



THE CHARLOTTETOWN GUARDIAN

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FRIDAY, MAY 18, 1928

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PARTIZAN DISCRIMINATION.

IN another column of this issue we reproduce from Hansard a report of the discussion in the House of Commons of the estimates for Prince Edward Island. It will require some ingenuity on the part of the King's Government to show that there was no discrimination against King's County in the matter of public works. Mr. John A. Macdonald, M.P. for King's, proved it to the hilt. A vote of \$35,000 in 1925, when the county was represented by a Liberal was allowed to lapse when a Conservative was elected, although the need for repairs to Souris breakwater is greater today than when the vote was passed. The Minister of Public Works endeavored to show that King's County had been very generously treated by the Government in the matter of the vote for the potato warehouse at Georgetown; but Mr. Macdonald showed plainly that the Government was in no way entitled to credit for that work, as it was entirely due to the recommendation of the Duncan Commission and that grants for Queen's and Prince for similar purposes had similarly been recommended and carried out. These appropriations, as Mr. Macdonald plainly pointed out, had nothing whatever to do with the appropriations for harbors and rivers. The point stressed by Mr. Macdonald was that the Souris breakwater was going to pieces in 1925, that the need of immediate repairs was admitted by the Government of that time and that while the county was represented by a Liberal, the need was so urgent that the sum of \$35,000 was voted for the necessary repairs. When a Conservative member was elected the vote was dropped, the breakwater is still going to pieces, and the necessary appropriation for its repair has been refused. The Minister of Public Works, unable to give a satisfactory answer to Mr. Macdonald's charge, took refuge in moving an adjournment of the discussion. It is to be regretted that Mr. R. H. Jenkins showed his partizanship in this matter by hedging. He was profuse in his compliments to the Minister of Public Works for what the latter had done in providing a warehouse at Georgetown and repairs to the railway wharf at Charlottetown, for neither of which the Government was entitled to credit, but he studiously avoided the point raised by Mr. Macdonald with reference to the Souris breakwater. The Hansard report of the discussion on this subject is illuminating, and shows the Liberal Government method of dealing with constituencies. None but a Liberal need apply to the legend plainly written over the portals of the Public Works Department. Mr. Macdonald is to be congratulated on the able and fearless manner in which he bearded the lion of the Public Works Department in his den and drove him for protection to the expedient of moving an adjournment against which there was no redress.

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OUR AUTO TRAFFIC.

IT is encouraging to note that the Provincial Secretary has issued a strongly worded warning to automobile drivers. It is to be hoped that the warning is not "strictly in words," but that the spirit as well as the letter of the law shall be strictly and fearlessly carried out. Unfortunately we have acquired an unenviable reputation at home and abroad, in our road and street traffic. This reputation has come to us through the recklessness of one who has skimmed many books. The few. The majority of our drivers are careful and skillful, cool-headed and respectful of the rights of others. Some, albeit they are few, have given the Province a black eye from which it will take some time and much watchfulness to recover. Experienced drivers have told us more than once that they feel safer on the streets of Boston and New York than on the streets of Charlottetown. This is not because Charlottetown autoists, as a class, are careless or reckless, but because a few speed fools have got away with their smart escapades. Since the opening of the present season there has been an outrageous violation of traffic rules. Cars without headlights are being driven, unlighted motor trucks have been towing unlighted tractors, reckless speeding has been indulged in, children have been driving and losing their heads and, in short, conditions have become such that for both pedestrians and careful drivers our streets are unsafe either for walking or driving. The police are not to be blamed for this condition. They are few in number, they are constantly on the job, but they cannot be everywhere. They catch an occasional offender, hail him before the police court and he is usually punished. There are some men and women who never can learn how to drive a car and they should never be given a driver's license. The time is now ripe for action on the part of the city. There is an insistent demand for reform in our traffic regulations, a demand that our streets be made safe for our citizens, whether driving or walking. The traffic regulations, if enforced, are sufficient, and it is up to the police and to the courts before which offenders are brought, to see to it that the law is rigidly and impartially enforced. It is up to those whose duty it is to grant driver's licenses to see to it that no imbeciles or incapables be granted licenses and that, if any such have been granted, to have them cancelled. There should be a rigid examination of applicants for licenses, an examination covering the mechanical knowledge and the general character of the applicant. If traffic can be regulated in our largest cities, surely it should not be impossible in a city the size of Charlottetown. The unwavering enforcement of penalties for infraction of the traffic laws and of decent citizenship is the only remedy and, in the interests of life and property and the good name of the city, remedy is now being in-

