

The Charlottetown Guardian

Head Office at Charlottetown, Branch Offices at Summerside, Alberton, Souris and Montserrat.

Saturday Weekly (founded 1887) \$1.00 per annum by mail in Canada or U.S.A.

Morning Daily (founded 1891), \$3.50 per year. (Delivered) in advance; \$2.50 per year (mailed) in advance.

Evening Daily (founded 1907) \$1.50, (delivered or by mail) in Canada, and \$2.00 for U.S.A.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 18, 1916.

CANADA IN THE REAR

A glance at the record will show that Sir Wilfrid Laurier has been most unsympathetic in respect of Imperial defence. Six years after he attained power, he attended the Imperial (then termed Colonial) Conference in London in 1902. Before leaving for Great Britain he made the statement in Parliament on May 12th, 1902, (Hansard, Vol. 11, p. 4726):—

"That is to say, while we are prepared to discuss this question of Imperial Defence, neither my colleagues nor myself believe that any useful purpose can be served by such discussion. It is no use whatever, at this stage of the proceeding, on the floor of this Canadian Parliament, to try to deceive ourselves as to what is intended by this subject of Imperial Defence. If it is intended simply to discuss what part Canada is prepared to take in her own defence, what share of the burden must fall upon us as being responsible for the safety of the land in which we were born and to which we owe allegiance, in which all our hopes and affections are centered, certainly we are always prepared to discuss that subject. But there is a school abroad, there is a school in England and in Canada, a school which is perhaps represented on the floor of this parliament, which wants to bring Canada into the vortex of militarism which is now the curse and the blight of Europe."

On March 29th, 1909, he declared in the House of Commons (Hansard Report, page 3508,) as follows:—

"We see no reason in anything that has taken place recently to depart from the policy laid down in 1902."

Therefore, at this Imperial Conference held in London and composed of representatives of the United Kingdom and of all self-governing Dominions, Sir Wilfrid Laurier would not permit Canada to be connected with any scheme of Naval Defence.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier had been in office six years when the Imperial Conference of 1902 was held. At that time other Dominions and Colonies had been for years making some acknowledgment to the Empire for naval defence.

Australia was paying \$530,000 a year, and had a small fleet of gun boats and torpedo boats.

New Zealand was paying \$100,000 a year.

Cape Colony was paying \$150,000 a year.

Natal was paying \$60,000 a year.

Laurier represented Canada at this Imperial Conference. Other Dominions were anxious that something more should be done. Australia raised her contribution from \$530,000 to \$1,000,000 a year, New Zealand doubled her contribution. Cape Colony raised hers from \$150,000 to \$250,000; Natal from \$60,000 to \$175,000. Even Newfoundland which had been paying a little, promised a larger annual contribution.

Canada had done nothing and would promise nothing, but her representatives suggested that she might establish a Naval Reserve. If this could be construed as a promise it was never fulfilled by Laurier.

RECRUITING

In practically all the letters received from members of the 105th Battalion, reference is made with justifiable pride to the fact that the Battalion is to me maintained as a unit and not broken up into reinforcements as was the case in our other units. Naturally the boys are proud of this, and proud also of the splendid name they have made for themselves both at Valcartier and since going to England. A gentleman who visited England recently and who is in a position to know, writing to a friend in this city spoke most enthusiastically of the battalion. We quote the following:—

"The 105th is without doubt one of the finest battalions that ever left Canada. I am saying this after close personal observation and contact with other units. They broke the musketry records at Valcartier; they were the best drilled and trained unit at Valcartier; they were specially mentioned by Sir Sam Hughes on a review here when he addressed the officers of all the units, among them crack city battalions. Then again the Staff Officers at Hythe Musketry school state that they have never had such a well trained and disciplined unit on their ranges. On the ranges they were shooting over they broke all records. Their physical record is one to be proud of. They came into camp without one case of disease contracted through a person's own conduct, a circumstance the Brigade M. O., informed me was unheard of before, and the behaviour of the men in and out of camp is excellent. Then again the great majority of the men are from the country districts and are to a large extent imbued with the spirit of religion which in itself is a very great moral factor in the well being of the battalion. While no doubt a certain amount of credit redounds to the officers, the principle reason for their success is the fact that the men realize what the war is, what they are fighting for, and they are anxious to prepare for it and anxious and keen to absorb the instruction they receive to fit them for the thing which is coming sooner or later when they will participate in the big driving movement at present going so well."

