

THE ST. JOHN EVENING TIMES

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THE STREET RAILWAY.

The Times has refrained from any harsh criticism of the street railway company, but so many complaints have been made, and so much criticism has been indulged in, that this paper feels it to be in the public interest to call upon the directors of the company to provide a better service.

On three evenings of last week a citizen boarded a street car in the south end of the city, intending to change cars at the head of King street for the Haymarket Square branch.

On the first occasion, before arriving at the head of King street, he was offered and accepted a transfer ticket, but when the car reached the King street corner the Haymarket Square car had just started and was already turning into Union street. The citizen, if he got off the other car, would have to wait until the next car on the branch line arrived. He decided to go on to Paradise Row corner and take the Haymarket Square car from that end. On arrival at that corner there was no car in sight, and he had to wait as long as he would have done at the head of King street.

The next evening he again boarded a car in the south end, but decided before accepting a transfer ticket to wait and learn if there was a Haymarket Square car at the head of King street. On arrival there the car, exactly as on the previous evening, had just started and was turning into Union street. A delay of about a minute on either evening would have given him an opportunity to catch the car. On this second occasion he simply got out and walked. Standing at the head of King street on a winter night is not a pleasant experience.

On the third night, on arrival at the head of King street, there was no Haymarket Square car in sight. He walked.

Some action should be taken to protect the public in this matter of street car service. There is no waiting room at the head of King street. If there is not another car to enter, those going on the branch line must stand in the cold or storm till one arrives, although they have transfer tickets in their possession—or they must walk. If the company cannot afford a waiting room, or provide a prompt car service, it should be compelled to honor the transfer tickets at another time, or in some way give value for the fare paid.

Complaint is also general that the cars are not properly heated, that they are not as clean as they should be, and that at times they are disgracefully crowded. If an accident should occur to one of these crowded cars, the company might not get off as easily as on some former occasions.

The St. John directors of the street railway company should give a little more attention to its affairs, and shake up the management. Winter is here and at best the service will not be what it should be for the next few weeks. Present causes of complaint should be carefully investigated and a better service provided. The service at present is wholly unsatisfactory.

PREMIER ROSS'S TROUBLES.

The temperance platform adopted by the Ontario liberal convention continues to be a great bone of contention. The striking out of the clause compelling all the municipalities to take a vote in 1906 on the abolition of the bars and of shop licenses has caused a vigorous controversy. Premier Ross has felt it to be necessary to make a second statement of his attitude on the question. In the course of a letter defending the action of the convention he says:

The temperance platform gains rather than loses by the elimination of clause three. It is the best and most advanced ever adopted by any province of Canada, and, as a clergyman said to me the day after, "It is more advanced than any religious denomination would ask its adherents to subscribe to as a test of church membership." I am confident that when it is more fully considered, it will be accepted heartily by the great bulk of the temperance workers of the province.

On the other hand, the Liberator, the organ of the temperance legislative league, has a strong leading editorial this month, in which it openly calls for the defeat of the Ross government by the temperance people of Ontario. These, for example, are strong words.

"The smashing defeat of this corrupt, time-serving and pledge-breaking government by the Christian citizenship of the province would mark an important epoch in the struggle for good government, by teaching public men the much-needed lesson that the way of the political transgressor is hard. We have, we believe, been warranted in assuming that the Christian public are fully informed and very deeply deplore the dishonorable acts of the Ontario government. We feel that the only danger lies in the beclouding of the question by appeals to party prejudices. Not policy, but conduct, not promise, but performance, is the issue."

