

THE CHARLOTTETOWN GUARDIAN

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Monday, May 24th, being Empire Day and a public holiday. The Guardian will not be issued on Tuesday. Advertisers please take note.

"THE PUBLIC BE DAMNED."

Never in the history of this province, or perhaps of any other province in Canada have the public been so bare facedly and shamelessly buncoed as they have been by the aggregation in whom they, under what was no doubt a hypnotic spell, placed their confidence last July.

Promising no additional taxation they, as soon as they were able to compass the means of doing so, put on a taxation measure so drastic as to fairly take away the people's breath; promising everything possible and impossible to the returned soldiers on whose necks they fairly wept in patriotic fervor and sympathy, they turned down practically every soldier's application for any worth while position, reserving these to their political heelers and throwing the scraps to the soldiers; promising the teachers a living wage, they legislated them a wage that leaves them no better, and in many cases worse, than before; promising to abolish all useless offices of which they said there were many, to reduce the salaries of officials and to practise all kinds of economy, if elected, they, when elected not only retained as many officials as before but provided for more and, to cap the climax, raised the salaries of the Premier, the Attorney General, the Commissioner of Public Works and the Commissioner of Agriculture to \$2,000 each and the sessional indemnity of private members to \$500 each!

Now let it not be misunderstood, the crime has not been merely in increasing taxation, not in the mere increase of salaries; the crime, for crime it all was, was in brazenly pretending that none of these things was necessary, that they had all been wrong under the former government, that they had solemnly promised not to do any one of the things they have done since assuming power.

This was the crime, the unpardonable crime of the Bell Government; the crime for which the people will hold them to strict account, the crime for which, before they have an opportunity of repeating it they should summarily be asked to resign their commission.

To have proved false to those who placed confidence in them, to betray those who believed them and trusted them, is to stigmatize them now and henceforth as unworthy of further trust and unsafe guardians of the people's rights and privileges. There has already been indignation throughout the country; we have no doubt this last act will intensify the feelings aroused and it would be no surprise to us if an instant demand were made for a dissolution of the legislature.

TAX ON SALES.

The Government has not considered the time ripe for going the full length of that change, entirely abolishing the Excess Profits Tax, but it has gone part of the way. The demolition of the business profits scheme of taxation has been begun. The rate of exemption has been raised from 7 per cent. to 10 per cent. of the profits earned in the year 1920 and payable in 1921. "It may possibly be," says Sir Henry Drayton, "that with another year business will be more normal and that no business profits tax ought to be levied."

In normal circumstances, he admits, it would be hard to find any argument that would justify its continuance. Of the idea of a tax on sales, he thought enough to apply it to the sales of manufacturers, wholesale dealers, jobbers and importers. Thus there will be a tax of 1 per cent. on all goods that come into consumption through these distributing agencies with the exception of the principal foods, coal and artificial limbs. Goods imported are not subject to the tax. This venture into sales taxation is likely to prove encouraging and may be followed by the whole plunge. The sales of manufacturers, importers, wholesalers and jobbers of goods for consumption in Canada exclusive of the articles whose overturn is not subject to taxation, must amount to several hundred million dollars a year, and must therefore yield several millions of revenue a year. If all transactions between buyer and seller were subject to a tax of from one-half of one per cent. to one per cent., the revenue therefrom would be much greater than that obtained from the business profits tax, and it would not be burdensome.

CURRENT COMMENT

And still ANOTHER TAXATION BILL. They have taxed everything they could lay hands upon, tangibles and intangibles, belonging to the living. By an extraordinary oversight they had almost forgotten to tax the dead and in the dying days of the session a Bill was passed for the purpose. The War Health Tax act, passed to provide a small \$20,000 or \$25,000 to meet extra expenses during the war was bitterly denounced and opposed by the whole Bell combination. It was unnecessary, we had ample revenues without it, and every man jack of them stood up in his place in the legislature and accorded his vote against it. They then went to the country and gave their solemn pledge that it would be abolished.