This is certainly a record that every Islander with red blood in his veins should be proud of, a record that every Islander of military age and fitness should be ready to share. Recruits are now being called for to maintain the strength of this Battalion and also for the Siege Battery. It is hoped that the response will be such as shall be a credit to the province and an encouragement to the splendid units that are now doing their bit on the battlefields or are on their way there.

AS TO AUTOMOBILES

Now that the automobile trials are over and the matter of "military service" has been discussed by the public and in the courts, it would be well to arrive at a working and workable basis. It is clearly not the intention of the law to permit any military officer at his own sweet will to take a car any day in the week and tour roads not open to the automobile. Neither is it the intention of the law nor the will of the people that automobiles should not be permitted to travel anywhere and at any time when real military necessity demands it. What is needed, and what should be provided for at once, is that when a car goes out on military service, bearing a "military service" placard, the people should know that it has been duly authorized by some person or persons legally entrusted with the responsibility of granting such authorization. A "military service" placard should have the same legal standing as a license, carrying with it the same rights and the same responsibilities. The trouble at present is that there is no authority either civil or military, to order a car out on military service, and owners of such cars going on such service have done so at their own risk, knowing that it was in violation of the law as it stands, but trusting to the patriotic forbearance of the people and their willingness to help the military authorities in every possible way. As a result misunderstandings and lawsuits have arisen and expenses have been incurred at a time when better use could have been made of the money.

The trouble can be easily remedied. We have responsible military officers among us who are at all times in a position to know whether real necessity exists for sending a car out into the country. The people throughout the province are quite prepared to take the word of any one of these officers as to whether or not the "military service" placard is justifiable. What is needed now is to have one or more officers designated to this duty, and to let the public know who they are. The public would then know that the "military service" placard on a car meant just what it said, there would be no need of appealing to the courts, and car owners would be less fearful of giving their assistance when required.

And while on the subject of automobiles it is as well to say right here that the friends of the much-maligned machine, if they expect to enlarge its circle of friends, must keep a tighter rein on chauffeurs. There are men driving autos who cannot control themselves and consequently should not be expected to control their cars. There are others who are reckless and consider it smart to break the speed limit. There is only one cure for these, that is suspend their license, and, for continued offences, cancel them. It is for the Automobile Association to apply the remedy.

CANDID FRIEND'S PLAIN SPEECH

Justly or unjustly, the United States today occupies no exalted place in the estimation of European nations. Those of its people who seem unable to see this would hardly be impressed by an elaboration of detail. It is a fact palpable, at all events, to the average observer. Many of the causes contributing to the mistrust of American motives and acts now so prevalent abroad are doubtless founded largely on misapprehension and suspicion, and, were the time propitious, might be satisfactorily explained away. The nations that entertain misgivings respecting the sincerity of United States democracy to say nothing of the United States friendship, are engaged in a struggle for their very existence, and will hardly stop now to listen to explanations where they believe no explanations should have been necessary. The nations that entertain misgivings of United States neutrality, to say nothing of sympathy, are too much occupied with nearer and more pressing problems to ask for a reckoning. The nations at war apparently must for the present, content themselves with silent contemplations of the attitude toward them of the one great nation of the world in the enjoyment of peace.

Unquestionably, the point of view has a great deal to do with the forming abroad, of impressions unfavorable to the United States. The very fact that the latter studiously, and not always with a nice regard for its own dignity, holds aloof from a struggle in which are involved questions of quite as deep concern to its own institutions, and to its own people, as to those of the nations in the thick of the conflict, is of itself sufficient to raise doubt. That it should have repeatedly allowed what seemed to be considerations of commercial advantage to influence its policy when the welfare of humanity was at issue, has been sufficient to strengthen these doubts.

There remains, even here, the possibility, as well as the hope, that all this may be cleared away with the passing of the war clouds, provided that a course is not followed, from this time on, which shall serve to confirm and to justify every suspicion entertained or expressed by the sister nations, in the time of their deepest distress and greatest need.—Christian Science

Men Wanted

Sir.—I am enclosing some clippings that may be of interest to your readers. I arrived in "Blighty" a few days ago from the Trenches, suffering from Dysentery and trench fever, but I am much better now and expect to re-join my Unit shortly. I hope the 105th Batt. go to France as a unit. It seems a pity that the P. E. I. boys are split up between the different Battalions and not getting any credit for their work. However, we are all fighting for the same cause and Victory is assured now, but every available man will be needed.

