

The Daily Journal

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ST. JOHN, N. B., FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 1922

THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSIBILITY

The City Council, yesterday voted, as was inevitable, to sign the Musquash contract as recently amended. And after the majority of the commissioners had spoken against the offer of a fixed price as a ten day ultimatum to the company, they voted, by silent consent, for this proposition as well, but not until the Mayor had given assurance that there was no finality in that offer.

If this attitude means anything, it means that the Council has still some hold on the axioms of business sanity and fair dealing and that in spite of the pressure from selfish and spiteful interests, they will still make an effort to come to a fair agreement with the Power Company before committing the city to a huge investment for an unnecessary second distribution system, and to a war deliberately designed to destroy the value of investments made in the good faith of this city and this province.

This is the course the Journal has persistently advocated. If the city is to go into this Hydro business it should do so on an honorable and prudent business basis, with an eye to its future development as well as to its present difficulties. We have never been able to see why it should be proposed to arbitrate the value of the holdings at Musquash and at the same time practically to confiscate the Power Company's holdings in St. John.

The significant warning issued to the Mayor and Commissioners by the Bond Dealers' Association of Canada confirms the Journal's position and should give pause to those in whose hands the problem lies. If St. John is to grow it needs capital. Experience proves that for most of our new developments this capital must come from outside. And to attract this capital there must be something more than cheap power. There must be some assurance of honorable and fair treatment—treatment far different from that which is angrily urged by the avowed enemies of the New Brunswick Power Company.

As the matter stands the Company has expressed its willingness to sell at a price which the City considers too high. The City proposes to offer a price which the Company considers too low. If this deadlock remains it means the construction by the City of a new system and a long and costly fight. The expense of this policy will be more than the difference between the asked price and the offered price. An arbitration usually results in a figure about midway between the two. Even if the City got the worst of an arbitration, it would still have half the money the fight would cost, and it would not blacklist St. John with investors of capital all over the financial world.

No assembly of business men with minds undistorted by hatred and greed, would hesitate long in settling that problem.

NOT FIRE BUT WATER.

"Mr. Kribs is now under fire" says the evening organ of the interests which are selling the Musquash power site to the Government, which is selling the Musquash power to St. John.

Not so! Mr. Kribs is not under fire; he is under water or will be shortly, we fear, for he is getting into deeper water every day.

Neither he, nor the organs of the interests aforesaid, have yet attempted to explain why within a week after the election of Mr. Fisher, the oft-timed promised rate of 4 cents per K.W.H. has been increased to 5 cents, with no sound guarantee that it will not increase weekly in similar proportion.

They have cautiously avoided reference to previous hydro estimates of construction and operation which the resultant facts multiplied by three. They have delicately dodged any explanation of how the city is going to sell within six months fifty per cent. more juice than the Company has ever been able to sell—as the city must do if Mr. Kribs' figures are not to be proven false. They ignore entirely the queries with regard to the absent-minded omission of depreciation and sinking fund charges from his balance sheet and to his startling assumption that the city can double its hydro business without adding a penny to the cost of operation. When rude questions like these are asked they smugly murmur reproachfully "Mr. Kribs is under fire".

It's not fire; it's water and life lines will shortly be in order.

RHODES SCHOLARS AS IMMIGRATION BOOSTERS.

The Journal publishes a letter this morning from Mr. R. M. Rive, containing a suggestion which is well worth serious thought. Mr. Rive makes the suggestion that the Maritime Provinces engage the nine Rhodes scholars who are sent from the three provinces to Oxford, as boosters for immigration. As he points out many of those who have been engaged in the past to go about the British Isles lecturing on the Maritime Provinces as a home for emigrants, "know as much about the country as a Canadian knows about Mars".

This is all too true and may be one of the vital reasons why so many immigrants merely use the Maritime Provinces as a gateway to the West. There are many advantages which these provinces hold for the average British immigrant—the country here is well settled, the climate, customs and people are more like those of his native land; the natural resources have hardly been tapped; there are great barren spaces which with cultivation and care might well become prosperous farming districts; there is a variety of pursuits which would attract people in many different walks of life; and as Mr. Rive points out an immigrant settling here is not very far away from his home-land.

