

THE DAILY MAIL

NEW BRUNSWICK'S ONLY HOME COMMUNITY PAPER

Published Every Afternoon (except Sunday) at 327-329 Queen Street, Fredericton, N. B.
THE MAIL PUBLISHING COMPANY — J. L. NEVILLE, Managing Editor
 Subscription Price: \$5 Per Year by Carrier; \$4 Per Year by Mail. Three and Six Months' Subscriptions Taken at Proportionate Rates. Phone 67.

FREDERICTON, FRIDAY, MAY 1, 1936

Would Kick Out Council

There are few municipalities in Canada that have not found it necessary to give closer attention to the administration of local government than was customary in pre-depression times. Almost daily, and for many months past, fresh cries of disapproval have been raised in one municipality after another against what is held to be mismanagement of local affairs. Seldom, however, has there been such severe condemnation of a system as that voiced in the Montreal Gazette against the "stupidity and recklessness" of the Montreal City Council.

"It has become very evident," the Gazette declares, "that Montreal taxpayers cannot escape continued mismanagement of their affairs . . . except through the help of the Provincial Government and Legislature. The city is heading straight for bankruptcy and the Province as a whole will suffer from a collapse unless averted through legislative action at the Provincial Capital."

The Gazette holds up the record of the Montreal Council, and offers the opinion that "to expect the present municipal government to exercise ordinary common sense, to manifest any real administrative capacity or any appreciation of civic responsibility is out of the question." The cure, as it sees it, is to scrap, "temporarily at least," the system "which sends the wrong kind of men into the City Council" and replace it with "some form of independent business management."

Conditions must be serious indeed when the Gazette is willing to throw the privileges of the ballot overboard. While it does not say so in words, the plan it suggests would appear to be one that would turn civic administration over to the Provincial Government and a business manager.

The Gazette's remedy goes further than most that have been suggested to date. But if the Gazette's appraisal of local conditions is correct, the present "picture is without a single redeeming feature," and the policy of "borrowing blindly, spending blindly, ruining property values, and steadily and visibly imperilling the industrial supremacy of the metropolis" is one that will require some form of radical treatment.

The Railways Step Forward

The first substantial step to be taken by the Canadian railways in an effort to regain the passenger traffic of pre-depression years and effectively meet the growing competition of road and air transportation was announced in Montreal at the close of last week. On June 1 reductions in passenger fares running as high as 13 per cent of the prevailing schedules will go into effect. A reduction will be made also in parlor and sleeping car accommodation; day coach tickets at the new rates will carry tourist sleeper privileges, and return tickets will be for a six-month rather than a thirty-day period.

While this action is not without precedent, it is one which will be commended all over this country. The railways in Great Britain and several Continental countries have made considerable reductions in fares, mostly on the seasonal basis, over the past three years. The Canadian roads began the cent-a-mile excursions in 1932, and have found them to be substantial revenue producers. In the United States a special Revenue Commission advised a basic two-cent-a-mile rate shortly after the new year, and this has been made compulsory for the Eastern States by the Interstate Commerce Commission, to take effect June 2.

While it is true the depression had damaging effects on the traffic volume of the Canadian roads, it is also true that motor transportation made its greatest headway and consolidated its position as a competitor over the same period. Consequently the railways have not recovered the traffic improved business conditions of the past year or eighteen months have made available. If they are to regain the passenger volume, they have to meet the new competitor, and the place where they must meet it is in the fares.

The excursion fares, though limited in the range of their appeal, have been sufficient indication that the travelling public has no special preference as to how it travels beyond that created by the cost. The excursions also proved that the revenues of the railways could be greatly improved without any appreciable increase in the operating cost. The success of the new rates will depend entirely on the volume they produce without necessitating increases in the service costs; and in view of the potentially greater passenger market they appeal to it is reasonable to expect the same results. Beyond this, they should do a great deal toward restoring railway consciousness.

Up to Mussolini

In the dispute now going on between France and Great Britain as to the war in Ethiopia, one is apt to lose sight of two important factors. One is that "France" is not opposed to continued League of Nations action against Italy in case she refuses to make peace, but only certain statesmen in France. The other is that neither France nor Great Britain is the League of Nations.

The latter fact was demonstrated only a few months ago, when the Hoare-Laval proposals for ending the Ethiopian war were made public. The plan had the sanction of both the French and the British Cabinets, and the only question in the minds of its framers was whether Mussolini would accept it. It did not. He hesitated too long. Before he could decide, a roar of protest arose, not from Great Britain alone, though she was regarded as the prime mover of sanctions against Italy, but from every democratic state in Europe, and from Russia. The proposals, said the protesters, constituted a surrender of the League to Italy, and as members of the League they would not consent. If the League showed the white feather, they were through with it.

These shouts of anger, coupled with those of the Liberal and Labor parties in England and a great number of Conservatives, forced the ditching of the plan and the resignation of Sir Samuel Hoare.

When, therefore, France not only backs away from further League action, but wants the League to remove present sanctions against Italy, she is dealing not with Great Britain alone, but with the Scandinavian countries, the Little Entente, Russia, Turkey, and a goodly portion of South America. To the small nations particularly the League means nothing unless it is strong enough to enforce its decisions.

