

THE CHARLOTTETOWN GUARDIAN

TUESDAY, JANUARY 20, 1920.

SACKVILLE-TORMENTINE LINK.

Since writing on this subject we have received a letter from Mr. Brown, Superintendent of the Eastern Division of the Canadian National Railways, enclosing a record of the run of trains Nos. 1 and 2 on the Sackville Branch from December 30 to January 9.

This record shows almost uninterrupted arrival and departure on time of these trains between these dates. The exceptions are January 3 when it is explained that "engine No. 419 that was handling this train failed causing a delay of two hours and ten minutes;" also on January 5th and 7th the Sackville train "was an hour and a half late arriving at Cape Tormentine. This was due to the fact that the ferry was two hours and five minutes late arriving on the morning of the 5th and two hours and thirty minutes late on the morning of the 7th." The delay to the ferry on these occasions was caused by the severe ice conditions and the consequent difficulty of docking. On the occasions referred to considerable time was made up by the trains on the Sackville-Tormentine branch.

In justice to the management it must be admitted that, all things considered, the interruptions on this line were no more than could reasonably be expected. True, it being the only way to or from the province, any interruption will be keenly felt and may occasion much inconvenience to passengers outward or inward. Nevertheless we are an island, with an island's disadvantages as well as advantages, and with ice conditions as severe as they are at present, interruptions must be expected, but it is gratifying to know that the management is sparing no pains to make the service as satisfactory as possible and there is every reason to hope that for the remainder of the winter it will be efficient.

THE PAST CIVIC YEAR.

Few cities in Canada can show as continuously clean and progressive a record as the city of Charlottetown has shown for many generations past. Progress and economy have ever been the key note in its Council and although there have been fluctuations, there have been no set backs or cases of mismanagement.

The past year has been no exception to the rule, unless indeed it be classed as a more successful and prosperous one. The financial and industrial storms which swept over other cities both within and without the dominion, blew gently over this city leaving in their wake not financial or industrial unrest but the reverse. Financially there were large expenditures; industrially these expenditures were distributed among our own people transforming them into the most wholesome form of revenue, revenue for the laborers and the citizens generally, and so far as the city accounts were concerned, leaving an actual surplus of \$149.48.

The expenditure on the streets was exceptionally satisfactory. Not only was the money expended in the city but the streets, so far as the repairs have gone, are a credit to the city and a permanent certificate of competence to the Street Committee of the Council of which Mr. J. J. McKinnon is chairman. The financial management also showed prudence, vision and economy on the part of the Finance Committee and its chairman, Mr. D. J. Riley.

In many respects the year has been a historic one. The end of the war last November brought our gallant soldiers home in small detachments during the year and His Worship Mayor Wright and his councillors deserve the highest commendation for the manner in which they organized the various receptions enabling citizens to fittingly honour the sons of the province on their return.

The visit of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales was another red-letter day of the year, an occasion which gave His Worship a pleasing opportunity to fittingly represent the city in its demonstration of loyal welcome to our future sovereign.

Whatever the forthcoming election has in store for the present Council the year has certainly brought them much upon which they may well pride themselves and few, if any, regrets.

U. F. O. PATRONAGE.

A plank in the United Farmers' platform is the abolition of patronage. The Drury Government has announced, through the Attorney-General, that appointments of Crown prosecutors and other legal representatives will not go by political favor, but by merit. The farmers of Middlesex think that in the matter of appointments in their county there should be the guidance of a local committee. The Attorney-General appointed a lady to the registrarship of Middlesex, on representations, apparently, that she had the qualifications, and was next in line. The farmers there are protesting vigorously against this method. They demand that they be consulted as to who shall have the post. They had several names to send in to the Attorney-General as recommendations. This is certainly patronage. The old system was one in which the member or defeated candidate belonging to the party in power had the privilege or responsibility of nominating persons for vacant posts within the constituency. He usually followed the advice of the local party organization. The farmers of Middlesex want to be consulted in the same way but they are solidly in favor of abolishing patronage in every other riding. Patronage dies hard.

Others View Point Frenchman Denies American's Story

LENINE'S "PEACE OFFERS"

(From the Brooklyn Eagle) If Lenin wants peace why is he pushing the campaign in Bokhara? He must know that the threat he is making in the direction of India will almost certainly force Great Britain to resume the fight against the Reds in England. The Bolshevik forces became a real peril in India, Persia or Afghanistan. If Lenin wants peace he is going about it in a strange way. He is deliberately forcing Great Britain, Japan and the United States to take defensive measures, which may lead to aggressive action on short notice.