Publicity, but intelligent, well-organized

publicity, is what is needed most. That is what these provinces have lacked in the past and if the same methods are pursued in the future there is no doubt that they will continue to lack it. Mr. Rive's suggestion opens up an avenue of co-operation in publicity for the common advantage of the three provinces by the sea. These Rhodes scholars are born and reared here. They know this section of Canada. They possess the best brains and physiques which our universities produce. The majority of them after finishing their courses at Oxford come back to the Maritime Provinces to practice their professions, so that they have a stake and an interest in this part of Canada, which no emissary on the other side, who does not belong here, possesses. They have practically six months in the year, during which they could do their missionary work. If they knew what was expected of them they would greatly increase their knowledge of the country during their university courses, and thus, not only those who qualify as Rhodes scholars, but the many who hope to qualify, would be benefited and in turn would benefit these provinces by the increased information they would obtain.

Mr. Rive's suggestion deserves the serious consideration of the Provincial Governments.

DEFICITS IN ONTARIO HYDRO.

An interim report covering its investigation into the Nipigon power project has just been issued by the Gregory Commission which has been appointed by the Ontario Government to investigate the whole Ontario hydro power enterprise. The report deals with the early history of the Hydro Commission, relates some irregularities in its procedures and announces that on this one project, alone, there has been an annual deficit of \$340,000 which is likely in the near future to reach \$750,000 annually. The Commission finds that the Province borrowed the money for the work on behalf of the Power Commission that neither the Power Commission nor the municipality of Port Arthur should have to suffer this deficit but that the province will have to make good the loss.

The report further suggests that the time has arrived when the provincial government must insist that the present standard contract adhered to by the Hydro Commission should not be allowed to bar out responsible customers for power. Dealing with the history of Nipigon the report points out that the original project was to cost \$3,000,000 but that the eventual cost was \$12,000,000.

This excess of actual cost over estimates in public hydro electric developments would appear to be a very prevalent disease. Musquash, for instance, was to have been developed at a cost of \$800,000 according to the estimate of the New Brunswick Electric Power Commission but the eventual cost will be in the vicinity of \$3,000,000. Chippawa was to have been developed for \$10,000,000 according to Sir Adam Beck's estimates but the cost has been \$78,000,000. Yet, St. John is asked to trust the Government and follow the example of Ontario. What kind of a mess will St. John and New Brunswick be in if we attempt to follow the example of Ontario? The sins of the Ontario Hydro Commission are just now being found out. The sins of the New Brunswick Hydro Commission have not yet been disclosed.

The great speed which was advised by the advocates if Musquash in the signing of the contract creates strong suspicion that they feared some of those sins might be discovered before St. John was committed to the course which the city fathers took yesterday afternoon. Probably New Brunswick will not be made aware of the amount of the annual deficit on the local venture for some time to come. Let us hope that the deficit will not be nearly so great as that which Ontario has had to suffer. The question, however, naturally arises as to how that deficit will be met in this province. Will the province, as a whole, bear it or will it be foisted on St. John and Moncton, the two cities which are to "benefit" most from Musquash? We may feel sure that the other parts of the province who are not getting Musquash power will not be very anxious to lift some of the burden from the shoulders of these two cities.

It is not necessary to raise rates in order to meet deficits on hydro, so Mr. Kribs informed the City Council. He admits there is going to be a deficit, now, but all through the election campaign no one heard him speak of a deficit—there never had been a deficit in Ontario—so the public was informed. But, strange to say, a deficit has been discovered in Ontario, and just to think that Mr. Kribs had not heard of it! The Gregory Commission, appointed by the Ontario Government to investigate the activities of the Ontario Hydro Commission has just brought in a report on the Nipigon division, on which they find there has been an annual deficit of \$340,000 which will probably, in the opinion of the commission, reach \$750,000 annually. This seems rather strange after hearing so much about surpluses.

The fact that the State of Maine is proceeding in its electrical development in a manner exactly opposite to that which is being adopted in this province should cause some people to think, for it is often stated that our Southern neighbors are always a jump ahead of us. The municipalities of Maine have been groping in the dark for years, and numerous towns have had enough of municipal control as is evidenced by the fact that Mr. Edward M. Graham, president of the Bangor Railway & Electric Co., has acquired control of many small municipal plants and is proceeding with important developments. Maine has found that private initiative and individual enterprise are the best bets, after all.

