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PETTY POLITICS

The Conservative party at Ottawa seems to be so thoroughly saturated with suspicion of everything and everybody that it would seem that a man's friends cannot even present him with an offering in testimony of their good feeling for him without their motives being impugned. If there is one public man in Canada who should have been exempt from any such censorious treatment that man is without question. Mr. Fielding. After nearly forty years in public life, his record is absolutely unsullied, and never has it been possible to point the finger of scorn at him in regard to his dealings with any matter which has come within the purview of his duty—or without it for that matter. No scandal attaches to his name, nor can it be said that he ever personally profited from the investment of funds of which he was trustee.

It was a piece of pretty small politics on the part of the Conservative member for Algoma to seek to impute unworthy motives to those friends of Mr. Fielding who recently showed their appreciation of his services to the country, but that class of politics seems to form the chief stock in trade of the party. What Sir Wilfrid Laurier, himself the soul of honor and whose integrity no man ever yet ventured to question, thinks about such politics can best be expressed in his own words. "The honor of the Finance Minister is above suspicion or reproach. The suspicions of the member for West Algoma have no foundation whatever, in fact. No man in the house or outside of the house will believe that the minister of finance will be swerved from his public duty or influenced in any way to do otherwise than justly by the public interest in consequence of the testimonial."

With this conclusion, all decent thinking men will heartily agree.

THE CENSUS AND IMMIGRATION

The Hon. Sydney Fisher, minister of agriculture, speaks of the probability of the Census of 1911 showing that Canada has a population of eight millions. This is something like one million in excess of other estimates. As the work of taking the census is done by officials of the department of which Mr. Fisher is the head, he is probably in a better position than other persons to form an opinion on the subject. One thing is certain. That is that the increase in the population during the last decade will be found to have been greater than was the case in any previous similar period. The problem however for Canadian statesmen is not so much how the population can be increased, as what is the best method to adopt to make certain that no undesirable people shall find it possible to gain an entrance into this country. The statement by an official of the Immigration Department of the United States that one immigrant in four arriving at American ports is either mentally or physically afflicted should make it plain to Canadian authorities that too great vigilance cannot be exercised in regard to this matter.

The estimates of the immigration from Great Britain during 1910 place it at 100,000 persons. Unlike the circumstances connected with British immigration in previous years, the immigrants this year are reported by the government officials to be well equipped with money and effects and are of a better general physical average than the immigrants from the United Kingdom in previous years. As far as appears the Canadian agents in Great Britain seem to be drawing their emigrants from classes more likely to furnish good settlers in Canada than was previously the case.

For the year the total immigration is expected to reach nearly the 300,000 mark. This will mean about one new citizen to every twenty-three of the present population of Canada. Now that the stream of emigration appears to be fairly directed to Canada it is likely to continue for a number of years. Not for a long

time will immigrants find that opportunities are not available in the vast expanse of territory included within the boundaries of the Dominion. Although from the circumstances of the situation the larger proportion of these immigrants will go to Western Canada, there will be many who will find in the Eastern Provinces opportunities that will cause them to remain there. It is very desirable that this should be the case as on the native population of these provinces there have been large drafts of the younger and more energetic part of it through emigration to the fertile lands in the West. But although Western Canada will get the larger part of the immigration, the Eastern Provinces will benefit by the large demands that the West will make for the products of the factories of Ontario and Quebec, owing to the rapid increase in the population west of the Great Lakes. But with the opening of the G. T. P., there will gradually be a broadening in the belt of population stretching across the Dominion from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Besides growing in numbers from the east to the west, the population will expand in a northerly direction as the country is made accessible and its distribution be over a much larger area than was only possible when settlement had to be confined to a narrow strip along the Canadian Pacific Railway. For several reasons this will be of no small advantage to the Dominion and indirectly to the Empire as making more secure the British position on this Continent.

THE CITY STREETS

Residents in the city will be glad to learn that the council is taking some active steps towards improving the streets. The majority of citizens will care little what kind of pavement is adopted, if only it is such as will enable them to use the streets without danger of getting lost in the mud. The Hassam pavement may be a somewhat expensive one to lay down but there can be no question as to its permanency or as to the facility with which it can be kept clean. As for the complaint that it is more liable than some other kinds of pavement to create dust, this has not by any means been established; in fact experience is rather to the contrary. Every class of pavement which is non-absorbent is bound to provide more opportunity for the collection of dust than one that is absorbent, the only remedy is to wash it daily. Towns in Great Britain in which there are permanent streets have them flushed every day; and having regard to the fact that water is cheap enough in Fredericton and there are standpipes all along the street, there seems to be no reason why the same process should not be gone through here. It would be a simple matter to wash off the mud that at present lies on the Hassam Block and in the hot weather, washing the streets certainly keeps down the dust and leaves them cleaner and sweeter for the operation.

