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W. K. C. PARLEE, L. C. MACNUTT,
Manager. Editor

DAILY HERALD.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 11, 1904.

FIRE INSURANCE RATES.

There seems to be an impression that whatever the citizens of Fredericton may do to improve their present very efficient fire extinguishing service, the insurance companies will run up their rates perhaps twenty per cent. The companies want to make up for fire losses elsewhere, and it will be done at the expense of cities like Fredericton, which have been a source of profit to the companies. The Fredericton hydrants are believed by those competent to judge, to be entirely efficient, and there does not seem to be any particular need of a chemical engine. Anyway, supposing that the city met all the demands of the St. John Underwriters and put some \$10,000 or more expenditure on the city to improve the fire department, these gentlemen can give no guarantee that the rates will not be advanced. The decision rests with the management of the fire insurance companies at headquarters, and even after the city made the expenditure demanded by the companies, they may still have to face increased rates.

If the companies make up their minds to squeeze the people of Fredericton beyond a reasonable limit, some means, not yet clear, may have to be found to meet the difficulty.

TORY FEARS.

The Montreal Star, which is taking a very violent interest in the Canada Eastern transfer to the government, discovers that the consummation of the bargain will very materially strengthen Mr. Emerson in Central New Brunswick. Of course it will, and that is the only reason that Tory newspapers, like the St. John Sun, are throwing cold water on the scheme. The Sun knows that it is not only for the interest of the province but for the Intercolonial itself that the Canada Eastern should form part of the government railway system, but it is politics first with the Sun and public interest afterwards. It is well known that Mr. Foster, when he represented York in parliament, promised to secure the transfer of the road, but like many of his other political undertakings, he never carried it out. Surely if Mr. Foster was favorable to the project it should find favor in the Sun's eyes.

MR. BLAIR'S RECOMMENDATION.

The opposition in parliament have accepted so sincerely Mr. Blair's views on the railway question generally and have quoted with approval his memorandum of Dec. 1902, obtained in some peculiar manner not yet confessed, that we may anticipate their support of the Canada Eastern proposition when it is formally put forward by the government.

In that memorandum Mr. Blair made a strong argument in favor of government ownership of the Canada Eastern as follows:

"The outlook for the Government railway is now so promising that the undersigned cannot refrain from urgently renewing his recommendation with respect to the Canada Eastern Railway. This line of railway runs between Chatham and Fredericton, crossing the Intercolonial about ten miles from the former town. Fredericton is reached by means of the Fredericton bridge, and there the Canada Eastern connects with the Canadian Pacific Railway. This bridge, it may be remembered, was built largely, if not entirely, by moneys loaned by Government, on a mortgage of the property; and as interest has been accumulating for years upon this mortgage the government has only to foreclose in order to acquire an absolute title to the property. The situation of the Canada

Eastern railway at present is such that it may be made a very valuable feeder for the Intercolonial railway, or will become an equally valuable feeder of the Canadian Pacific railway; and if the former, the Intercolonial would be thereby brought into the very heart of the St. John river district, and thereby through a growing and improving section of the province. If an enlightened policy is to be adopted in respect of the Intercolonial railway, this important feeder must not be allowed to pass into other hands.

It may be remembered that the undersigned, in his former minute on this subject, entered very fully into details respecting the then present value of the Canada Eastern and its then earning capacity and future prospects, and any changes which have since then taken place in these respects have been decidedly for the better. The price at which it was then expected the road could be purchased was \$850,000. The same terms are open to the government now. This railway would already have been acquired by the Canada Pacific railway if the owners had not very confidently anticipated that in a short time the government would be prepared to take it over, and if they had not very much preferred it should become part of the Intercolonial than of the Canadian Pacific railway.

During the past summer, the president of the Canadian Pacific Railway advised the undersigned of his having made proposals to the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, looked to the purchasing of their line, and expressed the hope that no obstacle would be raised by this department in connection with the use of the Saint John River bridge. The negotiations fell through for the reasons above-mentioned although the price offered but not accepted, was, it is stated, not less than \$800,000. The sum asked is a reasonable one, and, as the matter stands, it is a question whether the Canada Eastern railway becomes a feeder for the Intercolonial railway or the Canadian Pacific railway to secure the business originating on the Canada Eastern railway, it is infinitely more important that the Intercolonial railway do so. The Intercolonial is threatened with the loss of the business that now comes to it from this feeder, which is a valuable and paying business, and also exclusion from Central New Brunswick and the St. John river traffic. It only remains for the government to consider how far, because the Intercolonial is a government road, it should be debarred from profiting by its opportunities — opportunities which a company would not fail to seize."

Rear Admiral Charles Carter Drury, who is named as likely to succeed Admiral Douglas in command of the North American and West Indian Station, is a native of Fredericton, born in 1846, and was educated here. He entered the British navy in 1859 and was rapidly promoted. He is a son of the late LeBaron Drury of St. John and a cousin of Messrs. T. Carleton Allen and Geo. W. Allen, M. P. P., of this city.

In a lecture at Kingston, Ont., Monday night, Col. Sam Hughes, Conservative M. P., said he considered Sir Frederick Borden the most efficient Minister of Militia Canada has ever had, and characterized him as a man who could rise above party differences to further the interests of the people of Canada as a whole.

Rev. J. A. Macdonald, editor of the Toronto Globe, is summoned to appear next Monday to answer for alleged contempt of court, having made some observations on the North Renfrew election case now before the courts. It will be a new experience for the rev. editor, but we trust he will not have to go to jail.

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It is stated that a King's County district between Bloomfield and Upham in which there has been no school for twelve years is to shortly enjoy the blessings of education. The present generation of young people have grown up, it is alleged, without being able to even read or write.

Sir Henry M. Stanley, the great explorer, is dead, and there is talk of interring his remains beside those of Livingstone in Westminster Abbey.

Lord Dondonald in his annual report on the militia, urges the organization of more cavalry regiments.

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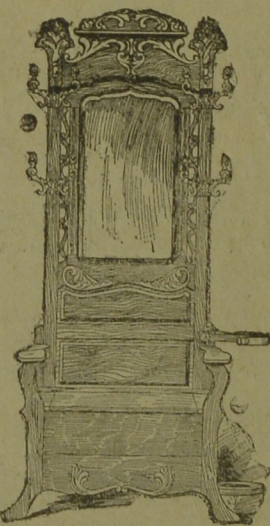
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