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THE MORNING GUARDIAN

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 1902.

POST OFFICE FINANCES.

The Conservative newspapers point out, properly enough, that the Post Office service in Canada is not yet self-sustaining, and that there was a deficit of some \$82,376 on the entire business of last year. This is made apparent if the Yukon mail service is taken into account, as it is the Postmaster General's report. The mail service of the Yukon and Athin districts yielded a revenue of only \$30,259, while the expenditure there was \$117,774. The deficit on this portion of the service was therefore \$87,486. If we deduct from the surplus of something over \$5,000 earned by the postal service in the older portions of the Dominion, we have still a deficit of some \$82,000. But Sir William Mulock did not conceal this fact in his recent speech before the Mulock Club in Toronto, as has been charged. On the contrary he pointed out that in the comparative statement he was presenting he had omitted the Yukon and Athin service, because it was not in existence in 1896.

But admitting that the deficit is \$82,000 we have still a most extraordinarily favorable showing. In 1896 the postal rate for letters in Canada was three cents; on letters to the United States the rate was also three cents and on letters to Great Britain five cents. At that time there was no Canadian mail service to the Yukon, and yet the postal deficit for the year was \$781,000, Hon. George E. Foster in his budget speech of that year—his latest budget—then pointed out how impossible it would be to reduce the letter rate. He said:

"There is now a deficit of somewhere near \$800,000 between the total receipts and total expenditures of our Post Office service; and this, I fear, makes the time somewhat distant when what otherwise might be fairly asked for can be granted—that is, a reduction upon the rates of postage in this country. Considering the large extent of country, the sparseness of the population and the great expenses necessarily imposed for carrying letters and papers in our Northwest, and in other parts of the country, there is no doubt that the carriage of letters, newspapers and parcels in this country is cheaper, for the population, than you would probably find in any other country."

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In the world."

These views prevailed and were accepted by Parliament and the country. But Mr. Mulock had other views, and he succeeded in giving effect to them. The result is that we now have a two cent letter rate instead of a three cent rate in Canada, and on letters going to the United States and a two cent rate to Great Britain where we had a five cent rate before; we have also at large cost and considerable present loss an all-Canadian postal service to the distant Yukon district. And yet with all these advantages and improvements the postal deficit of the country has been brought down from \$781,000 to \$82,000, a saving of almost \$700,000 a year in one department of the public service. It is true that some postage has been reimposed on newspapers, but this is not felt by newspaper readers, being in every case, so far as we know, paid by the publishers. In any case there are other and incidental postal improvements, increased number of post and money order offices and post office saving banks, increased mileage of mail routes and increased frequency of service which of themselves sufficiently compensate the country for this slight additional charge on printed matter.

The improvement in our postal finances is in fact most remarkable in view of letter rates generally lowered by one third, and a British letter rate decreased by three fifths. It is most creditable to Sir William Mulock and to the Government of which he is a prominent member. If like savings, coupled with like improvements could be effected in all other departments of the public service it would amount to a revolution, establishing a new and much brighter era in Canadian administrative affairs.

The New York Sun, always anti-British and strongly pro-Boer during the recent war, now feels compelled to take a somewhat favorable view of Mr. Chamberlain's visit to Cape Colony. It commends the Colonial Secretary's statement that he hopes to learn more in three days of consultation with the Boer leaders than he could learn in a month's study of the blue books at home. It thinks his visit well timed, just after the Boer generals have returned from a tour of continental Europe where they found lots of sympathy but no contributions, and learned that "their best friend is the enemy." It adds:

"When the Colonial Secretary lands at Cape Town he will find that the dream of a Dutch federation has been dispipated. The Bond abandoned its propaganda when the republics passed under British rule, although there are fanatics who still hope against hope. The Transvaal and the Orange Free State were rallying ground for the Afrikaners—a Mecca, somebody has said. As long as a Dutch flag waved over Bloemfontein and Pretoria, and as long as a revenue could be drawn from the Rand to provide the sinews of war, the star of the Bond was in the ascendant. But the revenue has been cut off, and the flags are but memories. Nothing but miracle can fan the spark of racial pride into a blaze, and only oppression can make it a conflagration. If Mr. Chamberlain has any influence with his countrymen there will be neither."

The Patriot's story of the Jew and the pork seam's to fit that organ's own case pretty accurately. All was sunshine when the Patriot announced that we were about to be made rich by the Government guaranteeing certain bonds. But a thunder storm and Blizzard were nothing to the storm that broke shortly after. An indignant people, and the desertion of its cause by Premier Peters at the Marshfield meeting almost struck the pork organ dumb with astonishment. Bristling with anger it yet does not dare to equal against the Premier, and can only grant to express its disgruntled condition. Tears by the hoghead are doubtless shed in secret by the editor, who "could a tale unfold," but dares not. He must stifle his emotions. Other promoters may have their fingers greased, but the Patriot will get nothing unless the deal



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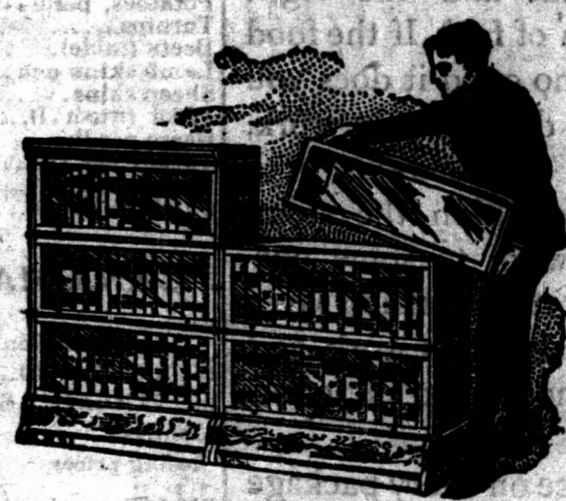
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