MORE WINNERS OF THE GREAT WAR

(London Daily Chronicle) Latin America, I gather, looks coldly on the claim of the other America to have won the war. Some of the minor republics point to the fact that they frequently issued ultimatums to Germany, and that the national anthems of the Allies were sung in all the principal cities. Further, if there had only been more privates and fewer generals in some of their armies there might have been nasty work on the western front. Mexico, I believe, claims, above all that the little internal troubles which kept her occupied undoubtedly won the war for the Allies, for whom she otherwise might have fought.

THEIR LACK IS OUR SHAME

(From the London Chronicle) The soldiers who were 20 years of age at the beginning of the war are now 25, and it is very unfair to tell them that all the intervening five years have been wasted, and that they alone must pay the penalty of the waste. Having been glad enough to accept their war service, we must now receive them back as they are, and do our best to fit them into our peace-time organization, even if we must work a little hard ourselves, or make some other slight sacrifice to help out their insufficiency. It will be a disgrace to the nation if even the most incompetent of those who were competent enough to save our freedom be cast on the scrap heap.

PROHIBITION AND POISON

(From the Chicago Evening Post) "See what your dry law does!" says the scold as he points to the headlines recounting a growing death list from indulgence in beverages with a poisonous kick. But the scold is wrong. This is not the result of the dry law; this is the result of years of licensed liquor selling. The saloon created appetites which are now seeking satisfaction in a quicker poison than it used to provide. The wood alcohol victim is the product of the days when whiskey was plentiful. Prohibition must be judged not by what it can do for those whose appetites were formed under the old regime—although many of these may be helped but by what it will do for the rising generation and for generations to come. We cannot eradicate the appetite where it has been acquired, but we can prevent its acquirement by millions of young Americans who will grow to manhood and womanhood in a saloonless land.

Daily Selections For Guardian Readers

Furnished by W. S. Louson

WHEN PA GETS MAD

I ain't afraid of mother, coz she's always mighty nice; Instead of givin' spankings all she gives us is advice. An' I ain't afraid of sister when I'm teasin' her, coz she has been told whatever happens she must keep her hands off me. An' I ain't afraid of grandpa when I'm doin' something bad— But you bet I drop my nonsense when my pa gets mad. My mother jus' looks solemn an' gits awful long of face When I'm kickin' up a rumpus an' upsettin' all the place. An' Sis says, "Ma, I tell you if that child belonged to me I'd have him right this minute lyin' flat across my knee!" An' grandpa sits an' chuckles, but there's nobody that's glad Or thinks it very funny when Pa gits mad. 'Taint often that he scolds me, but when he does, Gee whiz! You just get awful trembly with that angry look of his. An' he starts right in a shoutin' loud the things he's goin' to do. While Ma she "shushes" at him coz she's kinder frightened too, But nothing ever happens—that is, not 'til I know I'm awful sorry when Pa gits mad. BY EDGAR A. GUEST

Few articles written in the course of the war created such a sensation as that of Mr. Wyeth which appeared in Collier's in January, 1918, and purported to explain the cause of the failure of the great French offensive in the Spring of 1917. Summed up, it was to the effect that the French and British had practically succeeded when the French politicians ordered the attack to be stopped, and subsequently dismissed Gen. Nivelle. The story has been repeated with variations a thousand times since then, and was told in this column at the time. It is only just, therefore, that a circumstantial denial of it by M. Paul Painleve, Minister of War, which appears in the New York Sun, should be given prominence, especially since M. Painleve declares that the Wyeth article imperilled the success of the Allied cause and was German propaganda of the most insidious form, though Mr. Wyeth is presumed to be ignorant of the fact. The intimation is that Wyeth was loaded up in Paris by German sympathizers, masquerading as friends of a great French general who had been cruelly treated.