J. N. McEACHERN, LIEUT.,
23rd How. Bty, 5th Bde. C.F.A.
No. 2 Eastern General Hospital.

THE POTATO CROP

Sir.—I trust you will permit me to offer a few criticisms of a recent editorial of yours on "The Potato Crop," even though being a farmer I cannot be expected to know as much as a journalist, lawyer or politician.

First, then, the statement that the loss from rot will exceed \$1,000,000 is simply absurd. The actual loss will not be more than one-fifth of that amount. Too much, I grant you, if preventable, but not such as any but a confirmed pessimist need "view with alarm." Secondly, much of this rot is due, not to blight, but to the harvesting of potatoes while very green and soft, making them easily bruised in handling. This bruising, combined with abnormally hot weather, causes decay to set in. Thirdly, the reason we are getting only 48 to 50 cents per bushel, against the New Brunswick farmer's 80 to 85 cents, is not because we have not the "right varieties, but because this is the first time in at least 20 years that a good crop and a good price have come together, and 45 cents is more than we have ever received, except last fall, when we had only one-third of a crop.

Thus farmers are rushing their potatoes to market to save the labor of storing and repicking them, and dealers, when they can get all they can handle for 40 to 45 cents will certainly not pay more. In proof of this, if you will look up the market reports of this time last year, you will find that prices in St. John, Montreal and Toronto were not higher than now, and our Island potatoes were then bringing 65 cents, simply because they were a very light crop, and our farmers were unwilling to sell. Besides, if the white varieties are worth 40 cents per bushel more than red or blue, why are our dealers only paying 5 cents more per bushel for them?

Another reason than their susceptibility to rot prevents us from growing the white varieties, namely, their lower feeding value as compared with "McIntyres." I am not aware that any chemical analysis has been made to determine the relative food value of different varieties of potatoes, as has been done with turnips and mangels, but the consensus of opinion of observant farmers is that the white varieties are inferior to "McIntyres."

Now, since a farmer five miles from the railroad cannot afford to sell potatoes for less than 25 cents, they being worth that for feed, and since they were worth only 20 cents in the fall of 1912, 25 cents in 1913, nothing at all in 1914, and as low as the spring of 1915, the potatoes were the only kind saleable at any price, surely it is not strange that Island farmers plant only a small acreage of white potatoes.

In another editorial in your issue of October 13th, you ascribe the improvement in the quality of our pork to the packers. This is quite untrue, being definite and specific. Now, this is only true as regards weight, no attention being paid to type or finish, the effect being to induce the rushing to market of the "unfinished" or thin hogs, which the packers do NOT want.

I am, sir, etc., JAMES HUTT,
Glengarry, Lot 7, P.E.I.

Appeal to the Patriot

Sir.—In looking through a few Prince Edward Island papers, recently sent to one of the boys here, one article, an editorial in the Patriot, particularly drew my attention.

This editorial, with a flagrant headline, entitled "Sir Sam Hughes" says:

DAILY SELECTIONS FOR GUARDIAN READERS

Furnished by W. S. Louson.

THINGS GIVEN US.

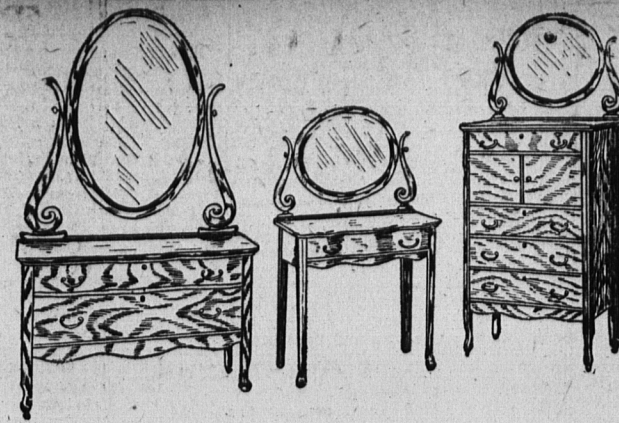
I give to you the long, long thoughts of youth and the memories of the years—the hope of the dawning life, the dream of the days to be, and the looking-back. I give you the yearning and the craving that make life sweet. I give you the time of waiting and the time of fulfillment. I give you the spirit that good fortune does not mar nor ill fortune break.

