

The Daily Mail

Published every afternoon (except Sunday) at 613 Queen Street, Fredericton, by THE MAIL PRINTING COMPANY.

Telephone No. 67

Fredericton, N. B., March 12, 1914.

THE BRIDGE SCANDAL

The admission made by the minister of public works in the Legislature on Tuesday that the substructure of the draw-span of the Fredericton high way bridge cost the enormous sum of \$64,227.22, startling as it may seem, will not surprise the people of Fredericton and vicinity who are familiar with the conditions under which the work was performed. In the first place, local contractors, men who have built satisfactory bridge foundations in the past at a reasonable cost, were entirely ignored and an arrangement was entered into with The Foundation Company, Limited, an American concern with branches in Montreal and Vancouver, to do the work on a percentage basis, the terms of the agreement being that they should have fifteen per cent. over and above the actual cost of the work. No tenders were invited as the department evidently concluded that the job was too heavy and too important to trust to local contractors. The arrangement under which the pier was rebuilt was an eminently satisfactory one for the company, but a very unsatisfactory and costly one for the people of this province. To put the matter in plain English, there never was a bigger outrage perpetrated upon the people of New Brunswick by any government. It is nothing short of a scandal and hundreds of the best Conservatives in this county do not hesitate to say so.

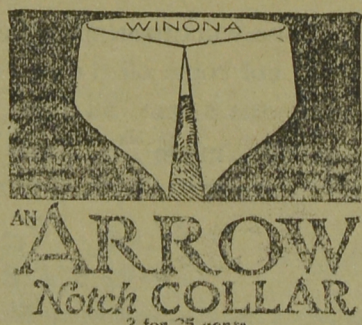
It will be remembered that the draw-span of the bridge and the circular granite pier supporting it were carried away by an ice-jam on the first day of April last. Had the government expended a few thousand dollars in protecting the pier with an ice-breaker, it would have been there yet. Of this there is not the slightest doubt. The government was too economical to take the precaution and the span was carried away, causing a big monetary loss and great inconvenience to the public. The incompetency of the government in dealing with the situation thus created, was in evidence from the start. Nearly a month elapsed from the time the accident occurred until work had been sufficiently advanced on a temporary span to allow the public to cross on foot. An adequate ferry service was not provided and the people were left to shift for themselves. Some crossed the river in row-boats, some made use of the Intercolonial Railway and others remained at home. It was not until the month of June that representatives of The Foundation Company, Limited, appeared on the scene. They erected a mammoth sign and then proceeded to hire all the men who came along and who had the necessary lacking of the Tory patronage dispensers. The work was said to be urgent and the company decided to keep things going the whole twenty-four hours, Sunday and week days. A number of arc lights were installed, derricks, steam-boilers and pile-drivers galore were brought into use, and it really looked as if the company had contracted to rebuild the entire bridge. An army of workmen were employed on both night and day shift, and to the casual observer their hardest work seemed to be to keep from falling over one another. A corps of divers spent a lot of time beneath the surface of the water, searching for something which they were apparently unable to find. They were well paid for their services and assisted materially in piling up the company's percentage allowance. The men were allowed to drink nothing but spring-water and having no water wagon, a man was employed day and night to carry a supply in pails from a sewer-spring located near the Cathedral, over half a mile from the work. The spectacular nature of the work attracted crowds of people, who marvelled at what they saw and speculated on the probable cost. It was a new thing in bridge building for these parts and from the standpoint of the public was really educating in more ways than one. Farmers on their

way to market watched the operations with amazement and not a few of them went home with the firm resolve never again to poll a Conservative vote.