The Great Offensive The offensive which began on April 16, 1917, had been carefully prepared for four months. It was Nivelle's plan. We had all heard stories before then that Nivelle had gone to the Government and staked his career on the success of the scheme which he had evolved, and that he only accepted the high command when the politicians had consented to his proposals. Gen. Haig had consented to cooperate to the utmost of his strength, but the plan was Nivelle's. On the Rheims, Soissons, Coucy front the scheme was to break through the three or four German positions, submerge Brimont in the morning reach Laon at dawn next day; then in a few days throw the enemy across the Meuse, and wipe out or capture the great part of the German armies between the point north of the Ardennes and the southern point of Holland. By the end of the week the offensive had died down without a break through having been made anywhere. In some cases the enemy still held his first positions, according to M. Painleve. In May the attacks were resumed, but only with local objectives. Never was the morale of the French army so low, says Painleve. It had been almost broken by the German machine guns which the Allied artillery had failed to destroy, this being the sole reason for the failure, assuming the leadership to have been adequate.

Sinister Rumors But it was not until the following Winter that the stories about the offensive that had failed began to circulate and cast a gloom over all France. The existence of the censorship only caused these reports to circulate in more exaggerated form, and it was left for Mr. Wyeth to write the first exhaustive, damning account of the action. The article circulated through France in hundreds of thousands of copies; it was read all over Europe in various languages and with various distortions, the object of those who circulated it being to prove that the French people had been betrayed once by their politicians and would be again betrayed, that Germany had in her day Frenchmen who would not let France win the war. The standing of Mr. Wyeth as correspondent of the New York Times, a stout champion of the Allies only added to the injury that his Collier's article had created. M. Painleve now announces that the French Government has since learned the source of the American's information, and that it was French not British or American, as seems to have been suggested in the original story.

Nivelle's Plan The assertion in the Wyeth story which most concerns M. Painleve is that it was he who gave orders for the battle to be discontinued. This he did, it was alleged, after twelve French parliamentarians had gone to the front, and horrified him in Paris insisting that the struggle be discontinued, at the very moment when it was about to be crowned with success, when the lines had been broken, and the Germans were in flight. The Minister of War asserts that on the contrary the battle was not discontinued until it had been lost. He says that there never was any secret about the Nivelle plan from the moment that Nivelle had been given command of the armies. This was that a steady offensive relentlessly carried on for twenty-four hours, or forty-eight hours, at the most, would either definitely succeed or definitely fail. The French offensive, on the contrary, continued un-

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On April 21, although all the experts felt that it had failed before the first day's fighting was over, and then it was terminated by General Micheler, commanding the G. A. R., in a letter to the general-in-chief.

British Not Deceived

It was further alleged by the writer that the British had been deceived by their French colleagues. They had been assured that the battle was to continue, after the French had definitely decided to call it off, and were eventually led to consent to abandoning the effort when the French gave them falsified figures of the French losses. M. Painleve denies every word of this, and declares that the French losses were 4,000 in killed, of whom five thousand died in a few days of their wounds. They were never reported at anything else. After the battle Gen. Nivelle, according to the Minister of War, was reluctant to hand in his resignation though he had previously pledged himself to this course. However, he was got rid of, and there came Pétain, with Foch as generalissimo. The writer quotes Foch to prove that after the disastrous offensive of 1917 it would have been physically impossible to undertake a similar enterprise the same year, and that the Allies had to wait thereafter until the Americans began to put their weight into the collar.

A Rational View

There would be more sense in the clamor for a general election in Canada if its authors were able to back it by any specific criticism of the manner in which the affairs of Canada were being administered at Ottawa, says the independent Toronto Saturday Night. But concrete instances of inefficiency or failure to grapple with the duties and responsibilities that government involves at the present time are curiously lacking. Intelligent men are therefore forced to the conclusion that those who are demanding an appeal to the people are actuated by the same thoughts as that of callow students longing for Hallowe'en—a chance to raise Hades.

The ground for demanding a general election is stated in the cant term "lack of leadership," a vague and meaningless bit of journalism, coined during the late war, which has been badly overworked, and should now be sentenced to the blue pencil. If it is intended to convey lack of courage or lack of decision, it is singularly misapplied in this instance. In dealing with the manifold post-war problems, of the past year the Ottawa administration showed a firmness with which it would hardly have been credited eighteen months ago. It has grappled successfully with the conspiracy to upset existing forms of government in the west. It has kept Canada's trade to a level wholly unanticipated when the war suddenly came to an end. It has gone ahead with the great problem of re-establishing the soldier in civil life, in a manner which has won the admiration of foreign observers. It has proceeded with its shipping program with commendable efficiency. 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