But the scene is charged. They are now in power. They had already legislated to scorch the country to the tune of about half a million of taxes, but omitted the War and Health tax. To leave it undisturbed would have been to leave one of their election promises unbroken. Their perfidy could not stand for this. They had salted the working man most unmercifully but the widows and orphans were still allowed their bread and butter. This would never do. So an Act is passed to continue the War and Health tax upon the estates of the dead for all time to come. When asked for his reason for this shameful change of front the answer of the Premier was "Tempora mutantur" (The times have changed), to which Hon. Mr. Arsenault promptly quoted the ancient and stinging reply of Horace, "Et nos sis mutantur" (And we have changed with the times.)

An incident in the debate on the budget was when the leader of the Opposition asked the Premier what he and his Government had done during the whole eight months since his election. If anything the public had surely been kept in the dark, and even his colleague, the Hon. Member for Morell had to come to the house and with the aid of the Opposition get information which as a member of the Government he had a right to without coming here. Hon. Mr. Cox replied that he was satisfied, to which Hon. Mr. Arsenault responded that if he was in a case of being content with the crumbs that fall from a table, but if he was satisfied his constituents were not, for they had asked him to resign. Again the question was asked, "what have you done since September 8th," and Mr. Cox quickly replied, "WE HAVE TAXED THE PEOPLE." Yes that is it in a nutshell, TAXED THE PEOPLE.

From the 9th, of September to the 31st, December the Bell Government spent \$172,707.46. None of the ordinary mortals know how many unpaid accounts have been carried in addition to this. All this money was spent after busy season was over, and at a time when there was little call for outlay, apart from official salaries. The winter supplies had been laid in and paid for, the summer work was completed (in July for election purposes) according to Mr. Bell and supplies purchased and paid for to the extent of over \$60,000 for contracts and repairs chargeable to 1920. What became of this money? This is one of the hidden

Daily Selections Guardian Readers

Furnished by W. S. Louison

LIFE'S COMMON THINGS.

The things of every day are all so sweet, The morning windows wet with dew, The dance of daisies in the noon, the blue Of far off hills where twilight shadows lie, The night with all its tender mystery of sound, And silence, and God's starry sky O; Life—the whole life—is far too fleet, The things of every day are all so sweet, The common things of life are all so dear, The waking in the warm half-gloom, To find again the old familiar room, The scents and sights and sounds that never tire The home work, the plans, the lilt of baby's laugh The crackle of the open fire, The waiting, then the footsteps coming near, The opening door, the hand-clasp and the kiss Is Heaven not, after all, the now and here? The common things of life are all so dear.

mysteries which the Government refused to disclose. The Audit Act it appears was not strong enough to check this expenditure. Nor would they permit an external audit of this portion of the public accounts under any consideration. This is not a question of mere suspicion. It is a self evident fact upon its face. Their accounts during the three and two thirds of a month of their administration will not stand investigation.

How cowardly has their whole conduct with regard to public accounts been in comparison with the courage displayed by Conservatives from the very outset of their Government. According to the Premier's own admission, instead of following the precedent and putting external auditors immediately on the job, he started sneaking around the Departments in quest of one-sided statements which he imagined he could manipulate with good political effect against the defeated Government. An external audit would be too decisive, too honest and not sufficiently pliable to suit his purpose. But something was needed for an emergency sensation, and under his direction the Provincial Auditor was employed to prepare a statement to his liking. Instead of gratitude for this service the Auditor is repaid with a cowardly attack, and charged with conspiracy with the late Government to defy the Audit Act and defeat the will of the legislature. And it develops that the "conspiracy" of theirs was such, with Br. Bell and his colleagues, to manipulate the accounts against the Arsenault Government.

A Bill, introduced by Premier Bell, to increase the salaries of the Leader of the Government, Attorney General, Commissioner of Public Works and Commissioner of Agriculture to \$2,000 each, and Members indemnities to \$500 each, produced an interesting discussion. To Mr. Peter Brodie, the only dissembler, we touch our hat, not that we endorse his economic argument, but because he was consistent with his pre-election promises. Hon. Mr. Arsenault agreed with this measure because no man of any value, unless he was possessed of personal wealth could afford to give the service which was required of him and which it was his duty to give upon the small salary hitherto paid. He had performed the duties of Premier and Attorney General for \$2,700, but he did so at a loss to himself of \$1,000, and if he had not had private resources he could not have done so. The same is true of private members, who besides spending six or seven weeks in the house were more or less engaged in public business during the whole year. Unless they were men of private wealth they could not afford it.