The sentiments expressed by Sir R. L. Borden before the McGill University Canadian Club yesterday to the effect that Canada's influence and her service to the world will be infinitely greater if this country remains within the Empire, than if it should become a separate nation, will find a response in the heart of every true Canadian. His reminder that in remaining within the Empire we must accept the responsibility of Empire is a point which some of us at times are apt to forget.

Mayor Fisher wanted the commissioners to sign the Musquash contract yesterday before they had received copies of it. He used to be a rather cautious gentleman but he is actually becoming reckless.

It is interesting to note that three of the four assistant general managers, who have just been appointed by Mr. Neill, general manager of the Royal Bank of Canada, are former Maritime Provinces men. One of them Mr. S. R. Noble, is a New Brunswicker.

THE WISE IKE

(By Berton Braley.)

If ever a bozo was hep to the frills,
You're truly certainly him
I've studied the chickens and I followed their trails,
I've kept the wrongs under my gill,
I've piped 'em at work and I've lamped 'em at play,
I've flirted and danced with 'em, too,
At knowing the ladies I'll modestly say
The birds that outclass me are few.

I've looked 'em all over; the kind you can pet,
And also the kind that you can't,
The baby-faced blond and the stately brunet;
At flappers I've taken a slant,
The rams and the ingenuities, queens and the dolls,
And all other kinds there may be;
If any one's got any dope on the molls,
I reckon that baby is me!

And now that that's settled, I'll slip you the dope
And tell you as much as I know,
For my education is wide in its scope,
I'm jerry, I'm jake and I'm joe;
If anyone knows 'em I ova, that's plain,
I should be some wise little elf,
But though I've endeavored to study each jane,
I don't know no more than yourself!
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Reminiscences of New Brunswick

The Mysterious Stranger Henry More Smith

But to return to our narrative. After the prisoner had made his will, he was for a short time left alone, with the probability that he would shortly be seized by another fit, which he was not expected to survive. About 6 o'clock in the evening, the Rev. Mr. Scovill observed to his family, that he was about the same home of the day at which Smith had had his fit on the day preceding; that he thought he would die suddenly; he would therefore walk over to the Court House, and be there at the time, as it must be unpleasant for Mr. Dibble to be alone. This so much awakened the sensibilities of Mrs. Scovill, that she could not bear the reflection that a child, of parents that were perhaps, respectable, should be so near her, in a strange country, sick and dying, on a bed of straw. She therefore called Amy, her wench. "Here," said she, "take this feather bed, and carry it to the gaol, and tell Mr. Dibble that I have sent it for Smith to die on." Mr. Scovill had been in the house, and seated with Mr. Dibble but, a very short time, when a noise was heard from Smith in the gaol. John Dibble, who constantly attended on him, ran in haste, unlocked the prison door, and found him in a state of a fit, and almost expiring. He made an effort to speak, and begged John to run and heat a brick that was near, and apply it to his feet, to give him one moment's relief while he was dying, for that his feet and legs were already cold and dead to the knees. John, willing to afford what relief he could to the dying man, ran in great haste from the jail through the passage round the stairway that led to the kitchen, where a large fire of coals into which he cast the brick, waited but a few minutes, and returned with the heated brick to the prison; but to his indescribable astonishment, and almost unwilling to believe the evidence of his senses, the dying man had disappeared and could not be found! John ran with the tidings to his father and the Rev. Mr. Scovill, who were sitting in a room which the prisoner must have passed in making his escape. They were entirely incredulous to the report of an affair so unparalleled, and would not yield their belief until they searched every corner of the apartment themselves, and found Smith had not only effected his escape, but had also carried his money, his boots, and ever articles of clothing away with him!