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EDITORIAL NOTES.

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Notes by the Way

INCREASE of Judges' salaries has been recommended by the special committee of the House of Commons appointed to investigate that matter. The committee's report as agreed upon recommends an increase of \$2,000 each in the salaries of the 135 County Court judges and of \$3,000 per annum for all judges of rank higher than the County Court. There are over 150 of these, and if these recommendations mentioned had been unanimously adopted by the committee the House would probably have adopted the report and a total increase of about \$750,000 yearly in the salaries of the Judiciary would have been the result. The committee were not unanimous for so large an increase and it was only carried in the committee by the casting vote of the chairman. It may be, therefore, that a less increase than \$3,000 for the Higher Courts and \$2,000 for Country Courts will be the final outcome. There seems to be no doubt that judges' pay will be enlarged but how much is yet to be determined. The judges have no power to increase their own pay. It is different with members of Parliament who have that power. But the politicians feel that if something worth while is voted to the judges their own intended salary grab will not look quite so bad in the eyes of the electors as it would otherwise. So it seems tolerably certain that the judges will be kindly treated by the politicians, if only to justify in some sort their intended liberality on their own behalf. Down to a day or two ago, more and more signatures to the round robin were being obtained, and it was reported that about 90 per cent. of the members had signed it, leaving only members of the Cabinet and the front row on the Opposition side, who are holding back. It is quite noteworthy that Liberals, Conservatives and Progressives who cannot agree on anything else, can so easily harmonize their views when the question is one of their own indemnity. And as has been said of old, "when they do agree their unanimity is wonderful." The latest word we have on the subject from Ottawa is that the great majority of the members, while not very sanguine of getting their pay increased during the present session, are anxiously endeavoring to get it done. Next session will be no near election time. It is a malodorous business at best, and if delayed until 1929 the taint will still be in the air when the people are called upon to vote again. They evidently fear the burdened taxpayers more than they love them! And they know very well that the taxpayers are not consenting parties to the Salary Grab. A special committee of the Commons is investigating the unsavory conduct of members of Parliament in selling permits to admit to Canada persons whose entrance as immigrant settlers is forbidden by the Immigration Act. Alderman Caldwell of Regina in his evidence before the committee stated the other day that "Mr. Forke, (Minister of Immigration) told me that Mr. McMurray (formerly Solicitor-General) had obtained large numbers of these permits," and a Maritime member whose name the witness had forgotten, was also named by Mr. Forke as implicated in the same way. Mr. McMurray has since denied that he had benefited in any way by the sale of permits and Mr. Forke has contradicted Caldwell's statements. Intense interest has been aroused over the permit disclosures and the committee room has been crowded with members from day to day. The general belief appears to be that so much smoke betokens a smouldering fire, but whether it will burst into a conflagration or not seems to depend upon how soon Parliament is prorogued. The report of the committee will be awaited with eager interest if the investigation shall be completed before the session closes. Already members are pairing off, packing their trunks and getting ready to return to their homes. A sufficient majority of supporters of the Government will remain till the end as usual. In that respect "official safety" will be carefully guarded. Beyond that only the usual undignified and unbusinesslike rush, and reckless turmoil of a closing session can be confidently predicted.

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