The executive committee of the Methodist church on temperance and moral reform has issued an appeal in which, while it does not take the side against the government yet expresses disappointment at the result of the convention so far as it relates to the cause of temperance; and the utterances of a number of prominent temperance and religious leaders indicate clearly that Premier Ross's enthusiasm with regard to his temperance platform is far from universal. The Toronto News (Independent) asserts that if Mr. Ross had gone to the country instead of to the convention he would stand in a better position before the prohibitionists. The News charges him with sacrificing principle for party, and makes this bitter attack:

During all his life Mr. Ross has been an advocate of prohibition. He has held high offices in temperance organizations. He was the mouth-piece of the prohibitionists in the Cabinets of Sir Oliver Mowat and of Mr. Hardy. He seconded the pledges of both of these leaders that they would give prohibition the limit of Provincial jurisdiction as determined by the Privy Council. He repeated the pledge in his own name when he succeeded to the Premiership. He was an active advocate of prohibition down to the very hour in which the Judicial Committee declared the Provinces competent to prohibit the retail trade in liquor. It was natural, therefore, that prohibitionists should expect Mr. Ross to rejoice in the judgment and to determine at any cost to give effect to the principle which he had championed for a lifetime.

But Mr. Ross shuffled and dodged, resorted to plebiscites and referendums, wrestled with caucuses, flirted with public ownership, danced forward and back, and hands all round, and up and down the centre, and all to your places. He urged the convention at Massey Hall to aim high, and then sat silent while two of his colleagues pleaded with the delegates to come down to a lower elevation—for the sake of the party—and at last bestowed his blessing upon the emasculated resolutions. But unfortunately the prohibitionists saw the performance go on before the footlights and the amount of faith in Mr. Ross which would have survived if he had gone to the country without the convention must now be completely shattered.

Evidently, the election campaign, when it is brought on, will be waged with unusual bitterness, and the prohibitionists will not all be on one side.

OTTAWA STREET RAILWAY.

The city council of Ottawa will this evening consider a report from a committee which recommends that the property owners of the city be asked to vote in January on the question of purchasing the street railway, at a cost of three million dollars. The proposition is to purchase the road and manage it by a commission, to consist of the mayor and two citizens elected by the property owners, who shall serve without salary.

Before preparing its report the committee obtained the report of the city engineer on the condition of the road, water power, property and equipment. The rights owned by the company would enable them to develop power to serve a city of 125,000 inhabitants. They have 42 miles of track, 107 cars, several private electric light circuits, power houses, quite a number of lots of land, and much other property.

The city auditor investigated the finances of the company, and reported that the net profits are sufficient to pay interest on the bonds issued by the company, and on \$2,500,000, the price asked by the company, and also to provide \$15,000 a year for maintenance and extensions.

The company asks \$250 per share for its stock. The highest price at which it has sold was \$210, but the profits have since increased and are still increasing, so that the committee regards the stock as worth more than ever before. The gross receipts in 1903 were \$318,888 and the net profits \$94,541. The estimated profits for 1904 are about \$100,000, and an annual increase is anticipated. It is pointed out by the committee that if the percentage of increase of gross earnings for the last eleven and a half years were continued for a further like period the gross receipts in 1905 would be over a million dollars. The report continues:

"If the city purchases at the price asked by the company the whole indebtedness to be assumed by the city will be:

"Interest at 4 per cent. on \$2,500,000 of bonds issued to pay for the capital stock of the company, \$100,000 a year. Interest at 4 per cent. on \$500,000 of bonds issued by the company and now outstanding, \$20,000 a year. Total \$120,000 a year.

"The net profits of the company this year will be about \$100,000 after paying the \$20,000 interest on the bonds issued by the company, taxes to the city, and track mileage to the city. It will be seen that the profits are large enough to meet all the charges which the city would have to pay if the undertaking is taken over by the city."

The building inspector of Winnipeg says the value of building permits

LIVELY ELECTIONS IN PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND.

Only Two Members by Acclamation—Interesting Review of Situation Within For a Toronto Paper—Open Voting—A Poor Crop Year.

The P. E. Island elections will take place on Wednesday. A Charlottetown correspondent sends the following interesting statement of the situation to the Toronto News:

"We are now within a brief space of a general election, which comes off December 7, and which will decide whether the Island Province will remain in the Liberal column or be transferred to the side of conservatism. It is now fourteen years since a conservative government has held the seals of office here, but the result of the late Federal election in this province has undoubtedly raised the opposition hopes.