It is impossible to conceive or describe the feelings of astonishment with which every one about the house was filled, when they found that the man who had been groaning, and agonizing under the pain of an accumulation of diseases, which, night after night, seemed to have been wasting his strength, and bringing him nearer to the close of his unhappy life—had, in a moment, and the very moment which was thought to be his last, seized the opportunity of his prison door being open, and rushed from his confinement leaving not a vestige of his movements behind him. As soon as a search through the prison confirmed the fact of the elopement, the inmates hastened outside, and continued their search around the premises. At this moment, Amy, the wench, made her appearance, carrying the feather bed; and seeing the people around the house, she said to them: "Misses send this bed for Smith to die on." Her master told her to take it home, and tell her mistress that Smith was gone. Amy ran home and told her mistress that massa say Smit dead and gone—he no want im bed! "Ah!" exclaimed her mistress, "poor man, he is dead! Then, Amy you may run and carry this shirt and winding-sheet, they Smit out in." Amy instantly obeyed, and told her master accordingly. "You may take them back," said the Smith is gone!" "Where he gone, massa?" "I don't know, said he, 'except the devil has taken him off!' Amy hastened back to her mistress and told her that "massa say Smit be dead and gone, and the devil has taken him away!" So much was the mind of every one prepared to hear of his death, that the expression, Smith is gone served to convey no other idea. The Sheriff himself who had not been present, and did not hear of the affair immediately, gave the sentence the same interpretation. A messenger having been dispatched to him with the tidings met him on his way to the jail, expecting to witness the last moments of the patient. On being informed by the messenger that "Smith was gone," "Ah! poor fellow," he exclaimed, "I expected it. What time did he die?" "But he is gone clear off!" "It is impossible," rejoined the Sheriff, "that he can be far from his sick bed." "Why," replied the messenger, "they were all about the jail looking for him and no one could tell which way he had gone." "Unparalleled and abominable deception!" replied the Sheriff. "How did he get out of jail?" He believed John Dibble left the door open while he ran to heat a brick, and then Smith made his escape.

This was to us the first development of the true character of Henry More Smith, and thus by means of a counterfeit illness, which meted the

feelings and drew the sympathies of the whole neighborhood; which baffled every power of detection and imposed even upon the physician himself, did this accomplished villain effect his release, and was now again running at large glorying in the issue of his scheme. But before we pursue his history in his succeeding adventures, it may be necessary for those who are unacquainted with the local situation of the gaol from which he escaped, to give a short description of it. Kingston is situated on a neck or tongue of land formed by the River St. John and Bellefleur Bay, running northeast and southwest on the western side of the neck, and by the Kennebecasis running the same course on the western side, leaving a tract of land between the two rivers about five miles in breadth and thirty miles in length.

(To be continued.)

THE LAUGH LINE



A Shameful Place
Welfare Worker—This makes the third time you have been here. Aren't you ashamed for your friends to see you?
Prisoner—Sure, I'm ashamed. The cell is damp as a cellar, the water stale and food bad. But what can I do about it?



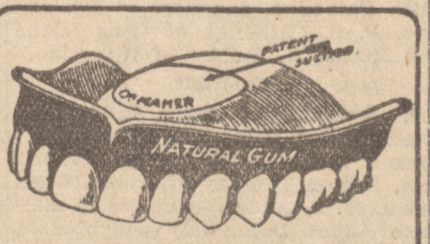
No Trouble at All
Waiter—I feel hardly justified in taking you from your father's roof, dearest.
Dolly—Oh, that's all right. I don't live on the roof.

Fully Prepared
He—"My dear, it's no use for you to look at those hates, I haven't more than a dollar in my pocket."
She—"You might have known when we came out that I'd want to buy a few things."
He—"I did."—Boston Transcript.

A THOUGHT

Hast thou heard the secret of God?
God? And dost thou restrain wisdom to thyself?—Job 15:8.
Secrecy has many advantages, for when you tell a man at once and straight-forwardly the purpose of any object, he fancies there is nothing in it.—Goethe.

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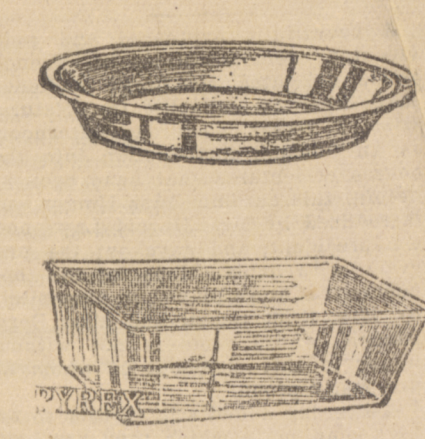


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