While taking this ground he wished it distinctly to be understood that he was not receding from the position he took upon the "TAXATION ACT." These salaries could have been paid without resorting to that measure. He could if he were so minded, use this to make some cheap political capital, but had always pursued the honest course of action and speaking from his conviction, and he did so now. Had he remained in government that would have been the ground he would have taken, and now as always he would pursue what he believed to be the right policy, matter on which side of the house he was, "I think, however," said Hon. Mr. Arsenault, "our friends should not have shown the attitude they did last year. They should have been consistent. They should not have gone to the country with the story that those working for the Government were being overpaid, and that their salaries should have been reduced. They should have told the people the plain truth, and their position would have become more enviable than it is today. However, be that as it may, it is a matter between them and their constituents. In this matter I believe we are pursuing the only right course, and because I always stand by my convictions, even though I may lose by it, politically I support the bill."

When the level beds of sandstone across the border are exhausted, we shall begin to build in Canadian stone. Our cities are imported, the stone from Ohio, the doors from Wisconsin, the floors from the Carolinas, Winnipeg with its imposing streets and noble buildings is a mirage on the prairie. It does not belong in the scene. It is imported. With the exception of the sand for the mortar, which is only an indifferent sand after all, every stone and stick is carried for five hundred miles although good stone lies at its gates.

DODD'S KIDNEY PILLS. RHEUMATISM, BRUISES, BURNS, SCALDS, DIABETES, BACKACHE, GRAVEL, GOUT, NEURALGIA, MIGRAINE, HEADACHE, INDIGESTION, BILIOUSNESS, COLIC, CONSTIPATION, URINARY AFFECTIONS, ALL KIDNEY DISEASES. 23 THE PROSPECT

THE IMMIGRANT

Canada, like any country, has natural resources, but no resources are of any value apart from the human labour bestowed upon them. Wild fruits, and edible animal caught in a trap, or a fish taken from the water may sustain a wandering prospector, but these resources go a short way towards the life of an organized community. Indeed no organization is possible so long as these chance resources lie ready at the hand, and it is only after they have disappeared that efforts are made to conserve them. The important Conservation Commission devotes the most of its labour to an enquiry which resembles a coroner's inquest or a post mortem examination. Their reports make dismal reading, but they suggest that the time has come to cease talking of natural resources, and give some attention to natural laws.

The only unit of wealth is a day's ration of food for a grown man. The dollar, gold or paper, is an illusion, or at best a symbol. The world is coming to the thing itself and can obtain it only by direct barter. All else but food has merely a contingent value. The value of clothing even is contingent upon climate and acquired habit. In the tropics it is almost worthless. Natural resources fall into the same category. They may have a contingent value, but at any moment that value may be destroyed. Commerce and trade depend entirely upon this contingency of value. For many years mines near Ottawa yielded a handsome profit from sulphate of lime. A new and easier source was discovered in the Appalachians, and the Canadian enterprise perished. On the other hand the discovery of gypsum in Canada destroyed the mines in Florida.

There are certain commodities of no value at the moment, which may rise into importance when a general scarcity causes a fresh demand, or the exhaustion of related supplies compels a substitution. It is conceivable that a time may come when pulp wood will have become so rare that an aeroplane may be sent to Ungava to fetch home a log, or food become so scarce that an aviator may be sent on an expedition to the Arctic to catch a musk ox. But the contingency is remote, and the enterprise highly speculative. Before resorting to these extreme devices people will probably prefer to read less newspaper and eat more bread. When the forests were cut a pine tree would be left on some difficult hill top. At the time there was no warrant of expending human labour upon it, and it was allowed to remain until less opulent days. Tin mines have been opened up in England, which had lain idle since the fall of Phoenicia, and the charcoal burner's smoke was seen in Surrey, the first since Puck left Pook's hill. This is the romance and tragedy of trade.

When the level beds of sandstone across the border are exhausted, we shall begin to build in Canadian stone. Our cities are imported, the stone from Ohio, the doors from Wisconsin, the floors from the Carolinas, Winnipeg with its imposing streets and noble buildings is a mirage on the prairie. It does not belong in the scene. It is imported. With the exception of the sand for the mortar, which is only an indifferent sand after all, every stone and stick is carried for five hundred miles although good stone lies at its gates.

