

THE CHARLOTTE TOWN GUARDIAN

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The Strongest Memory is Weaker Than the Weakest Ink.

The Prohibition Bill

The surprising thing about the abortive effort made to amend the Prohibition Act in the Legislature last week is not that it failed ignominiously, but that it should ever have been attempted in such an irregular and unconstitutional manner.

Surely, it is the first principle of responsible government that the Government is responsible for raising the revenues of the Province. Here was a bill, purporting to affect both government policy and revenue, brought in by a private member.

The bill, of course, should have been brought in by a responsible member of the Government, preferably by the Premier or the Attorney General in view of the administration of the Prohibition Act is vested in him.

Both these essential requirements were ignored. It is not surprising therefore that Hon. Mr. Wright's motion to give the bill the "six months' notice" to kill it, in effect—should have been carried by a substantial majority. No other course was open to members who had any conception of the implications involved.

Premier vs. Patriot

Premier Jones is apparently too outspoken for the local Liberal press, which takes the following characteristic methods of dealing with him:

Speaking in the Budget debate, March 8, on the car ferry situation, the Premier said: "One hesitates to speak about the difficulties today because they are so extremely serious. If the public knew all about it, I think they would be shocked and alarmed. A few of them might even move to the mainland. Conditions have been very bad, so much so that there has been a hush-hush policy this winter."

Patriot editorial comment, March 18: "The only serious situation at Borden, after all, is the ice, and for anyone to say people were leaving not to come back because of the situation is ridiculous and affords bad publicity."

In the Legislature on March 17: Mr. Heath Strong: "I see by the paper this morning that they have refused to take freight on the car ferry. Is that correct?"

Premier Jones: "Yes." Mr. Strong: "What is the reason?"

Premier Jones: "I have no immediate information regarding the state of affairs on the ferry, but I know it is very serious. Also they have refused to sell through tickets from Montreal to Charlottetown."

Mr. Strong: "That means they can't travel here at all." Premier Jones: "They can't get a through ticket."

Patriot comment thereon, March 18: "The statement made yesterday that the Canadian National is refusing through tickets from Montreal to Charlottetown is incorrect and just propaganda."

Premier Jones in Draft Address Debate, Feb. 17: "I venture to say that it is highly probable that the next session of this Legislature will be a post-war session."

Patriot, March 18: "The 'victory now' people are vocal and voluble. They manage to get a lot of publicity for their heedless talk, and it is no wonder that this angers the men who have the evidence right under their eyes of the tremendous military task still before us. Those men who cannot make a worthwhile contribution through a sane appraisal of all the considerations should at least have the grace, for the sake of morale, to keep silent."

Worst crack of all—Patriot, March 18: "He (Mr. Kickham) has shown on different occasions in the House that he is not afraid to champion a cause in which he believed. He registered strong opposition to Daylight Saving on the ground that it is not suitable to the rural areas. . . . He is very much like Premier Jones in this respect."

(Mr. Kickham, when a motion urging discontinuance of Daylight Saving Time was put before the House, got up and voted against it.)

Credit Where Due

Congratulations are due to Premier Jones for the manner in which he passed his initial test as leader of the Legislature. During a session of unusual length, and confronted by the ablest Opposition the Province has had for many long years, the Premier emerged very creditably indeed. His attitude for the most part was one of complete indifference to partisan politics. He was obviously concerned with matters of real importance, and his sincerity won the commendation of both sides of the House.

True, his ideas, as the Opposition pointed out, were somewhat hazy—many of them were pretty far removed from the realm of practical affairs. But sincerity goes a long way, and there will be every disposition, on the part of the country as there was in the Legislature, to give him every chance of making good with regard to his platform.

The strength of the Opposition was particularly noticeable in the lengthy discussions in committee over the Estimates. Hour after hour, they probed departmental expenditures, bringing out much information which otherwise would never be divulged. They obtained the assurance from the Government that more adequate information would be forthcoming at the next session, and that a better accounting method would be employed with regard to officials' salaries and other matters. They also obtained government assurance that there would be a greater effort to implement the intention of the House with regard to expenditures on extramural treatment of tuberculosis.

EDITORIAL NOTES

As long as Canada has a Navy destroyers will be needed and it will be desirable to build them in Canada. Navy Minister Macdonald told the House of Commons, Halifax had been chosen as the best place for the construction of the destroyers now being built there. The cost had been criticized as it was higher than in Britain, partly due to higher Canadian wage scales but might not be so high on subsequent ships.