"Our three counties are each divided into five electoral districts, each of which elects two members, being ten for each county, and making a House of thirty. When the House just now dissolved was elected in December, 1900, it was made up of 22 liberals and 8 conservatives. The latter gained three seats at bye-elections, so that previous to the dissolution the party strength was 19 and 11.

"The general scheme of Cabinet construction here has been to have nine members, three from each county. There are three portfolios, one of which is supposed to be allotted to each county. The salaries attached are a modest \$1,200 each, to the Attorney-General, Provincial Secretary, and Commissioner of Public Works, the remaining six members being without office. The numerical strength of the Executive, it will be seen, is great in proportion to the strength of the dominant party, there being in the late House nine "Honorable," out of a total of nineteen liberal members.

Things Accomplished.

The liberal party has something to its credit for its prolonged term of power. It abolished the old Legislative council, but in a peculiar fashion. It was more like an amalgamation of the two Houses. We have in fact done to this day the two classes sitting together, with equal powers and privileges. Of the two members for each district one is a councillor elected by the restricted "property vote," and the other an assemblyman elected by the "franchise vote," which comes very near to manhood suffrage. Roughly speaking the votes for assemblyman in a district exceeds the property vote for councillor in the proportion of five to three.

The liberal party also claims credit for having secured something in the way of improved financial terms from Ottawa, the latest being the interest on a million at 3 per cent.—\$30,000 a year for all time in settlement for the failure of the Dominion to keep up daily steam communication in the winter time between the Island and the mainland.

Prohibition Issue.

And finally the government claims credit for having passed a prohibitory liquor law, and made more or less honest efforts to enforce it. All the three counties of the Island are and have been for twenty years under the Canada Temperance Act, all efforts to secure the repeal of which have been in vain. But the city of

Charlottetown, being a separate municipality, alternately accepted and repealed that Act. In deference to the strong temperance sentiment of the Island generally the late Premier Farquharson passed the Provincial prohibitory law some four years ago. At present it only affects the city of Charlottetown, but its provisions would take effect automatically in any or all of the counties should the Canada Temperance Act be repealed there.

Almost beyond question the prohibitory law is a source of strength to the government everywhere outside of Charlottetown, but in the city the feeling in regard to that measure is much more equally divided.

There are no distinctive questions of liberal or conservative principles at issue in the election. Both parties claim that their respective Administrations have been the more clean, honest, and economical. Deficits are much in evidence in the records of both parties.

Poor Crops.

This has been a year of poor crops throughout the Island. So great was the drought that hay was little more than half the usual crop, and the production of cheese by the numerous factories also fell off fully one-half. The Government has become an extensive purchaser of hay from Quebec, which they are offering to the farmers at cost, having also secured free transportation of the same over the Dominion Government railways. Despite this service the bad crops probably tend to weaken the support of the Administration.

Both Government and Opposition are lacking in men of first-class ability, with the Opposition the weaker of the two. The prestige of Laurier's victory will help the Government somewhat, the more so as open voting is still the rule in Provincial elections here, and many who secretly voted conservative in the Federal contest will now be found voting openly for the liberal candidates.

Premier Peters takes a risk in going to the election with one of the three Departmental offices—that of Provincial Secretary—and three other seats in his Cabinet vacant. One of his late colleagues, Hon. R. C. McLeod, is hopelessly ill; another Hon. James Richards, resigned to run for the House of Commons, and was defeated; still another, Hon. George Forbes, is now said to be in Opposition. These are in addition to Hon. Ben. Rogers, late Provincial Secretary, who has retired from public life.

Hard Fights.

Both Attorney-General Peters and Hon. Mr. Cumiskey, the Commissioner of Public Works, will have hard fights in their respective seats, and one or both may be defeated. The same is true of the Opposition leader, Mr. Mathieson, whose seat in Georgetown is far from secure. So the chances all around are doubtful.

