The Daily Journal

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ST. JOHN, N. B., FRIDAY, AUGUST 4, 1922.

THE RULE OF THE ROAD

The surprising announcement comes from Halifax that the Nova Scotia Government has requested the Federal Government to disallow the Act passed at the last session of the Legislature in that Province, making it necessary for all vehicles to turn to the right after January 1 next. Premier Murray would not have made such a request without the very best of reasons, and the fact that disallowance has been requested gives color to the report that "Turn to the right" legislation which passed the Nova Scotia House at its last session did not go through in the usual orthodox and correct manner.

No matter what the cause, the fact that the Government of Nova Scotia has changed its mind will make it somewhat awkward for the Government of New Brunswick which has since 1918, when it passed the "Turn to the right" legislation, been awaiting action on the part of the sister province. Our New Brunswick legislation was passed with the proviso that it should go into effect upon proclamation of the Lieutenant Governor-in-Council. That proclamation has been issued, and on December 1, next, all vehicles in this province must turn to the right when passing, instead of to the left. It is very doubtful if this measure would have passed the New Brunswick Legislature had no such proviso been attached to it, because it was felt that unless Nova Scotia acted in concert with this province it would be quite useless to change the law. There are many people in New Brunswick who do not think the rule of the road should be changed. They argue that with not only fifteen or sixteen thousand automobile owners, but probably three times that number of automobile drivers accustomed to turn to the left, it will be almost impossible for all of them to tun to the right without many accidents. The fact that our neighbors to the west of us, in Maine and other States in the United States, turn to the right is no particular reason why the people of New Brunswick should follow their example. It is quite true that "Turn to the right" rule prevails in Quebec and Ontario, but aside from the usual border traffic, there are not many Quebec and Ontario cars using the roads of New Brunswick. It is very true that we have a thousand or two—not any more—American cars here in the summer season, but when they cross the international bridges they are advised that the rule of the road in the Maritime Provinces is "Turn to the left" and, apart from a very few accidents, they have observed our law and we, in our turn, when we travel in Maine or the other States of the Union, observe theirs.

Aside from the danger of accidents to very many of our people, there is an enormous expense levied upon the farm communities of the Province of New Brunswick in the changes necessary in their pungs which they use in the winter season. It is not, of course, so apparent in the towns and cities where the roads are broken thoroughly, but in the country districts, where the roads are usually broken with a double team and a core is left in the centre of the road, it is not possible for a single team to travel with any comfort unless the shafts are so shifted that the horse will travel on the right of the path and when passing a team turn to the left in the path, the "shift" of the shafts permitting him to do so. Now, when the rule of the road is changed on December 1, all of the shafts upon these single sleighs and pungs must be changed to the other side. It has been estimated that each of these changes will cost from $5 to $7, and, with probably a hundred thousand pungs in the province, it can easily be estimated just what a tremendous sum will be necessary to bring about the needed changes.

That is not all. The street railway system of St. John and Moncton will have to make very extensive changes. In the Province of British Columbia, when the rule of the road was changed from left to the right, the British Columbia Electric Railway System made a demand for a partial reimbursement and the province agreed to pay them $375,000. We have not heard of any application being made by the street railway systems of this province and, if such applications were made, it is not probable that they would be given much attention. However, as the time draws near for the change of the road to go into effect in New Brunswick, the Government, if it has not already done so, should consult with its friends in the rural districts and ascertain whether the great majority of the people who have to travel in the wintertime without automobiles are going to be seriously inconvenienced and put to much expense.

CRITICISM OF THE PROGRESSIVE LEADER

The silence of Hon. Mr. Crerar, the Leader of the Progressive Party, upon Western problems and the absence of any lead, on his part, has led to considerable criticism from his friends and others. The rumors of fusion between the Progressive and Liberal Parties while never really confirmed, have not been denied, so officially as to satisfy the radical element of the Progressive Party. The suggestion is made now that the Progressive Party is either going on or going out. Some say they are getting weary and the attitude of its leaders is not as vigorous as it should be. It is difficult to say if this really represents the sentiment of the men and women who make up and support the party of which such high hopes were entertained. There is no misunderstanding as to what fusion between the Liberal and Progressive Parties means. Absorption by the Liberal Party can be the only understanding of such a move, and this would certainly be a most inglorious climax. Those Conservatives who joined the Progressive Movement are apt to speak of Hon. Mr. Crerar as being more of a Liberal than a Progressive. When forced to meet such a statement, Mr. Crerar simply evaded it by another query: 'What is Liberalism?" Mr. Crerar was so long in the Liberal Party that it is very difficult, indeed, for him to clear himself from the influences of it, but many men, who belonged to the Liberal Party up to 1917, found, for the very best of reasons, that they must choose between party allegiance and loyalty to their country. It is no reflection, in fact it is to their credit, that they preferred what they considered a patriotic course to opposing prompt assistance to the Canadian boys on the field of battle. Many of those Liberals who joined the Union Government have no political party today. They, perhaps, might have returned to the fold where they were nurtured had they been welcome, but in too many cases there was undisputed evidence that they were unwelcome. For this reason the Liberal Party lost some of the very best men in their ranks—men who, if they have not changed their politics, will find it easier to change in the days to come. There can never be any real sympathy between the men who fought the fight at the time of the country's crisis and the men who refused to go or refused to vote to send others to go to their assistance. Hon. Mr. Crerar was a Union Liberal; that gave him much support in the Western Provinces where the farmers did not take the same stand as many of them did in Ontario and the East, and it is doubtful if Progressivism and Liberalism can find any common ground to meet on and unless there is a great departure from the axioms of the Liberals in Ontario and Quebec there can never be any fusion that will satisfy the rank and file of the people belonging to both of these political organizations.