Mar-hal Ferdinand Foch, French soldier, died this date 1929, in the great Somme offensive of 1916, the French armies co-operated successfully under his direction with Sir John French; finally in the darkest days of 1918, when unity of command was agreed upon, he was appointed in March generalissimo of the Allied armies in France and Flanders; the turning point came in the middle of July at the second battle of the Marne, and thereafter with consummate ability he demoralized the enemy, forced them to seek an armistice.

"Long before America entered the war I tried hard to get (Prime Minister Eamon) De Valera to abandon neutrality and join in," says George Bernard Shaw. "I told him he wouldn't get away with it. He didn't think he would either, but described my suggestion as 'contemptible.' He said he would fight anybody who invaded Ireland. He said if Germany tried it, England would be forced to protect Ireland. But De Valera did get away with it," he said. "He saved Ireland's neutrality and gave Ireland an opportunity—which is now presented of making an unusual magnanimous gesture."

Official quarters at Ottawa say that Canada's basic gasoline ration will remain unchanged at 120 gallons for an "AA" ration holder despite a reduction in the basic ration in the midwest and far west of the United States. Munitions Minister Howe in a statement on gasoline and oil in the House of Commons last month declared that rationing will remain on the same basis as last year, and spokesmen confirm that it was expected to continue unchanged. The office of Oil Controller Mr. G. R. Cottrell announces new regulations to be introduced this week will make it compulsory for dealers to treat gasoline ration coupons like cash and deposit them in banks. Howe expressed that this measure would help to end "black market" activities.

Neville Chamberlain, British statesman, born Saturday's date 1869; interested in Birmingham civic politics until 1918 when he became M.P. for Ladywood Division of that city, he made rapid progress in politics, and ultimately reached the Premiership at a most critical period in the history of the Empire; he endeavoured to obtain time to offset Hitler's war aggression on the continent, and further preparations and threats, by flying to Munich and personally beseeching the Fuhrer to desist; a vital year's delay was thus obtained but Hitler waited no longer, and proceeded with his warfare on Europe, and ultimately on the world governed by democracies; Chamberlain's health broke down under the strain, he resigned and made room for Rt. Hon. Winston Churchill, who saved Christian civilization, at least for the time being, with the prospect of its being fully restored ultimately in practice as well as name.

Mr. Lewis W. Douglas, former principal of McGill University, has resigned as deputy administrator of the U. S. War Shipping Administration effective about April 1. While no reasons were given officially for the resignation, Mr. Douglas has told friends that he has developed a chronic sinus condition which will require surgical treatment unless he relinquishes his duties and gets plenty of rest. Mr. Douglas will continue until about July 1 as Admiral Emory S. Land's deputy on the Combined Shipping Adjustment Board, and as chairman of its employment and policy committee. Mr. Douglas had a career in business and higher education from the time early in the present administration when he broke with the President over fiscal policies and resigned as director of the budget, and May 1912, when he again became a part of the administration in the War Shipping Administration. His work has been primarily concerned with ship utilization, which until recently was one of the most critical problems in the conduct of the war. In private business Douglas is President of the Mutual Life Insurance company and he did not relinquish that office when he joined the War Shipping Administration. He will continue to function in that capacity to the degree that his health will permit.

PUBLIC FORUM

This column is open for the discussion by correspondents of questions of general interest to the readers of the Charlotte Town Guardian. The opinions of correspondents are not necessarily those of the editor.

THE CAR FERRY

Sir—In the Guardian of March 14 Captain John McGuire, of the ferry, Prince Edward Island, is reported as denying a rumor to the effect that the ferry was leaking badly as a result of damage to her bottom from a rock at one of the piers earlier this winter. This denial is ambiguous. Exactly what did Capt. McGuire deny? Did he deny that the ferry was leaking, or did he merely deny that the cause was a rumored rock? What the people of Prince Edward Island want to know is: Is the ferry leaking badly? If so, what caused the leak? If she is not leaking why are hundreds of freight cars waiting on each side?

ONE INTERESTED.

THE TUNNEL OR?