Ordinarily the picnic season in this locality ends in August but chill November's surly blasts had laid fields and forests bare before this one saw its finish. The hard pine and other costly material used in connection with the work was sold at auction and brought only a fraction of the original price. When the smoke of battle had cleared away it was found that the company had erected a granite pier for the draw-span, similar to the old one except that it has a sloping face as a protection against ice. In addition to this they fished out of the river and deposited on the shore for safe-keeping the battered remains of the old steel superstructure which had been carried away by ice. The old pier, built by a local contractor, cost \$9000 and the new one, erected by a foreign concern, has cost \$64,227.22, or more than seven times as much as the old one. For superintending this work The Foundation Company were paid in commissions, the tidy sum of \$9,633, or more than the price of the old pier. The temporary span, according to the auditor's report, cost the province the sum of \$2,240.27, which brings the total cost of the work, exclusive of the superstructure and the time of engineers, up to \$66,427.49. The superstructure (which is not yet installed) will probably cost \$15,000 and should it reach that figure, we will have a grand total of \$81,427.09 for the job. This is the price the taxpayers must pay for the inefficiency and incompetency of a government which went into power a few years ago, pledged to put all public works up to tender and pledged furthermore to exercise the strictest economy in the administration of the affairs of the province. Is it any wonder that hundreds of the best Conservatives in York county are in open revolt against the Flemming government and its disgraceful methods of transacting public business. Only the blindest of partisans and men feeding from the public trough in York county today will attempt to justify the reckless waste of public money on the Fredericton bridge job.

Montreal Herald:—There is no disguising the dissatisfaction of Western Canada over the attitude of the present government in regard to western demands. The western papers are seething with discontent first at their betrayal by the present government on the question of the natural resources of the Prairie Provinces and secondly at the disinclination of the government to put wheat on the free list. The Manitoba Free Press declares that Premier Borden's recent statement on the first question is "a cynical avowal that party pledges and party professions of principle, were all framed up with intent to deceive." The incipient revolt of Mr. R. B. Bennett, the Conservative member for Calgary, is also ascribed to the fact that Mr. Bennett has realized that a continuation of the government's refusal to consider the claims of the west regarding such things as free wheat "is going to make it very dimly to secure any Conservative seats in the west" and that he sees little honor or glory "in following sheepishly behind a party which does not represent his opinions." Evidently some of the Tory chickens are coming home to roost.

St. John Times:—Mr. J. K. Pinder has been a valued colleague of Mr. Hazen, Mr. Flemming and Mr. McLeod and other leading lights of the New Brunswick legislature past and present. Mr. Pinder has been an active member and if we mistake not a chairman of the public accounts committee. He has had the full confidence of members both of the Hazen and Flemming governments. But Mr. McLeod now calls upon the minister of railways to investigate in the public interest a matter in which Mr. Pinder was personally concerned. Is Mr. Pinder a very bad man? Also is a man known by the company he keeps? Mr. Pinder should now be heard from.



AN ARROW NOTCH COLLAR

PINDER'S STUMPAGE

(Continued from page one.)

cord of the expenses of surveys in additional surveys since October 31st, 1912.

Q. 3. Were additional soundings made upon the Kennebecasis River? Who made them and at what cost?

Answered by question two. Q. 4. What was the cost of the soundings and work incidental in the search for a firm foundation at or near the Mistake?

Answer. The Government has no statement from the Railway Commission as to the cost of the work mentioned in the above question.

Q. 5. What was the amount paid or arranged to be paid to Mr. Monserratt for his services as Engineer?

Answer. No bill for services has yet been received from Mr. Monserratt. The terms at which Mr. Monserratt was engaged was \$100.00 per day for time actually engaged at the work. Two or three other engineers named conditions and terms as high or higher than Mr. Monserratt.

Q. 6. What amount was charged by the Foundation Co., Ltd., for their work in the same connection?

Answer. The Government has not the information as to the cost of the work done by the Foundation Co., at the Mistake.

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THIS DATE IN HISTORY

MARCH 12.

1664—Charles II granted to his brother, the Duke of York, a territory in America, called in honor of the proprietor, New York.

1734—First party of Salzburgers reached Savannah, Ga., and met with cordial reception.