The French argument is that Italy has the war all but won; that she is capable of insisting on a dictated peace; that sanctions have been ineffective, and further action can accomplish nothing; that new sanctions may drive Italy into the arms of Germany, and may even bring a declaration of war against Great Britain; that Italy must be kept on good terms with the Locarno powers. Against this argument the British Government can only reply that it has a mandate from the people to support the League, and that it can not retreat from this policy.

It is now up to Mussolini. Certainly he does not want a European war. Certainly he wants not only to keep his gains in Ethiopia, but to get still more, and to secure League recognition and ratification of his conquests. He has given consent to peace negotiations "in principle." He has been asked to be more specific.

SNAPSHOTS

With the roadbed rather bad on College Hill and Alexandra Street being used by the bus, those lovers' parked cars are moving towards the Hanwell Road.

Wonder what the girl who hand-painted her father's eye recently will do to her hubby. Maggie and the rolling pin has nothing on her.

The city is starting to make a clean up on the former city dump, Queen Street West. Why not make a nice river front right down to Westmorland street? It is on our principal street.

The rats which left their marshy homes on the river bank near the old dump and took refuge in peoples' cellars at West End, are gradually going back home again. When the place is made presentable and the decayed garbage is covered up with earth, the rats will move.

Now the upper provinces people are kicking about our Maritime freight rates. There is nothing with a larger slice of gall than those Central Canada members.

There is no truth in the report that the Secretary of the Board of Trade is to become an advertising solicitor. He has just been helping people out of holes.

If they are going to pick that old junk out of the river and allow the boats to navigate, why don't they do so?

Another sign of Spring—the Rubble Brigade on the riverbank.

Meeting Mail Order Competition Here

Hiram Walker, our old friend, came in the other day, boiling mad.

"What's the trouble," said we. "Hop the doorsill and tell us all about it."

"It's that fresh storekeeper down at the corner store," said Hiram, sinking into the chair we kicked in his direction. "He won't give me my saw."

"Did you pay for it?" we queried. "Pay for it! Are you insinuating—"

"No, no," said we, hastily. "Tell us all about it."

"Well, I need a saw right away. So this morning I go down to the corner and price one. It's a good saw but costs \$4.35. I say to him, 'I won't pay you that. I can buy it from the Dings Mail Order House for \$3.95.'"

"Well," says he, "we'll meet their price. Give me \$3.95," says he with a nasty kind of smile.

"So I pass it over. He figures on an envelope and keeps me waiting some more."

"Hey," say I, "I'm in a hurry, give me my saw."

"Just a minute," says he, "I'm figuring the other charges against you."

"Other charges? You're crazy!" "No, I'm not, I said I'd meet the Dings Mail Order House charges and so I will. First of all, give me eight cents for a postal order."

"Hey, what do you mean?"

"Eight cents for a postal order, three cents for a stamp, C.O.D. charges, say 30 cents being under \$5.00 in value, two cents for paper and envelopes—say 45 cents roughly. That's meeting the price, isn't it?"

"Well, said I, pretty mad, I need the saw. There's 40 cents more."

"Fine," says he, ringing it in the cash register.

"Are you going to give me my saw, I bellowed, really angry now."

"Not yet, says he, real provoking. Today is Saturday. If you had bought from the Dings Mail Order House you couldn't get it till next Friday noon. Come back then and I'll give it to you. I aim to give you as good a deal as they do in every respect."

C.P.R. Has Paid Back Full Amount, Interest

(Continued from Page One)

combine in making this loan, but as an added measure of security to the banks, the Dominion Government agreed to guarantee repayment of the loan both as to principal and interest. The loan was to mature in 5 years, or might be paid off by the Canadian Pacific prior thereto of notice to be given to the banks. It has been paid off in full in less than three years and the obligation of the government to guarantee payment came to an end automatically the moment the cheques issued today were presented. Furthermore, since all interest and other charges have been paid by the company, the entire transaction has not cost the Dominion Government one cent. The loan originally carried an interest rate of 5 per cent but later this was reduced to four and one half per cent. New loans raised by the company to pay this off were made at a still lower rate of interest.

It pays to advertise in The Daily Mail.

RICHEST GIRL IN WORLD STICKS TO HER OLD HOME

Doris Duke Often Back to "Modest" 30-Room 2300-Acre Estate

SOMERVILLE, New Jersey, May 1.—Be it ever so palatial there's no place like home to Mrs. James H. R. Cromwell, the former Doris Duke.

She may roam the earth, as she did after her marriage, tasting the fruits of wealth in foreign lands, but she always comes back to Somerville.

Here she enjoys a 30-room house on a 2300-acre estate with its 42 miles of improved roads, its woodland glens where bronze satyrs and Greek athletes ogled bronze dryads, and a multitude of bass and trout, fearless of capture, frisk in the eight lakes and the winding streams.

