

Back-To-Land Movement Urged

E. C. Atkinson, M.P.P., and C. Robert Hawkins Deliver Two Splendid Addresses at Quarterly Meeting of Board of Trade at Waverly Hotel—Colonization, More Population, "Back-to-the-Land" Are Advised—Hon. Lewis Smith, Minister of Agriculture, and J. A. Murray, Former Premier of New Brunswick, Also Speakers.

The quarterly meeting of the Fredericton Board of Trade which took the form of a supper meeting held at the Waverly Hotel last evening at 6:15 o'clock was a most successful one and featured two stirring addresses from E. C. Atkinson, M. P. P., for York-Sunbury and C. Robert Hawkins, well known barrister. The supper served under the direction of Mr. and Mrs. Jack Dewar, proprietors of the hotel, was a sumptuous one.

W. W. Hubbard, president of the Board was in the chair, and seated with him at the head of the table beside the two chief speakers of the evening were Hon. Lewis Smith, Minister of Agriculture and J. A. Murray, former premier of New Brunswick and now Superintendent of Immigration.

Several business matters concerning the Board were taken up while supper was in progress and announcement was made of the resignation of R. H. Simonds as secretary of the Board of Trade. Mr. Simonds has been secretary of this body for the past twenty years and during the evening the several speakers referred gratefully to the services which he had rendered during his term of office, and expressed regret at his resignation. Close to one hundred attended the supper meeting.

Future Lies In Soil

Both Mr. Atkinson and Mr. Hawkins, the principal speakers of the evening, stressed the need of more population in the province, urged the newly energized Board of Trade to take note of such pressing problems as unemployment relief, and colonization. Mr. Atkinson asserted that the future of this city and this province lies in agriculture, and a "back to the land" process. Mr. Hawkins berated "loose thinking" and false optimism which he said was everywhere evident. He advocated sane thought and courageous action, and he urged the Board of Trade to take into consideration bigger things than just Fredericton.

E. C. Atkinson, M. P. P., for York-Sunbury was the first speaker. He extended to Mr. Simonds' regret at his retirement. It was a loss, he said, as he has occupied the position for so many years. He was sure he carried with him the thanks and best wishes of the Board of Trade. He wished him long years of happiness.

Mr. Atkinson pointed out how necessary it was to build up the Board of Trade and the City. A large amount of the land in New Brunswick, he said, is owned by the people. What are we doing to develop this vast area? We have rich resources in timber and in our mines. This country and province will get its wealth from the soil. It is an agricultural province, he declared. There were great distances of highway. On these roads there are only 408,000 people. Why are these lands not developed and populated. In the boom days things were great. But after words come the crash with its unemployment relief problems. It is our greatest problem. We need to get our people employed—with a fair wage. In 1932, there were 12,465 people on relief. The cost to the province was \$1,110,000.00. He cited the immense number on relief. There will be a reduction in the present year of this cost for relief, he prophesied.

"In this province there are a vast number who want to work, if given an opportunity and there should be some way of getting them to work", asserted Mr. Atkinson.

He dealt with certain phases of agriculture. The future of this city and province lies in agriculture.

Mr. Atkinson pointed out the farming—agriculture products coming into the province which should be produced by "our own people".

The solution, he said, was a colonization plan—a real "back to the land" policy. Here lies the solution of our unemployment colonization and financial problems. He quoted figures. He had reason to believe that by putting people on the land we create real valuable citizens. We should have in this province, irrespective of politics, a real definite colonization plan—nothing haphazard. Make it first for our citizens and then for those from other lands that would be valuable citizens. Why have we not developed as fast as we should in New Brunswick?

What has happened in this city? It is the same thing. We need population above everything else. We have got to bring people here. If we have people here we will have wealth. "On agricultural development the future of this province lies", he repeated.

He emphasized sound sincere interests for the development of our province. We should be builders! We should make for the growth of our people and our province.

C. Robert Hawkins

C. R. Hawkins, the other speaker, conveyed gratification to the Board of Trade for what he termed a "renaissance" of the Board of Trade. He tendered thanks to Mr. Simonds the retiring secretary. He congratulated Mr. Atkinson.

He mentioned the duties of Boards of Trade. The Board of Trade of St. John is the "trumpet of complaint", he declared. It is essential for it to be loud, he ventured and he hoped that the Board of Trade here would not depend entirely on "howling" to governments but could get results in other ways too.

Mr. Hawkins believed a Board of Trade here should adopt a definite attitude. There is a great deal of uncertainty at present as well as a lot of "loose thinking". He admired men who can stand up and define just exactly what is to be done. There can be no solution of problems at present until conditions today are changed or remedied.

He suggested some theoretic improvements. There ought to be some way to finance the consumer. The consumer's object is to get money. Before there is any relief in sight the consumer must benefit.

There are deficits in our banking systems. In our banking system serving the people as they should. He submitted that the bigger banks are interested in larger schemes. They are not primarily interested in New Brunswick and the provinces.