1854—England, France and Turkey formed a triple alliance against Russia.

1862—George Peabody, the American philanthropist, gave \$750,000 for dwellings for the London poor.

1868—A Penian attempted to assassinate the Duke of Edinburgh in New South Wales.

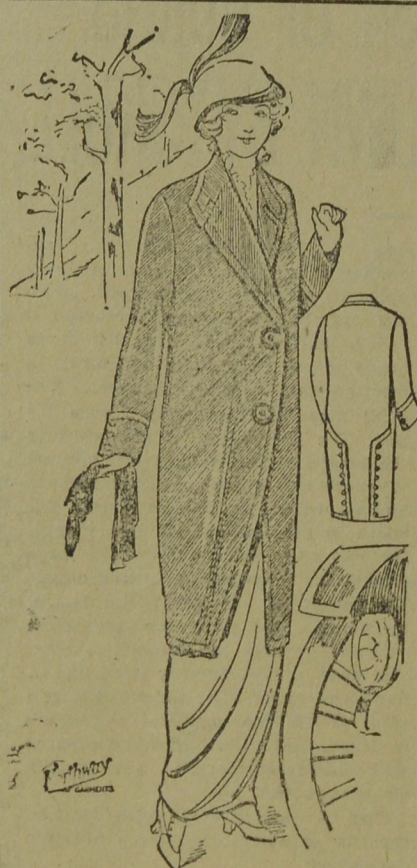
1877—William M. Evarts was appointed secretary of state.

1879—Two thousand lives lost in a flood which destroyed the town of Szeged in Hungary.

1913—Canberra was selected as the name of the projected capital city of Australia.

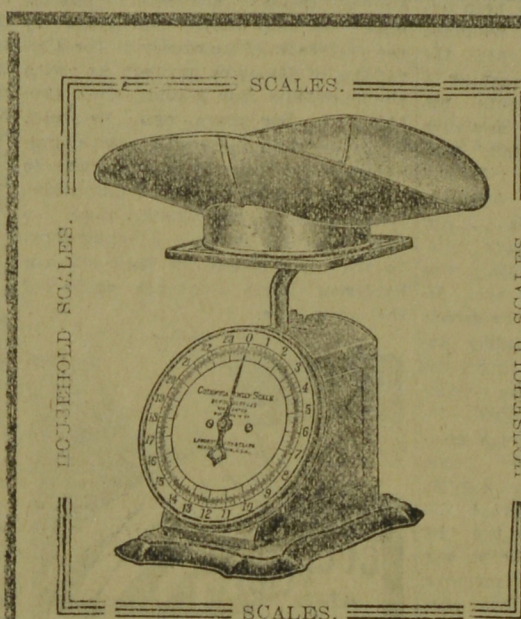
PEOPLE SHOULD GUARD AGAINST APPENDICITIS

Fredericton people who have stomach and bowel trouble should guard against appendicitis by taking simple buckthorn bark, glycerine, etc., as compounded in Adler's, the German remedy which became famous by curing appendicitis. JUST ONE DOSE relieves sour stomach, gas on the stomach and constipation INSTANTLY because this simple mixture draws off such a surprising amount of old foul matter from the body. George Y. Dibblee.



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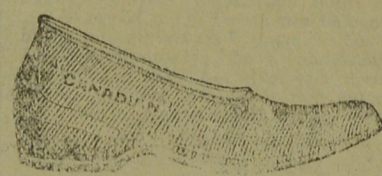
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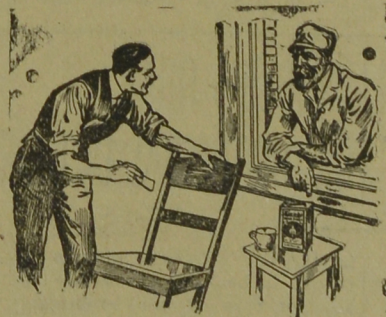
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