These observations are peculiarly applicable to Canada. The bituminous coal of Alberta may replace the anthracite of Ohio under cover of an American embargo; but the industry will be endangered when the embargo is lifted. That is the fallacy in all trade that depends upon tariffs, subsidy, and convention. The conditions are not permanent. They are subject to gusts of popular passion. Persons who are clever at figures are fond of calculating the force of the water that falls in Canadian rivers. With a touch of hyperbole they invent new terms, and think they have created a new thing. They describe these foaming waters as "white coal," or they think of racing rivers as horses which may be "harnessed." They even dream of satisfying the universal desire for heat from electricity, quite unaware that a water power expressed as the continuous labour of twenty horses day and night for a month is, for heating purposes, only equivalent of one ton of coal. Niagara Falls if completely "harnessed" would involve an outlay of 240 million dollars, and then would yield for heating only the equivalent of 150 thousand tons of coal a month. The cost of transmission would even then remain to be added. Ontario would do well to think upon these things. Having built our railways for the

convenience of "potential" immigrants, the end is not yet. Railways must be operated, at what a cost we are only beginning to discover. Reference has been made to the winter. Climate manifests itself at every turn of the wheels. Frost condenses steam into futile water and lays its own laws upon construction, replacements, and repairs. The problem now is: these railways having been built, how long must we continue to operate them until the immigrants arrive to relieve us of this burden of fifty million dollars a year? Railways are so familiar that we have come to look upon them as natural means of transportation like the winds upon the ocean. They have never received the full cost of operation. Part of their revenue is derived from land which was previously worthless. They were built free of charge at the expense of the investors who lost their capital in every case save one. The Canadian Pacific is the only large railway in America that ever made honest return to the original shareholders. If the national railways had been acquired free of cost, operation might be possible until these potential immigrants arrived. If the present rate of increase is not exceeded, the question of the abandonment of the two northerly railways is bound to arise. The truth is all railway rates are only about one-half of what the service costs. That accounts for the deficit of a thousand million dollars on the American roads. The contest now is between those who pretend that the loss in operation shall be distributed over all the people and those who protest that they who use the railways shall pay for the service.

The manager of the National Railways declares that they may be made a source of enormous revenue if only enough goods be carried and enough people be induced to travel. One who watches two trains at Kingston Junction, headed in opposite directions, is led to suspect that the passengers would be better employed if they stayed at home. A commercial traveller is going to Toronto and another coming to Montreal to sell the same goods; two professors pass each other on their way to a lecture, when each would do better to lecture at home, or even to keep quiet. Some goods increase in value when they are moved. From this arises the inference that nothing has any value until it is put in a freight car. Transportation is the most precarious business in which men can engage. Suburban railways gave place to motor-trucks; these in turn learned to their cost. Railways may be an asset; they may be a liability also. Their success lies within narrow limits. When people choose to remain where food is produced, and eat it there, the era of the railway will have passed.

It is not the intention to write the economic history of Canada in these few pages, but the condition of the forests may be taken as an illustration of our process in the destruction of those natural resources upon which our future was based. They have disappeared in the lifetime of those now living, and a forest once destroyed is never replaced. A pine forest is the finest product of geological time, its flowering and final achievement. The world has a recorded history of four thousand years, and never in that time has a forest been renewed. In old settled countries under dire necessity patches of land have been planted with trees; but the land must first have been thoroughly cleared and labour available at nominal rates. Destruction and replanting have never done together since it is more profitable to destroy, and the cost of replanting takes away the profit from the "development." It costs twenty dollars to replant an acre of pulp wood and no returns are in sight for seventy years.