THE UNIVERSITY'S WORK

The University of New Brunswick begins another year in September and its Chancellor, in another column, refers to some of the reasons why the young men of the province should attend this provincial institution. Other colleges of a denominational character draw their students from all parts of the Maritime Provinces. They do splendid work and Dr. Jones would be the last man to disparge the graduates of Mount Allison or St. Joseph's. He does right, however, in pointing out the advantages of the University which is the head of the public school service in New Brunswick. The fact that it is supported by the revenues of the province has been a drawback, inasmuch as its graduates have never felt called upon to contribute to its support. The spirit of loyalty to their Alma Mater has prompted the graduates of such colleges as Mount Allison, Acadia and St. Francis Xavier to endow their colleges handsomely. Unfortunately the provincial revenues are too meagre to permit of any generous grants to its University. To feel that there will be a deficit every year, and that the governing body must go to a not too sympathetic government for funds to meet the obligations is a position that is most unsatisfactory. The proposition to amalgamate with other colleges would cost the province more than the present expenditure, and the province would feel it necessary to pay its share of the burden. There does not seem any way out but to interest the graduates in the progress and prosperity of their Alma Mater—to see that her class rooms overflow and that the University of which they have such a right to be proud is so popular that students in arts, forestry or engineering do not go elsewhere for their training.

The Minister of Lands and Mines for New Brunswick, when asked if it were probable that the rate of stumpage would be decreased during the coming year, answered enigmatically that no doubt the lumbermen would welcome a reduction at any time and if any action toward this end is taken it would be done by the Government at its next meeting. The price of lumber is still very low, but the costs of camp supplies, and many other things which enter into the production of logs, are not as reasonable as was expected. The lumbermen, no doubt, will make their usual request to the Government for a reduction of stumpage, and there is not much doubt but that the Government will be quite as firm in stating that the province cannot afford to make any reduction. Until there is a more equal division of taxation to provide provincial revenue the Crown Lands and their licensees must bear the brunt.

Immigration to Canada fell off during April, May and June from 41,000 last year to 25,000 this year. Immigration from the Old Country increased by leaps and bounds. There is something wrong about this. There should be some policy by which more people will come to Canada and stay in it, for unless our broad acres are populated our home market must diminish. The prospects of other markets at the present time are very slim. The United States is trying to shut us out from selling our goods there, and Europe is unable to pay for all the exports we could give them. If Canada is to go ahead we must have more people, and it is up to the Government to adopt some progressive policy to this end.

POLITICS AND OTHER THINGS

I notice in some of the western newspapers an illustration of what is called the "Hangman's Tree," located, I think, at Caribou in British Columbia. It is told that this was the tree which furnished an opportunity for summary justice upon some of the bad men who lurked around that region in the early days of the colony. There is a broken limb which, it is said, gave way under the weight of one culprit, but otherwise the tree seems to be well proportioned, well foliaged and much the same kind of a tree as any other in spite of the fact that it bore rather peculiar kind of fruit upon occasions.

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The reason was not that the rock was in the graveyard or churchyard, as they are sometimes called, but because of the curious story which was a part of the history of the place, and which dated back over a hundred years ago. In those days stealing was punished by hanging and men took their lives in their hands when they purloined anything. There were some negroes living in Kingston at that time, among them a young man who went by the name of "Croppy." He was a muscular sort of fellow and the young folks stood somewhat in awe of him. An accusation was laid against him, however, by the village storekeeper that he had stolen two loaves of bread, and "Croppy" was arrested and tried. The evidence was very clear and the verdict was "guilty." "Croppy" was sentenced to death, to be hung and the place chosen for his execution was very handy—it was the big boulder in the churchyard. A sort of a platform was built out from the top of the rock and all of the village—men, women and children—assembled to see "Croppy" hung. The sheriff was a somewhat humane man, and many of the villagers thought that the penalty did not fit the crime, and that hanging was a little too severe for stealing two loaves of bread, so it was made up that the sheriff would take the handcuffs off "Croppy" and tell him to go down to the brook, about three hundred yards distant, and wash his hands. He told him, as the story goes, that even if he had stolen the bread it would be well for him to have his hands clean when he passed into the other world. There was not a man, or the sheriff, who did not think for a minute but what the nigger criminal would have made his escape without any further ado, but to their absolute amazement, "Croppy" walked to the brook, washed his hands, came back to the rock and was hung.

