twelve of our machines are missing. Six hundred bombs were dropped during the night on two of the air-dromes used by enemy night flying machines and on ammunition dumps and billets. All our machines returned."

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Gray, faded hair, though no disgrace, is a sign of old age, and as we all desire a youthful and attractive appearance, get busy at once with Wyeth's Sage and Sulphur Compound, and look years younger. This ready-to-use preparation is a delightful toilet requisite and not a medicine. It is not intended for the cure, mitigation or prevention of disease.

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