

THE CHARLOTTETOWN GUARDIAN

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TUESDAY, AUGUST 15, 1922

BEATING THE AIR

Our Liberal friends are becoming hysterical over the coming bye-elections and are saying things and doing things that only emphasize their helplessness. What else could the Bell government do but increase the taxes, the Patriot asks. The question is not what they could have done but what they did. They came in to power on the distinct promise that they would not only reduce taxation but also reduce expenditure. The Patriot will attempt to deny this and will produce Mr. Bell's manifesto to show that no such promise was made. Mr. Bell's manifesto made no definite statement on anything and was never produced or even mentioned by any one of the Liberal candidates during the campaign. Every Liberal candidate, however, made the promises referred to as every elector in the province who attended the political meetings will remember. On these promises which they never intended to fulfil the Bell government came into power. This is one of the complaints against the Bell government, a complaint emphasized at many indignation meetings throughout the province since the election and the point of the complaint is that a party elected to power on false promises is not to be trusted. The government takes credit to itself for the work done on the highways of the province. The complaint against the government on this score is that while it has spent untold thousands of dollars on roadwork, necessary and unnecessary, the expenditure for the most part has been practically thrown away because of subsequent neglect. Many of the roads fixed are today worse than before they were touched, simply because of neglect. Another, and perhaps more serious complaint about the roads is that nobody knows what they cost, nobody knows how much money has been borrowed, nobody knows "whose coin fattened the contractors." There are many charges against the government, charges which have already been proved to the hilt, and will again be proved during the campaign. If indeed there is going to be a campaign. The most serious charge perhaps is that while the government is spending hundreds of thousands of dollars on the roads through contracts and day's work, it has never yet given any idea of the amount expended or how it is being expended. The debt of the province has been enormously increased, as shown by the meagre Public Accounts and the government organ has the temerity to tell its readers that there has been a surplus every year. The people know that in reality there has been no such surplus, this has been fully and fairly explained and there is no need of going all over it again.

The people never had a clearer case to vote on and we have no doubt whatever as to how they are going to vote. With the first act of the Bell government it threw its pre-election promises to the winds and the people lost confidence in it. Their confidence will not be restored by any hysterical shrieking that "we couldn't help it," nor by any declarations by the government organ that Premier Bell is more firmly seated in the saddle now than ever before. Premier Bell's seat is a barbed wire one and he is only occupying it because no other member of the party would risk his political trousers to sit in it.

THE POINT OF VIEW

Tyranny and liberty, like heterodoxy and orthodoxy depend upon their advocates. It has been well said that orthodoxy is "My doxy," heterodoxy the other fellow's doxy. In the despotic days of the Romanoffs, Lenine and Trotsky were the disciples of freedom, the opponents of despotism. The original despots have been slain and the disciples of Liberty are in power. What is Liberty? A recent despatch tells us that thirty Russian prisoners are to be shot one of these days for criticizing the government of Lenine and Trotsky! Under the new despotism that came in as a new born Liberty men are put to death for opposing what men opposed and were executed for under the former tyranny. What a word to conjure with is Liberty! In all general elections men have died in its sacred name; nations have suffered and bled to secure it and the hard won Liberty has become a blood thirsty despotism. There is no such thing as Liberty. No man and no nation can be a law unto himself or itself. The rights of others must be respected and Liberty can exercise itself only within the limits bounded by the rights of others. These limits are laid down by the law of God and man and whose disregards them is a lawbreaker and a menace to society. The Liberty which Lenine and Trotsky preached while despots ruled was license. They have it today and because they have it Russia is a hell.