* * *

I remember, when a very small boy, having a huge boulder pointed out to me in the old churchyard in Kingston, Kings County, as being noted for the fact that it was once the scene of justice. At this particular point the churchyard slopes somewhat steeply and the rock stands on the lower side, perhaps ten feet from the ground, and on the upper side mayhap five or six feet. I can remember a rock cranberry bush that spread over the top of the boulder and, in spite of the fact that cranberries were very popular and much to be desired for the wonderful jelly they made, there was not a woman in the neighborhood who would think of picking them.

* * *

This story, I believe to be absolutely true. I think I read some account of it in later years, but it was impressed upon me when I was very young that it was not well to play around "Croppy's Rock," for that was the name that the big boulder went by for all time after this execution of early days.

* * *

A friend of mine sends me a letter commenting upon the hotels in St. John and New Brunswick. I am printing it as he wrote it and, while I agree with much he says, I think that much might be added to his suggestions Ever since I was a small boy, and I am something past twenty-one moons now, I have heard of a new hotel that was going to be erected here. Has anyone seen it? Certainly not the tourists who are arriving every day. There is not a hotel in the city that does not have to refuse guests, rooms with bath, every day, that the average traveller now demands. How many of our leading business men when they go away do not also demand rooms with bath at the hotels they stop at? How many of our leading business men are proud of the hotels of this city? Mark you, I am not "knocking" the service of cuisine of the hotels we have, for that cannot be beaten anywhere for less than double the money, but I am "knocking" the buildings that are called hotels. Not one of them was ever built for a hotel, and no matter what tearing down and remodelling may be done to the present buildings they cannot be made modern hotels. How many of our leading business men and others will put their own money into a hotel in their own town? How many of them realize that a first-class hotel is a great big advertisement for a city? How many of them realize that every cent spent by a hotel is spent in the city in which it is located? How many of them realize that indirectly every merchant gets a share of that money to say nothing of the money spent here by travellers and tourists?

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How many of them realize that there are hundreds of tourists who, finding that they cannot get the kind of hotel accommodation they want merely stop for lodging and breakfast and get out? How many of them realize that these tourists tell others and describe the hotel conditions here? I'll venture to say that there is not a city of half the population of this on the continent of America where hotel accommodations are as bad as they are here.

* * *

I would suggest that a committee from the Board of Trade, the Rotary Club, and the Commercial Club locate for a couple of days in the different hotels, mingle with the guests, hear the complaints—not of service or cuisine—but of lack of accommodation, principally rooms with baths, that are made at the desks, and if they don't acknowledge that St. John is sadly in need of an up-to-date hotel, and that they as citizens are not ashamed to announce themselves as such after hearing tourists and travellers' opinions, then all I can say is that they have no shame left and no pride in their city. I really think that after an experience such as I mention they will be ready to put in money and start the boom for a modern hotel, one which they will be able to point with pride to.

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They will also find it a paying investment in every way. It is useless to advertise for tourists to come here under existing conditions. Those who are worth having are willing to spend money for what they want in the way of accommodation. When they can't get it, they will naturally go where they can. The other kind of tourist is no good to any one, which recalls to my mind the story of a witty Irish-cabman now dead. Summoned to court one morning for breaking the rules at the International wharf on steamer day, he was asked by Magistrate Ritchie "guilty or not." Before pleading by way of excuse for his conduct, he complained that "business was very dull and competition keen, and that going after a possible fare he had no doubt broken the law." In closing he pleaded that the Magistrate "overlook the matter as times were dull and the tourists who were travelling spent no money for cab hire, leaving home with a clean shirt and a new dollar and changing neither until they got back." There are many of this kind always travelling and if the business men of this city are satisfied with that kind of tourist traffic, then the tourist association should cease advertising, for they will come anyway, and if they do not it won't matter.

