



The Acton Free Press

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THURSDAY MORNING, MAY 22, 1924

EDITORIAL

Good Roads—Always a Live Subject

Good roads make a popular topic for discussion these days. Mud stalls the horse. Grade cuts down his load. Mud stalls the truck. Grade cuts down its speed. "Load" and "speed" are both synonymous for "profit." Good roads, proper grades, quick, sure, heavy hauling at low cost—that's the answer to the farmer's need of some way to make his business pay better. When the farmers of Canada unitedly say that they must have good roads everywhere, they will get them, and the other forty-five per cent. of the country's population will enjoy them also. The new highway between Acton and Crewsons Corners is a live example of the value of good reliable roads to the farmer. There is not a farm on this new road, or within a mile or more of it, whose value has not been increased by hundreds of dollars, through its construction.

Does Prohibition Increase the Drug Evil?

In 1908 the Dominion Parliament passed an Act to prohibit the importation, manufacture and sale of opium for other than medical purposes. In 1916 the United States passed an exceedingly drastic law regarding habit-forming drugs, which drove the drug vendors to Canada; and at the second session of the Dominion Parliament in 1919 and at the regular session in 1920, stringent regulations were passed regarding the importation, exportation and traffic in narcotic drugs. In regard to convictions for offences against the Opium and Narcotic Drug Act, Government statistics show that the bulk of offenders are in the two wet Provinces of British Columbia and Quebec. The convictions for the year are as follows: Prince Edward Island, 2; Nova Scotia, 2; New Brunswick, 29; Ontario, 321; Manitoba, 38; Saskatchewan, 170; Alberta, 160; total in dry provinces, 711. Quebec, 352; British Columbia, 801; Total in wet provinces, 1,153.

The Late Samuel Dice, Police Magistrate

In the death of Police Magistrate Samuel Dice, of Milton, on Saturday, the County of Halton has lost a worthy and very prominent citizen. Mr. Dice was a native of this county, having been born in Nelson township in 1837. He was a man who faithfully and fearlessly assumed the duties of citizenship, and was eminently successful in public life. Mr. Dice was a man of high purpose and noble resolves. He stood for what he believed to be right, whether it was popular to do so or not. For forty years he was a power in the advancement of the temperance issues in this county, and to his efforts much is due for the progress made and maintained toward the ultimate goal of total prohibition of the manufacture, importation, exportation and transportation of intoxicating liquors for beverage purposes. As a Police Magistrate Mr. Dice was fair and impartial, always weighing evidence carefully, and ever inclined to favor the accused so far as the ends of justice would permit. For five years he was Mayor of Milton, and his administration was most satisfactory. As a member of the Anglican Church he was active and representative, and for years was a delegate to Synod and Diocese meetings. The name of Samuel Dice will ever be remembered in Halton County with esteem and reverence.

The Budget of 1924

After being before the House of Commons for thirty-three days, and discussed from every possible angle by the members after hearing respectively from their constituencies, the House of Commons on Friday approved of the new tariff by a vote of 185 to 53, more than three to one, Mr. Woodworth's amendment, advocating more radical changes, received, as was expected, little support and was negated by 204 to 16. Four Liberals, Messrs. McCrea, Raymond, Euler and Marler, voted against the Government. The Hon. Walter Mitchell resigned his seat in the House for the same reason, and Sir Lomer Gouin, by releasing his pair, classes himself among the intentional absentees. These incidents indicate some defections from the Government in Ontario and Quebec, which will no doubt be regarded as far more than counterbalanced by the prospect of greatly increased support in the Prairie West. We are confronted with a new political alignment. Its first effect will be to give the Government a large and safe majority in the House, putting an end to the talk of an early election. It means also that the country will have one, if not two, years to consider the effect of the new tariff and of other changes, if any. Historically the majority for the budget was the largest ever given in the House of Commons.

Felt Like Daniel in the Lions' Den

Sir Thomas White, whose inactivity in Home Bank affairs when he was Minister of Finance is now being discussed, made rather a significant, and with ethical content introduction to a two hours' speech at the meeting of the Royal Commission at Ottawa last Friday. His introductory remarks, following an impassioned argument by W. T. J. Lee, who referred to Sir Thomas White, Sir Henry Drayton and Rt. Hon. W. S. Fielding as "a trinity of negligence" was: "When I survey this imposing array of counsel and see my experienced friend, R. J. McLaughlin, my fiery and pugacious friend, Mr. Lee; my practical and restrained friend, Mr. Browning; my very learned friend and leader, and dean of the Bar of Canada, Mr. Lafleur, and a leader of the Bar of Manitoba, Mr. Symington—know when I see this imposing array of counsel what Daniel felt like in that den of hungry lions, and when I see them looking at me hungrily I am not without hope that I may fare as well as that biblical character."

Guaranteeing Bank Deposits

Parliament at Ottawa is being called upon to consider a scheme for guaranteeing depositors in the banks against loss, through the mismanagement and misfortune of the institutions to which their savings are entrusted. To some of the advocates of the idea such insurance will appear to be an easy and simple thing. It is regarded by them as something more effective than government inspection, as a guarantee against the consequences of incompetence and malfeasance in the operation of a bank. If bank note circulation can be guaranteed, it is asked why not deposits? There are differences between bank notes and deposits, but in the nature, and extent of liability bank notes, through not of necessity a legal tender in payment of a debt, are accepted as such. This new suggestion adds a new responsibility to the Government of Canada, which is not in any respect justified. Robbing Peter to pay for Paul's speculations is neither honest nor business like. The more the idea of making the people of the country responsible through the Government, for the loss of incompetently directed banks, such as the Home Bank, which is responsible for the present agitation, the less will it appeal to the reason of men, who can view such serious matters from a calm, businesslike point of view.