Only two elections by acclamation took place, namely, J. W. Richards, of Bideford, in the second district of Prince liberal, and Archibald J. Macdonald, of Georgetown, in the fifth district of King's conservative.

of putting the case, but the light service is certainly not satisfactory.

Mr. W. K. George, president of the Canadian Manufacturers' Association, in an address before the Empire Club, stated that the manufacturers would insist on protection to their own industries in negotiating any preferential tariff relations with Great Britain.

A considerable degree of latitude by general consent permitted a clergyman in the discussion of the moral aspect of public affairs, but when a case is before the court and is still the subject of enquiry it might not be judicious to await the outcome.

The city council is in session this afternoon. There should be some very interesting discussion.

FRENCH SETTLERS FOR CANADA.

Twenty-five Thousand Will Go to British Columbia.

A Victoria, B. C., despatch says:—Fully 25,000 French have either left or are about to leave their native land for this part of Canada, being attracted by the promise of work at good wages on construction of the Grand Trunk Pacific, and at the same time being at outs with the government of France over treatment of Roman Catholics.

Preliminary negotiations have been conducted through the Vatican, A. Fox, an enterprising merchant of Montreal, acting in behalf of the immigration department of the Canadian government. He is now here, and says that the first batch of colonists, 12,000 strong, are ready to sail for Canada.

They say most of the newcomers are agriculturists or vineyardists. The latter are negotiating for a tract of 50,000 acres in the Okanagan district, where their families will be at once established, the men intending to work on the railway during construction, and then settle down to grape culture and winemaking. The others will be distributed through the agricultural districts of the Crow's Nest pass.

The statement has been made that the chief reason for the poor quality of the lights provided by the St. John Railway company is that an inferior quality of carbon is used because it is cheaper. The company of course would not agree with this way

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THE DAILEY COMPANY. The Dailey company who are playing in Springhill, Amherst and Moncton are to return to the Opera House on Thursday next, Dec. 8th, and present the comedy "A Runaway Match." The plot of the play deals with a handsome young widow who, in her desire to conceal her true age, compels her sixteen year old daughter to dress in infant attire. A wealthy widower of middle age, meets the daughter and falls in love with her and an elopement is planned. They depart on an outgoing train and intend to marry when the journey is completed. The young widow, in turn, falls in love with a young lawyer, who proves to be the son of her daughter's gay old lothar. This couple also plan an elopement, and they happen to board the same train as the first couple of elopers. Through an accident to the train, all are compelled to remain over night at a wayside inn, where the already complicated state of affairs is made more embarrassing by the actions of a country bumpkin, Solomon, the work boy about the tavern. The parents meet their children and things become mixed. Explanations and confessions follow and there is a change of affections with the result that the two elders and the two juveniles pair off and other elopements follow.

AT THE YORK THEATRE. Tonight marks the beginning of the twelfth week of vaudeville in St. John. The people have learned that vaudeville means everything that is good, and nothing that is objectionable. Miss Rita Mario, violinist, will make her initial bow to a vaudeville audience tonight, and will render some of the grandest music of the masters. Verin and Turcotte, Roman axe manipulators, will be seen in one of the most hazardous acts in vaudeville. Harris and Nelson, knock about comedians, are laugh producers of the first order, and will be a big hit. Lavender Richardson and Co. will be seen in an act, entitled "Brady's Boy," which is replete with up-to-date situations. Sheridan and Forest, Irish sketch artists, will present their laughing creations. John Walsh, mimic and musician, has a mannerism that is his own, and wins his audience at once. His work is clever, and will be heartily appreciated. Daisy Linden, the clever vocalist, is up-to-date in her specialty, and will be a favorite. This week's show is one of the best yet seen here, and will prove a winner. A matinee will be given Tuesday at 2.30 p. m.

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