Truly there is something colossal in these pretensions, something worthy of the colossus of Rhodes. It is the sheep-like instinct of following each other. The whole flock follows where one or two have gone and the following becomes a rout. The present labor agitation with its strikes, its hold ups and its warnings is a typical example. The crowd follows a lead, it may be by one who knows nothing about the road he is taking except the excitement of leading a crowd. So the bell wether in a flock of sheep often leads his followers over a precipice or into a bog or a trap, so the human bell wether the agitator, often leads his dupes to irrevocable ruin. Had the thousands of strikers now idle in the United States thought long over the probable consequences of their ceasing work there would have been no strike. Thousands of them are now idle, eating the bread of idleness and many of them eating no bread because they acted without thinking. A healthy public opinion can come only of careful thought and sane leading. To rush after the man who claims to have found Eldorado is madness and oftener than not leads to the precipice or the wilderness. Public opinion that comes from careful consideration of public questions is wholesome and may always be relied upon. Spasmodic thinking and action is seldom to be trusted. Mobs acting as a mob have been guilty of actions which no individual member of the mob would ever think of committing if he had thought for himself. Revolutions and national and individual disasters have resulted from sudden, unthinking impulse. Let us show the agitator, the would-be reformer, the man who would subvert existing conditions and lead us to fanciful creations of his own imagination. Let us form our own individual opinions on the sound bedrock of knowledge and understanding and public opinion will take care of itself.

A NEW CLAIM

The Summerside Pioneer puts up a new claim for the Bell government, a claim which, strangely, has escaped the eye of the Patriot and which as it can be substantiated should carry some weight. Here it is: "In the face of turmoil and threatened strikes, the present governments, since they reached power, have brought peace and contentment to our people." The Pioneer is an inveterate joker. Who, but our jovial western contemporary could, knowing no good that could be said of the Bell government, would think of crediting it with the fact that during its regime, there has been no strikes among the coal miners of Prince Edward Island? And the point of the joke is that it is absolutely true. No more contented people than the coal miners of Prince Edward Island, have ever paid taxes to any government; it may be truly said that they are thoroughly satisfied with the Bell government; indeed it would not be too much to say that they are the only people in Prince Edward Island who are thoroughly satisfied with the Bell government. The Pioneer always speaks respectfully of the dead and it is to the credit of its head and heart that when it could find nothing good to say directly of the Bell government it was able at least to say that during its short and inglorious career our coal miners have been peacefully and contentedly attending to their business!

It was Dr. Johnson, if we remember rightly, who said that "where the public think long they usually think right. It is where they do not think at all but have been moved to feel strongly that their will tends to run against the grain of which their common sense would approve as sound public policy." There is a good deal of what a French writer called the "Mou-

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tonniere instinct" in the human race, that is the sheep-like instinct of following each other. The whole flock follows where one or two have gone and the following becomes a rout. The present labor agitation with its strikes, its hold ups and its warnings is a typical example. The crowd follows a lead, it may be by one who knows nothing about the road he is taking except the excitement of leading a crowd. So the bell wether in a flock of sheep often leads his followers over a precipice or into a bog or a trap, so the human bell wether the agitator, often leads his dupes to irrevocable ruin. Had the thousands of strikers now idle in the United States thought long over the probable consequences of their ceasing work there would have been no strike. Thousands of them are now idle, eating the bread of idleness and many of them eating no bread because they acted without thinking. A healthy public opinion can come only of careful thought and sane leading. To rush after the man who claims to have found Eldorado is madness and oftener than not leads to the precipice or the wilderness. Public opinion that comes from careful consideration of public questions is wholesome and may always be relied upon. Spasmodic thinking and action is seldom to be trusted. Mobs acting as a mob have been guilty of actions which no individual member of the mob would ever think of committing if he had thought for himself. Revolutions and national and individual disasters have resulted from sudden, unthinking impulse. Let us show the agitator, the would-be reformer, the man who would subvert existing conditions and lead us to fanciful creations of his own imagination. Let us form our own individual opinions on the sound bedrock of knowledge and understanding and public opinion will take care of itself.

Notes By The Way

One of the seven wonders of the ancient world was the Colossus of Rhodes. It was a metal statue of a man so huge and tall that its widespread legs straddled the entrance to a great seaport, the highway for ocean commerce and ships in full sail passed and repassed between its mighty limbs. It fell at length and was shattered to fragments. And nine hundred camels were loaded with the brass of which it was composed. So runs the story, be it fact or fable, truth or fiction.