I give you the calm that looks out upon the world and will not be disturbed. I give you the heart that does not quail; I give you the courage that does not flinch; I give you the faith that will not fall in the Valley of the Shadow of Death. I give you the power to believe in the everlasting spirit of the world.

I give you the love of true things, the love of pure things, and the companionship of sweet liberty everywhere. I give you the scorn of all ignoble things, the hate of all things evil and unlovely, and the strength to march breast-forward against them until they are destroyed.

I give you the promise that they shall be destroyed, that the face of the earth shall be fair, that the mind of man shall be free, that all that came from God shall yet return to Him, that little children yet shall see the Dawn that no man knows.

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"The impression largely prevails that Sir Sam's visit to Europe is a preliminary to the government riddling themselves of him. It is freely reported that his resignation is in Sir Robert Borden's hands, and that he is to be eased down by being appointed to a command at the front. This would be worse than continuing him as Minister."

Following this is a recommendation to read a lying and obnoxious editorial, reproduced, for the "enlightenment" of the Island public, from the Toronto Globe.

If the editor of the Patriot saw the expression of disgust that I saw on the faces of some of its readers on perusal of this article, I fancy he would have thought twice before putting it in print.

I do not know what the Minister of Militia did to the Toronto Globe (or the Patriot) either for that matter, but I do know that such contemptible journalism, at a crisis like the present, should not only not be permitted, but the authors of it should be severely punished. Is it not sufficient that our brave Canadian boys are not receiving the support from their comrades at home that they should receive, without trying to sow discontent among them by belittling their leaders before the whole world? Has the editor of the Patriot or Toronto Globe, I wonder, ever stopped to think what it would mean to the boys in England and France, as well as those training in Canada, were they to accept as the truth such damnable lies as these two newspapers have tried to force upon them?

Daily I see boys from our own beloved province convalescing near here, with shattered nerves, maimed, and suffering from divers afflictions, the result of many strenuous weeks and months spent in the firing line. They read these articles, and what do they say? I would not like to put on paper for the public eye, what I have heard some of them say, for be it known that Sir Sam Hughes is the idol of P. E. Islanders, as well as all the Canadian boys here, and they all know, too, that the man who raised and trained an army of nearly 400,000 men, the best in the world, from absolutely raw material, is no fool and well able to administer or command.

The article says that if they put General Hughes in command of troops at the front, it would be worse than leaving him Minister of Militia. Well, to this I would answer, the man, unlike those who criticize him most, who led troops gallantly over more than one battlefield, ought surely be able to lead them there again. God knows there is difficulty enough in getting recruits in Canada as it is, without trying to deceive the would-be recruit into believing that our leaders are doddards, and the Minister of Militia a fool.

I would like to have had some of these gentlemen on parade the other day when the General came out to inspect the 20,000 Canadian troops of

the Shorncliffe command. The tremendous cheering of 20,000 lusty Canadian voices might make them think that some method other than the writing of editorials in two Canadian newspapers would have to be resorted to, to remove Sir Sam Hughes from the position of trust which I have reason to believe he has filled faithfully and well for some years past.

Why not, dear Editor of the Patriot, forget our little feuds, forgive one or two little mistakes, and unite in urging our boys to not forget their patriotism, their loyalty, their manhood, but rather to get up and get into the game before it is too late? Why not, I say, do this, rather than write some foolish article with a high sounding title and gurgling finish, believed by few, ridiculed by many, and accepted by those only whose wish it

is to hide behind something vastly smaller than themselves. Better, sir, a thousand times better, to leave your editorial space a blank than to put in it anything that would prevent our man from joining the colors or increase by one minute the time of separation between some boy and his mother, some youth and his sweetheart, or some man and his wife.

I have not written this to knock any faction, newspaper or power, but rather to justify in the public eye, a man of whom every true Canadian is and should be justly proud, and whose vast achievements should be the glory of every true citizen. Thanking you for your valuable space. I am, sir, etc.,

ULRIC GATHORNE DAWSON,
Shorncliffe, Kent, England.

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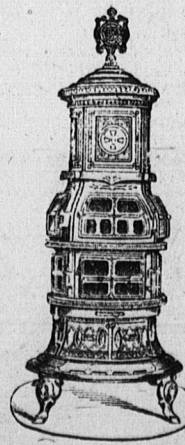
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