How does the ratio deposits to loans compare here to the same ratio in Ontario and Quebec? It should be looked into.

He referred to the policy of tariff. It has been detrimental to the Maritimers, he asserted. Tariffs do not help out any our whole tariff policy helps with the centralized industry in Ontario and Quebec.

Regarding trade east and west. Trade goes north and south, and not east or west, he declared. The fact remains that is the great final result trade gives north and south. It is a natural result. We need the south and they need us. Products should go reciprocally this way.

The speaker talked of taxation. It is a major problem, hard to solve.

"Let us take into consideration things bigger than just Fredericton". We shall have to do this to solve our fundamental problems. He was tired of seeing "big men" making foolish, optimistic statements to the press. These, he said, are misleading the people.

Statistics do not give a true picture of conditions. He cited examples of young men and boys suffering privation and with no futures.

There are great problems today, which require some sane thinking and action. And also it is necessary to be more than conservative about these problems. Some thought and courageous action are needed above everything else he believed. He urged the members to disregard all prejudices only by the news can we get out of the middle we are in.

Hon. Lewis Smith spoke only briefly. He congratulated the previous speakers. He agreed that colonization was a vital need for the province, and he stated that there is room for greater development.

J. A. Murray, of Saint John, former premier of New Brunswick expressed pleasure at being present. Especially referring to the duties of Boards of Trade he told of the practice of the Board of Trade at Sussex where the agricultural society is directly affiliated with it and matters of agriculture are discussed, as well as other matters. Concluding, he said that he would follow the local Board's progress in the future "with intense interest."

At the opening of the business meeting Mr. Hubbard, the president, gave notice that I. B. Rouse had joined the board as a new member. R. L. Phillips to special excursion rates which had been secured from the railways for the May 6th celebration. He urged that the merchants properly advertise and take advantage of the excursions to the city.

Mr. Hubbard told of recommendations made by the Retail Merchants' Association, which had been sent to Ottawa and the Mass Buying Commission for their perusal. He had received a reply from the officials there. The president of the board pointed out that such communications serve a purpose in conveying the opinion of the business men throughout Canada.

Mr. Hubbard announced also the resignation of R. H. Simonds, as secretary of the board, which is to take effect on April 30. On motion by Donald Smith the matter of the appointment of a successor was set aside to be taken up at a later date by the executive. An amendment to have the matter taken up at the meeting last night was thrown out after a vote was taken. The president gave notice of an "Empire Trade Week", which is to be held throughout Canada and appealed to the retailers and householders to buy and sell in Canada. This matter was left to the proper committee for development. Invitation was executed by President Hubbard for all members of the Board to pay a visit to Burton around June 1, and also he gave notice of trips, which will be made to Minto and other districts this summer, the purpose being to acquaint the Fredericton business men with residents in those places for the betterment of business conditions. These trips will likely be made on the Thursday half-holiday.

Mr. Phillips gave notice that at the next general meeting he would move an amendment to the by-laws to enable the board's executive to the selected at an open meeting rather than by ballot, as at present.

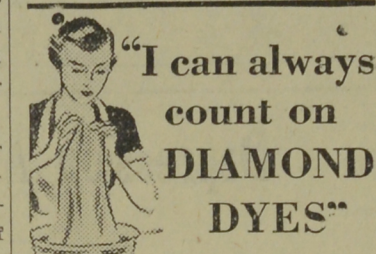
WAR TALK

Just about a year ago the dogs of war were baying in Austria's backyard. At that time we had something to say about those who were making them howl. Happily, a lull ensued, until once again the situation has become critical. The futility of war seems beyond the understanding of political factions who continue to disport themselves in unnecessary flag-waving.

It can safely be said that the ordinary citizen in all countries wants a peaceful opportunity to pursue his business. He should be encouraged in that attitude. Potential conflicts are in sight, but actual events do not justify the constant war-sears which are presently dished up to the man in the street through headlines and despatches. In the meantime, sensationalists stand like an army of Micawbers waiting for something to turn up, while national prejudices are being inflamed everywhere. Even here in Canada, far removed from any likely theatre of war, unwarranted statements do not help the cause of peace. Parliament, more-

over, has spent some precious time during a crucial session disclosing eventualities in the failure to build up new external political alignments and war machines.

Now, if ever, is a time for exercising caution in speaking, writing and printing, for by so doing we shall be benefiting a cause in which the public, generally, are in favour. Temperate leadership from press and platform are essential if we are to give farsighted statesmen a fair chance to smooth out national enmities to the benefit of us all.



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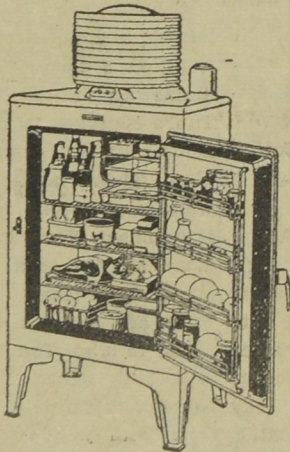
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