(Enlarging The Residence)

Across the deep woods and rolling greenward the big bell in the tower of the house booms the hours, and now there is the sound of workmen's hammers and song, for they are again enlarging the building. When the weather gets warmer the regular force of gardeners, farmers, woodsmen and others who keep the estate in order, will be increased to 150.

Mrs. Cromwell was born on the estate, lived here most of her life, and has spent many week-ends here since her marriage and honeymoon. She has 11 servants, who occupy third floor quarters.

The big rustic stone stable is now the garage—it looks like an automobile show room and its floor is covered with matting.

Improvements of recent years include a swimming pool, 60 by 120 feet with underwater lighting effects; an indoor tennis court and a lounge-room where movies are shown.

(Police On Guard)

Two motorcycle policemen patrol the roads of the estate. Guards are always on duty at the entrances, and the grounds are strictly private.

The miles and mile of rustic stone fence cost James B. Duke \$5 a cubic yard. There are marble statues in the house and other buildings; there are many foundations on the estate.

Should the Cromwells settle here for long periods at a time Somerville would react only slightly. The town has always known Mrs. Cromwell, regards her as democratic—before her marriage she and her mother used to go to the movies in Somerville—and is, on the whole, glad the estate is situated near the town. The firemen especially like the mistress for every time they extinguish a fire—grass or chimney—on the vast acres they are rewarded with a check for \$100.

Quebec Debt Lowest Per Capita in the Dominion

(Continued from Page One)

At the same time the treasurer tabled the public accounts for the year 1934-35, ended June 30, 1935, showing a deficit of \$4,939,235. Ordinary revenue had been \$31,954,885 and ordinary expenditure \$36,924,121.

(Not Yet Complete)

Accounts for the current year will not be complete until after its close on June 30, 1936. Of it Mr. Stockwell said: "Owing to the unsatisfactory conditions still prevailing as regards unemployment which entails continued heavy demands on our spending departments it is not yet possible to definitely forecast results."

An improved trend in revenues, begun a year ago, was being maintained during the current year, he said, but estimated ordinary expenditures would be exceeded by supplementary estimates to be submitted shortly.

The public accounts, he said, showed net funded debt outstanding increased by \$20,915,495 during the fiscal year 1934-35. "Quebec pays the lowest interest rates (effective cost price) of any government in the Dominion of Canada," he said. It had the lowest per capita debt of any of the provinces and its credit "is still the best of any government authority in Canada."

LAST ICE BARRIER IN LAKES BROKEN

TORONTO, May 1.—The last big ice barrier to the opening of 1936 navigation on the Great Lakes appeared broken today and indications were that freighters would move freely by early next week. Passenger travel will follow soon.

Most serious of the delays so far this season was lifted yesterday as 30 vessels moved in and out of Port Colborne harbor with difficulty. Tied up for 2 days by ice estimated to be 25 to 20 feet thick in parts, the vessels followed the Thunder Bay Quarries to open water.

Veniot Will Raise Question of an Audit

(Continued from Page One)

C. F. Bothwell (Lib. Swift Current) informed the committee it was "time we stopped the abuse of passes on our railways." He suggested cutting out passes unless they were justified. Obtaining passes for dependents of members had been abused. "I think it time for the ministers to consider if we can't stop the exploitation of our railways through the issue of passes," he declared.

Railways Minister Howe told the committee issue of many passes was controlled by statute. Members of Parliament could help by not abusing their privileges.

"They're taking the fleet over just when it's beginning to make money," remarked Mr. Heaps during the discussion of the sale of the remaining ships of the Canadian Government Merchant Marine to Australian interests. The management had estimated a profit of \$200,000 from these ships for the present year.

The new syndicate taking them over thinks it can make money with them, replied the railways minister. "We've put \$80,000,000 into them, and we knew we can't."

Members from the Maritimes urged that in any new agreement Canadian sailors be given employment.

Co-Operation

Some discussion arose about co-operative arrangements between the Canadian Pacific and Canadian National Railways.

"Is there one case of co-operation between the two railways in Canada that is equal or to the advantage of the Canadian National?" asked C. B. Howard (Lib., Sherbrooke).

"Yes, I think so. We try to get an even break," replied Chairman Fullerton. "It's pretty hard sometimes," he added.

Floods, snow, ice, and lower tonnage traffic during the first three months of 1936 caused a drop of \$2,000,000 from the budgeted revenues, the committee was told.

The committee was informed it would cost between \$5,000,000 and \$6,000,000 to perform work on the proposed Montreal terminals so they could be used for trains. This would not, it was stated, by any means finish construction of the terminals.

The committee approved the supplementary vote of \$39,900,000 to cover estimated deficit for the present year, as well as a further amount of \$6,412,000 required for loans and investments. Additional supplementary estimates for last year were passed.

Favorable conditions might correct the revenue decrease, Mr. Fullerton said, but if conditions continued bad and there was a small movement of wheat, the deficit might be greater than estimated. Last year, revenue from the moving of wheat was the lowest on record.

The committee directed attention to the Canadian National hotels. Chairman C. P. Fullerton stated hotels showed an operating profit of \$110,770 last year.

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