THE KING AND HIS TAXES

The King paid his income tax under the Lloyd-George Finance bill even before he gave to that measure his royal assent. The rate is very high. He is not obliged to pay at all since Parliament has no legal power to levy on the crown; he prefers to follow the excellent example of Queen Victoria, who voluntarily shared the burdens of British taxpayers.

The New York World in commenting on this says there are American "Kings of Finance" of greater wealth and fewer financial burdens of obligation than King Edward's who fight by every means in their power all at once to secure legislation such as every other civilized nation of consequence has adopted to insure that wealth shall bear a reasonable part of the public burdens along with poverty.

Organized wealth in New York, is almost solidly against the adoption of the income-tax amendment, for which President Taft is still pleading. Is the New York Legislature prepared to take the position that this organized wealth should have privileges transcending those which the British Crown claims for itself?

Mr. Charles Perks, a former resident of Fredericton, and now a leading citizen of Houlton, Me., was seized with a stroke of paralysis at his home one day last week.

N. B. AUTOMOBILE ASSOCIATION MEETS

Action will be Taken to Punish Careless Drivers, who are Mainly from over the Border.

(Telegraph)

The annual meeting of the New Brunswick Automobile Association was held in the office of J. A. Pugsley & Co., Canterbury street, St. John last night. The meeting was largely attended and great interest was shown in the important matters under discussion. The question of fast driving on country roads and on city streets was brought up and it was the unanimous opinion of all present that the majority of auto owners were careful and considerate of the rights of others on the roads, but that a few careless or reckless drivers brought discredit on all. The association decided to take active steps to punish any drivers who show disregard for the laws and who are discourteous to or regardless of the rights of drivers of horses, especially if the drivers are ladies or children. In all cases where the autoist is shown to be at fault, the matter will be dealt with by the association and in the localities where there has been most cause of complaint, as in Carleton county, the association will bear the expense of having special constables appointed to enforce the law more strictly and to safeguard the interests of the public. P. W. Thomson and J. F. Gregory were appointed a committee to draw up laws to be submitted to the association for recommendation to the provincial government for better safeguarding the interests of all.

As local auto owners are in nearly all cases courteous and respectful to teamsters and visiting autoists from points outside of New Brunswick usually disregard or overlook the rights of others on the roads, the association will have large signs erected on the main roads leading into the province, warning all drivers to observe our provincial laws and to drive carefully. Pamphlets will also be distributed to visiting autoists at the border towns.

J. F. Gregory made several valuable suggestions as to possible advances of the association, which were considered so practical that a special committee of five was appointed to look to them in detail and report back at a special meeting which will be held in a couple of weeks. Means of improving the roads and several other important matters were discussed but nothing definite was decided on.

At the close of the meeting the election of officers for the ensuing year took place and resulted as follows:

President—F. S. Crosby.
Vice-President—J. Fraser Gregory.
Secretary-Treasurer—S. P. McCavour.

Board of Governors—J. E. Sayre, L. G. Crosby, A. E. Massie Fredericton; F. W. Magee, Port Elgin; C. W. Givan, Moncton; C. W. Fawcett, Sackville; J. E. Ganong, St. Stephen.

GIBSON BRANCH SERVICE SHOULD BE IMPROVED

Business men of the city are beginning to think that if the improved train service on the Gibson branch which the C.P.R. authorities promised some weeks ago, is to be of any benefit this year, it should be inaugurated without further delay. The advent of spring means a busy time for the farmers and they are compelled to visit the city quite often to purchase seeds, fertilizers, farming utensils, etc. Under the arrangement now in vogue on the Gibson branch a trip to Fredericton from Millville practically consumes three days. The train does not arrive until nearly nine o'clock in the evening when there is no business chance to do any shopping, so parties coming down on the Gibson branch to make purchases are compelled to remain over the next day. They may be able to do all their shopping in less than an hour, but it makes no difference, they have got to spend a day and two nights in the city. With a morning train from Millville three times per week, as suggested by the Transportation Committee of the Board of Trade will be possible for parties to reach this city in the morning at eleven o'clock and return home at five the same evening. An arrangement of this kind would be very popular with people living at Keswick, Burt's Corner, Millville and other points along the line and would be advantageous to Fredericton merchants. The C.P.R. authorities promised this service over a month ago and if they intend to inaugurate it this year it should be done at once. The roads are in a frightful condition at the present time, and there is every reason to believe that the railroad would get the big end of the traffic if it made some effort to give the people decent accommodation. A morning train service to Fredericton is badly needed and if the C.P.R. authorities intend to carry out their promise they should do so at once. It will not do to wait until the summer time table goes into operation.

April 25th 1910

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