Sir—The letter signed "Traveler" which appeared in Public Forum on March 13th was refreshingly practical. It is a tunnel or causeway, or both, or neither, or something else, that is the important point. Firstly, engineering projects of this magnitude are almost always attended by unforeseen difficulties. And although engineers may give assurance that it is really practicable or an estimate of the time required to construct either a tunnel or a causeway? Again, they refer frequently and plausibly to the advantages of a connection with the mainland. It would be in regard to the tourist trade that they with a mention the fact that one of "The Island's" greatest attractions to the tourist is the crowded city, the quiet and peaceful tempo of life here. If we were no longer an island but were attached to the mainland we would lose our charm, our insularity and with it much of our attractiveness as a resort.

I am, Sir, etc.

WHOB.

WHAT A CAUSEWAY MEANS

Sir—In the past two weeks we have had a good deal of talk about causeways and from what quarters, even a suggestion of a tunnel under the Northumberland Strait. One wonders what the causeway and even our M.L.A.'s speak so glibly of a causeway connecting the Island to the mainland, whether any trouble to do a little figuring in the matter, or do they just dream. Recently I talked with a man who lives near the Strait and who has fished his waters every year for the last 25 years. He says there are two miles at or near the centre, where the water is 66 feet in depth, adjoining this on either side there are three miles in depth. This would make eight miles—we will leave the other end of the causeway for the present. Let it be understood that I do not possess technical knowledge of this matter—yet there are certain facts evident, even to the lay mind, in this, in most other problems.

Firstly, the two miles at the centre where the crossing is 66 feet in depth. For safe navigation in a storm, the water would at least have to be 25 feet above low water mark. This means that the structure would be 91 feet of vertical height. Such a height would require a base of 300 feet. By simple arithmetic, the two centre miles would have a cubic capacity of 7,118,202 cubic yards.

The water being of less depth in the other six miles would not require so wide a base—say 214 feet. Now, allowing a top width of 110 feet which is not an over estimate of the requirement, the water here would be 11,838,880 cubic yards. For the last mile of the half-mile on either side where water is shallow and the water here would be 1,500 cubic yards. This gives us a total of 20,515,882 cubic yards. From this total, we take the five million water space. We still have 15,515,882 cubic yards to fill with rock.

I presume there is this amount of granite in Westmorland County, N.B. It is a long distance away. Suppose we have fifty, say, one hundred tons capacity to move the rock. They can make one trip daily—after many millions have been spent on wharves, railroads, lifts etc. etc. to load the stone—and afford docks.

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Lenten Meditations

from The London Times

THE GOOD SAMARITAN

The traveller who fell among thieves on the road from Jerusalem to Jericho and suffered in pain as well as in pocket owed his chance of recovery to an act of charity from a quarter where it was little to be expected. The words "but a certain Samaritan" must have come as a great surprise to our Lord's hearers, not least to the lawyer whose question "Who is my neighbour?" gave rise to the parable.

It is curious to realize that one of the apparent intentions of those who plan for the future is to make Good Samaritans superfluous. Certainly the results of well-arranged schemes for the relief of various forms of distress would be that the kind of character that is associated with this warm-hearted man was no longer required. Planning of what already exists and has greatly increased within living memory. Whatever dangers attend upon it, there intrudes in it one indisputable merit, the treatment of single members may be allowed to suffer unattended.

The background of legislation and organization which are directed towards the welfare of the community need help that is beyond their own resources, and would otherwise be supplied only if others were moved to give it, it is the development of a social conscience. The Christian who marks his progress and tries to make his own contribution to it will see in it the true expression in the life of the New Testament of what the body and its members are.

That being so it may be said that the Good Samaritan lives on wherever there is the effective resolve to preserve or to recover from calamity those who, in its absence, would be the victims of circumstances too strong for them. A grave injustice is done when the work of Government and municipal departments, which comes to view in white papers or blue-prints is estimated without any thought of its moral quality, what it has meant in the expenditure of honest and careful thought and the many routes of study and research. But the Christian would make a great mistake if he supposed that the presence of the spirit of the Good Samaritan in the public service dispensed with the need for the presence of his own heart.

There is and always will be many a touch, for the personal and the ministry of help or service which can be rendered only as one man for another in some way. He has heard when he said "man as near to death." It all depends on me.

for fifteen of our fifty years the year does "Traveler" think he might cross on the causeway?—Simply eighteen to twenty working seven days weekly. Let me say that I would very much like to see our fair island looked to in a manner—be it in the least.

I am of the opinion that when Ottawa is broached on the matter, the engineers have had their offer for the whole island, stock and barrel as a bird's nest, where I understand, there are no ice barriers.

I am, Sir, etc.

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