In the artificial forests of Europe the trees are cut by a process of selection. The ripe and dying timber is selected. In Canada also the principle of selection prevails, but with this distinction: we cut the good trees and allow the dead and dying to remain. In Europe where the forests are in settled areas, within reach of cheap labour, and every twig carried away for use, that method is practicable. With us it is a vain hope. Our business is to salvage what we can. The forest tree is a wild thing. It will not live in the presence of man. The forest is an unsafe place for a fire. Fire and disease are the enemy. It is a law of life that disease fastens upon the old and feeble. In Canada all the balsam is dead or dying, and in 1918 the spruce "showed incipient stages of similar trouble." The hardwoods are too heavy and poor to bear the cost of logging, and the slash develops disease like garbage in an army. The growth of trees in northern regions is incredibly slow; it requires 160 years to produce one of

four inches in diameter. In Quebec the yield is one six-inch tree per acre per year. If this perishes by fire or disease, there is no increase. All the facts are now known. The various governments have in their employ men of sincere minds and scientific accuracy. Their reports are based upon precise experiment and assiduous labor. There is no longer need for guess-work. Estimates of a thousand million cords have shrunk to 85 millions; and 25 millions to one hundredth of that quantity. As an observer puts it, 16 acres to a cord is in areas once burned a nearer estimate than 16 cords to the acre.

For every tree that is cut by the ax twenty-one perish by fire, and of two trees that escape the flames one dies of disease. A railway burns more timber than it hauls out, and as the forests recede from the streams logging becomes at first difficult, then impossible. The business will cease automatically. It has come almost to that point in the United States, and as a result news-print has reached the price of ten cents a pound. In Canada the end also is in sight. In 1904 the Forestry Department of Quebec estimated that the supply of pulp wood last 334 years. The three hundred years have since been abandoned, and it is now a question what part of the 34 years is a valid estimate.

But every cord of pulpwood secured is a cord saved. The operation of the mills is sheer gain. Their only fault is that they do not operate fast enough to overtake the ruin. The country is under a heavy obligation to the men of enterprise and courage who have undertaken to salvage the forests which were doomed to destruction even before they arrived upon the scene. The Ministry of Lands and Forests in 1918 testify that the manufacturers were earnest and enterprising men who strove to get value from their material, to utilize waste, and turn all by-products to profitable account. They conceal nothing. They have their own scientific experts whose reports are open to the world. Mr. Ellwood Wilson, chairman of a committee of the Canadian Pulp and Paper Association to confer upon means "essential to the preservation and perpetuation of the forests," sent to the persons concerned a letter remarkable for its breadth and sincerity, in which after reciting every possible alternative and considering every counsel of perfection he arrives at the ominous conclusion, "It almost seems as if there were no solution." Deplore it as we may we are face to face with a phenomenon of nature which will not be gainsaid.

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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.

No "Case" for The Teacher

Sir:—The letter which recently appeared in your columns under the heading, "The Teachers' Case" shows a slow and interesting aspect of such a discussed question. The writer on this subject takes careful, scientific treatment which such practical matter demands. He remembers that many are prone to forget, that this is a material age that we must not suffer ourselves to be influenced by sentiment that we must always be guided by sense. The sincerity of this writer is evident from the careful calculations upon which he has laid his deductions. The high or low figure of the teachers' wage caused me to doubt at first the mathematical accuracy of his reasoning, but have carefully checked his figures and find them correct to the last decimal. He has erred, indeed, it was in calculating the number of working hours, for he neglected to deduct the many hours which the classes are reading, writing, etc., and the teacher is not working at all.

Let us consider the teacher as a machine which we desire to run at the maximum efficiency during its working hours and that at the minimum cost. The writer to whom I have referred has shown that the teacher's working year consists of 904 1-2 hours. The normal person requires three meals a day or one meal every eight hours. Our machine, then, to run normally, must be fueled 113,062 1/2 times during the working year. I shall treat the unruly decimal as a brush or rather to maintain my metaphor as that the fuel of fuel thrown on to bank the fire overnight and consider 113 shovels as sufficient to run this machine during the working year. Next, as to the cost of this fuel; to more easily calculate this I shall for the moment abandon my metaphor. A small study of rural markets in many widely separated parts of the province, an exhaustive knowledge of raw food values, and the application of the principle of balanced rations, enable me to state accurately that the price of one meal for one teacher on the average 31.9 cents. Therefore the total cost of fueling our machine for the year is approximately \$36,184. We expend on this machine \$300 per year; this shows a yearly waste of \$463.84.

I have purposely made no mention of the lubrication necessary to keep the machine running smoothly. The scarcity and the prohibitive price of the proper sort of oil makes it more desirable economically to allow the machine to run down than to expend time and money in procuring that which might make it right. I am, Sir, etc., BROM BONES.