* * *

The Union Bank of anada has published a memorial number of the U. B. of C. Monthly. It is in memory of the fallen heroes, employees of the bank, who went overseas during the Great War, and there is a very excellent illustration of the memorial which was recently unveiled by His Hon. Sir James Aikins, the Lieutenant Governor of Manitoba, on the site of the Lakeside Fresh Air Camp for Children at MacElheran. The letter press of this issue of The Monthly is well worth reading. We, who are not able to follow such things closely learn for the first time that the Vice-President and General Manager of the Union Bank, Mr. H. B. Shaw, initiated the movement in Winnipeg of the Lakeside Fresh Air Camp for Children on Lake Winnipeg. Surely no better place could have been chosen for the erection of a monument to the fallen heroes of the institution. The additional contents of the U. B. Monthly show some remarkable photographs of the ceremony of unveiling the memorial to the boys who served. In one view is shown the Governor and officials of the bank and the choir singing the dedication hymn: then there is His Honor unveiling the monument and the Directors of the bank and clergy watching the unveiling, as well as the group who assembled; then the presentation of the deed by Mr. Allan, and finally a wondeful group of the kiddies for whom Lakeside Camp was established. There are several views of the youngsters at play in the fresh air. Altogether the booklet, as it might be called, although it is the monthly of the Union Bank of Canada, is a most interesting publication and will be read with much interest not only by the employees of that Canadian-wide institution, but by their friends and the bank's customers as well. The Union Bank of Canada is managed in St. John by Mr. J. W. Ryan, who, with his obliging accountant, Mr. Hunter, and other officials of the bank, have made many friends for it in St John.

W. Tweedy Mace

THE LAUGH LINE

What shall it profiteer a mine operator if he can't get cars?

And we were just getting out of a depression when the strike season opened.

And With Arms Agog

From a story—"She stood staring at him with eyes akimbo."—Boston Transcript.

Truth Will Out

It's disconcerting and mortifying when one's wife says: "Now, now, you mustn't do that. Gentlemen don't act like that. You never saw Daddy do that, did you?" to have one's offspring reply, with the assurance of the truth-teller, "Yes!"

Lost Car

"Where is the car?" demanded Mrs. Diggs.

"Dear me!", ejaculated Professor Diggs. "Did I take the car out?"

"You certainly did. You drove it to town."

"How odd; I remember now that after I got out I turned around to thank the gentleman who gave me the lift and wondered where he had gone."—The American Legion Weekly.

The Family Implement

A lady interested in the poor was trying to impress upon a mother the necessity of having the children clean their teeth. "Oh, I don't have to make my children do that," the mother replied. "There's always a fight between them which shall use the tooth-brush first.

Couldn't Be Done

A profiteer bought a wonderful country home and set about making it even more wonderful. One of his suggestions was a fish-pond which should contain eels.

"But you can't keep eels in a pond," objected his neighbor, to whom he had confided his idea. "They have to go down to the sea every year, you know."

"Well, I won't have 'em," gasped the profiteer; "I always takes the missus and kids every year, but I ain't going to take no eels."

Something Like a Fight

Two men were sauntering through the British Museum. In the course of their travels they came to a statue, beautiful but sadly dilapidated.

According to the inscription it represented "Victory," though the visitors thought a better title would have been "Chipped off the Old Block."

"Crumbs!" said Bill. "Look at this 'ere, 'Arry! Ain't 'alf 'ad a time of it, 'e ain't!"

An expression of regret overspread 'Arry's countenance.

"Bill," he murmured, softly, "if that bloke won th' fight, then I'd gie sumfink to see the bloke wot lost!"

Great Vacation for William

Jones was discussing vacation with his wife. "Doc Parsons tells me," he said, "that a separate vacation is the best for married folk. We've been married now for nearly twenty years. Think of what a change it would be for both of us to get away alone—to see nothing but new faces. A change, a thorough change is what we require, Doc Parsons says."

His wife was omniously silent. Presently she said, "Very well, William, I consent, but on one condition—that you make this change really thorough by letting me off on my vacation by myself and you take with you on yours the six children I haven't had out of my eight for ten years."

"Humph!" said Jones and he proceeded to change the subject.—Boston Evening Transcript.

Her Unthrifty Spouse

Broker's Wife—I think it's awfully foolish of you to pay so much for a seat in the stock exchange. Every time I drop in to see you I find you either standing up or walking about.

His Reason

"Why is it that you have never married, Sam?" asked the white woman of the shiftless colored man who did odd jobs for her. "Won't any of the girls have you?"

"Oh, yas-m, they'd have me all right," replied Sam. "But it's this-a-way. When I feels like gettin' married, I ain't got no $2 for a license. And when I has $2 I feels too right to get married."

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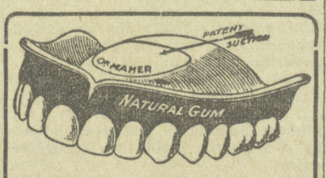
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