Every Citizen of Ontario Has a Responsible Duty

It is time the good people throughout our Province awoke to the importance of personal responsibility for keeping the sale of liquor out of Ontario. If prohibition is never overthrown in this Province whose fault will it be? The Moderation League's? No? The blame will lie at the door of self-centred indifferent Christian voters. There are, unfortunately, many of them who still fail to recognize the personal responsibility which plainly rests upon them. Acton and scores of other places in this Province suffered for years under the licensed bar, because of the apathy and indifference of citizens of this type. Such incidents as the following have been common: "Oh, Mrs. M., why didn't you come out to vote?" questioned an unfortunate woman whose husband was addicted to drink, after the last Local Option election here. "Do you know that six more ballots would have carried Local Option? And there were three times that number, right in our own church, that were not polled." "Well, really, I couldn't. We were house-cleaning that day, and had expected company. I was sure the by-law would carry anyway. So sorry." Her questioner naturally turned away, oppressed by such a bland, crass selfishness. If an election comes on a plebiscite on the Ontario Temperance Act, every citizen should be impressed with his or her personal responsibility in this important matter.

EDITORIAL NOTES

An observant philosopher remarks that "not all who praise liberty and moderation, practice moderation when they get the liberty," and that's true as gospel.

Last season was a record-breaker. Prohibition has been the greatest blessing base ball ever enjoyed. The passing of the saloon increased our patronage wonderfully. Regardless of the merits of the Eighteenth Amendment, it is a great business booster for us.—Thomas J. Hickey, President American Base Ball Association.

After some months of comparative quietude, Lloyd George appeared on the floor of the British House of Commons on Saturday in one of the most effective contributions he has made since the present Government came into office, and it was notable that the vocal support emanating from the Unionists drowned that of his own followers.

Hon. N. W. Rowell, K. C., was appointed to represent the League of Nations Society of Canada at the convention of the League of Nations Societies at Lyons, France, at a meeting of the executive at Ottawa on Friday, when Sir Robert Borden, President, presided. Mr. Rowell will present a resolution to have the nearest Sunday to January 10 in each year observed in all countries as League of Nations' Sunday.

George Wood, of Onondaga, suggested a wise course the other day at a convention of Brant county farmers: "What we need is a round table conference between manufacturers, labor and farmers. I would like to see the Canadian Manufacturers' Association invite a representative of the farmers to place our case before them. And, when the United Farmers hold their annual convention, let them hear from representatives of the Manufacturers' Association and Organized Labor."

THE MINISTER'S FISHING TRIP

The Rev. Alexander Ramsay, like some of the early disciples, was a fisherman before he became a Minister. He had not been six weeks in charge of his first parish among the hills of Western Connecticut when he discovered Beaver Brook, a sparkling trout stream some three miles from the village. Into its alluring pools he determined to drop a hook at the earliest opportunity.

Beyond the red bridge which spans Beaver Brook, at the foot of Powder House Hill, Mr. Ramsay turned into an open pasture, and, with a long lance to unharness the mare, unfortunately he knew little or nothing about horses, and he slipped off the barren bridge and all before turning back to the carriage to look for the baiter.

Armed with the baiter, Mr. Ramsay set out in pursuit. But the capture was more difficult than he had expected. The mare, feeling placidly, with a perfect submission of indifference to his movements, would not approach within arm's length, and then plunge off again with a sort of mischievous defiance. Mr. Ramsay, thereupon patiently coil up his halter again and follow her.

Half an hour passed in the rather monotonous repetition of this performance, until Mrs. Ramsay, tiring at last of the amusement she had at first derived from her husband's difficulties, came to his aid.

With her assistance the mare was penned up in one corner of the pasture; but at the moment when success seemed assured, the perverse creature leaped a low stone wall into a pasture which seemed larger, bairn the first and was partly filled with underbrush and clumps of trees.

"You go back to the carriage, Mary," said Mr. Ramsay, his spurring forehead, "and see that no one makes off with that. I'll have another try for this exasperating animal, and if I can't catch her alone, I'll go for help to the nearest farmhouse."

The chase now became more active, for the minister's temper was aroused, and the best part of the day—for angling—was passing.

"Nathan," she gasped, "I locked him in the summer kitchen!"

"Nathan," shouted his father, "go into the house and get your gun! Order her to get out! I will get her, and I guess we'll be enough for the fellow."

They argued, the three men approached the summer kitchen. It was a dramatic moment. Mr. Hodfish unlocked the door and threw it open. "Hurry up!" he shouted, while Nathan presented his gun threateningly at the man who appeared within.

For them the affair ended in a happy laugh, but the delicacy of Mrs. Hodfish's position was felt by those all around. It was Mr. Ramsay's tact that saved the situation. He went back to his wife, whom he found calmly employed in the kitchen, and sent her to call on Mrs. Hodfish, while he, with the assistance of the farmer and his son, recaptured the mare, now ready enough to be caught.

As fishing trips go, the minister had reason to consider this a success. True, he brought home no fish, but that often happens. The next Sunday Mrs. Hodfish, who had not been to church for ten years, came with his wife to hear the young parson preach. He came again, and before Mr. Ramsay left the White Church for a larger parish, he had the satisfaction of saluting as "deacon" Rufus Hodfish, who had stood ready to run him through with a hay-fork.

HE WENT ON THE TRAIN.

An American lady, who spoke very little French, was getting into a train for Quebec at last summer. She had a little white dog under her arm. One of the railway guards stepped up to her, and, touching his cap, said "Madame, you cannot take your dog on the train."

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