Where shall we find a modern parallel for this ancient wonder? Where but here in this Island, Kingdom? For Rhodes was and is still an Island. In what great man shall we find the antitype of the lofty and gigantic Straddler of the Immemorial past? Was it not said of Caesar that "he doth beset this narrow world like a Colossus?" And who today doth so beset our Island Province, if it be not the Chief and leader of what is at least in his imagination, the Best of All Governments? Nor does the parallel end with that. For as the mighty ancient statue was set above the water highway at the entrance to Rhodes, does not the mighty spirit of the great Chieftain preside over all the highways of our land as a veritable Colossus of Rhodes? For this the sound of words of unlike spelling enforces the sense of things that are alike in essence.

A Colossus of Roads, the leader of the so-called Best of Governments "believe" himself to be. He proclaims that roads are his policy, roads are to be his monument when he has passed away. These roads are to be built of clay but are to be permanent. They are to extend over hundreds of miles. They are not to cost the taxpayers a cent. True, some money is to be borrowed to be repaid in fifteen to twenty years, but nothing is to be added to the public debt. Like the easy-going borrower of humorous fiction the Province is merely to give its obligation to pay and debt is paid!

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roads! It quite transcends the petty operations of the poor faker at a side-show with his three shells and an elusive pea beneath one of them. Let the gulleible elector and taxpayer put up his money and make his guess, while the colossus unfolds his sweet and captivating delusion: "Trust me! Trust the Best of Governments! No doubt to you it may seem impossible, but we will do it! We will pay as we go and keep out of debt even if we have to borrow money to do it. You will have the roads and they will not cost you a cent!" So says the Colossus of Roads.

Is the sensible elector, who having been "once bitten, twice shy," or is he still in doubt? Let him ask his banker whether this is sound or possible finance, or is it only a confidence game? Let him remember the deception of the campaign of 1919. Did he vote then with an open view of the doubled taxes of 1920? Was he told by the deceivers of that day that even the head upon his shoulders would be taxed? Did they tell him in 1919, "Elect us and we will tax everything tangible and intangible that you possess? And if not why not?"

Did the deceivers tell you in 1919 that if they were returned to power they would cram their own pockets with \$500 indemnity to each per session? That is two and a half times as much as the ablest and best of members were ever paid before. If they told you that, you may excuse them. If they did not tell you, were they not gross deceivers? And will you trust them now that the mask has been torn from their faces? Where is the economy that they promised you? Is doubled expenditure a true economy? If it is then falsehood is truth and truth is falsehood. Will you reward the men who deceived you in 1919 by giving them your votes in 1922? Will you, honest voters, pay a premium on treachery and betrayal?

The Colossus of Roads, indeed, self-styled Head of the Best of all Governments! Did ever brazen self-conceit and bragadocio frame such a title for such a bunch of deceivers and incapables? The Colossus, with his ledger-dominion of finance that can coin money out of wind? Why did he not pay your taxes for you in the same happy-go-lucky fashion if he had the power? Trust him not! Already the puffed-up Colossus, and his best of all colleagues totter to their fall like the gigantic monuments of old. And when the final crash shall come there will be full nine hundred camel-loads of brass encumbering the ground!

Are Two Things Britain Must Do

LONDON, Aug. 14.—Viscount Grey, speaking at Oxford tonight, said there were two things that Great Britain must do; first, pay the American debt and keep it entirely separate from the question of the allied debts; second, use Britain's credit position in Europe in a generous way. The Balfour note did not keep the two questions separate, he said, and, like many beautiful things, in nature, it contained a hidden sting. It conveyed to him the idea that Britain was resolved to be generous up to a certain point, but after that would adopt an attitude of contingent generosity, for she was still to retain the right to collect the money due from European debtors. When the Government had a chance to do big things, Lord Grey contended, it had chosen little things.

MOVED FIVE TIMES TO FLEE FROM MOTHER-IN-LAW

NEW YORK, Aug. 13.—We have moved five times in the last six months in order to duck my mother-in-law," pleaded Percy Fletcher, of West Hoboken, before Recorder Walters. "But every time we move," he continued, "she packs up and moves into the house right next door. I asked her why she was following us all over the state of New Jersey and she told me she would follow us to the ends of the earth to make things disagreeable for me." Mrs. Catherine Niederhafer, the mother-in-law, who had her son-in-law haled to court, then took the stand. "He said I was a nincompoop," she hissed, glaring at Fletcher, "and he also told me to go to a place I will not repeat in a court of justice," she added. "Case dismissed," smiled the judge, and the two antagonists left through separate doors.

MEIGHEN TO SPEAK IN HOME DISTRICT

WINNIPEG, Aug. 14.—Rt. Hon. Arthur Meighen, Conservative leader, Mr. Meighen is expected in Winnipeg Saturday on his way to Vancouver where he is to address the British Columbia provincial Conservative convention.

The Public Forum

This column is open for the discussion by correspondents of questions of interest. The Charlottetown Guardian does not necessarily endorse the opinions expressed by its correspondents.

King's County Roads

Sir.—I noticed in the Guardian the second letter of Mr. John F. Curran in which he honors me with his attention. As the work in my division has been carried on to the satisfaction of the public and the department to whom I am responsible, no other defence is needed. The work which was done in Gault's wood last fall was not in my division and I had nothing to do with it. I am Sir, etc. P. W. KOUGHEN.

Bell's Government

Sir.—In the Patriot of the 12th there appears a leading article, touching the finances of the Province, as the Liberals found them on their being returned to office. He asks, what could the new Government do? What a question in view of the fact that they had been months telling the people what they would do. But what did they do, when they discovered so they allege, that the Province was in the hole some \$253,000.00 as a result of the Conservative Regime. Did they start right in on retrenchment? They did not; but they individually and wholly, without exception, for absence from the House was no excuse, voted an increased indemnity of from \$200.00 to \$500.00. Fine unselfish birds they are. Men are supposed to be elected to the Legislature to represent the interests of the people and not their own individual interests, but where was the unselfishness of individual effort displayed in this case. This Government is rotten to the core and the people should turn it down cold. The Premier is merely a time server and intends to hold on to office, regardless of the destiny of the party, so long as there is a salary attached to the office he holds. Cut off his salary and he would resign forthwith. He has been asked to resign for the good of the party, but his estimation of what is beneficial is quite different from that of his followers. He is the old man of the sea and to get rid of him the Liberal party will have to go down to defeat. Just think of a man suggesting that the people should be led along to believe that the bye-elections were to take place and so let them drift and not bring them on. That is Mr. Bell's idea of statesmanship. A policy of deception. He was taken to task about that and finally forced to bring on the elections, but think he did it with a clean heart. The poor man has been gathering dollars so long that he sees nothing else and whatever essence of unselfishness was born with him has been strangled by his foolish ambition. No man ever had a better opportunity of displaying his unselfish love for country than our present Premier but, unfortunately he has failed utterly. I am Sir etc., M. L. O.

Museum and Library

Dear Sir.—Your editorial in this morning's paper and Mr. Cruikshank's letter attracted my attention, because neither of you mentioned a lack that I discovered, namely, a Library in its own building, with a collection of books that would do justice to the importance of the city. The point of view of a business man touring the island would naturally differ from that of a librarian on a rest cure; but if Mr. Cruikshank's suggestion were acted upon at once and a museum established, that would be out of the usual order of things. Us

Daily Selections for Guardian Readers

From the W. S. Louson collection TO MY BEST FRIEND

I love the wet-lipped wind that stirs the hedge
And kisses the bent flowers that drooped for rain,
That stirs the poppy on the sunburnt ledge,
And like a swan dies singing without pain.
The golden bees go buzzing down to staid
The lilacs frills, and the blue harebell rings,
And the sweet blackbird in the meadow sings,
Deep in the meadows I would sing a song,
The shallow brook my tuning fork, the birds
My masters; and the boughs they hop along.
Shall mark my time; but there shall be no words
For larking Echo's mock; an ancel herds
Words that I may not know, within, for you,
Words for the faithful meet, the good and true.
Francis Ledwidge

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daily the public library follows the natural place for school, and the museum comes after. In fact, libraries are traditional conservers of tradition and there is a growing tendency to combine local museum with the public library. The natural place for a stranger to go for both maps and information about local history is the public library. I am Sir, etc., ALICE B. LONG, Ch'town, Aug. 11, 1922. New York, N. Y., U.S.A.

In view of recent advance in the stock, it is interesting to note that the figure below is the Estimated Gross Value of Ore Reserve of HOLLINGER as shown in the last Annual Statement— \$42,716,027.00 JOHNSTON AND WARD

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