CURRENT COMMENT

Another Hydro Commission.

Premier Drury, after fifteen years of Hydro-Electric education in Ontario, has approached the question as a new student. He wants information, which is a creditable desire, and he hopes to get it speedily by the appointment of a Royal Commission. Five men on a Royal Commission may take a year or more to arrive at a conclusion. If Premier Drury called in five eminent capitalists and said to them: "Gentlemen, I have three radial railways which I am offered at a bargain by the Federal government; I have a franchise for radial railways covering the banner province of Canada; with that goes the additional franchise of the distribution of power and light to the people of the province; moreover, we have 238 munacipalities who have guaranteed your bonds by a vote; and 138 of these are townships representing the interests of the farmers. We have spent seven years of getting information and threshing out the subject and this information has been laid before the people and they have voted accordingly. Will you, gentlemen, look into this matter, and accept our franchises and proceed with these plans"? If Premier Drury made this proposal to five eminent capitalists, how long would they be before accepting his offer? They would hasten to have him put the offer into writing before he changed his mind, and the prospectus they would publish and the $100,000,000 corporation they would float, and the jubilation they would indulge in, would be worthy of the "pudding" they had discovered. Premier Drury has been led to regard the Hydro-Electric franchises of Ontario as liabilities. They are well known to corporationists as the greatest assets the province possesses. For fifteen years Hydro-Electric power has been before the poople. It was difficult to convince Premier Drury's predecessors that Hydro was an asset and not a liability. But Hydro has saved the people of Ontario $17,000,000 in rates, and they know that similar achievements are certain for Hydro radials. The advantage of dividing the overhead charges of the radials with power distribution appears to have been entirely overlooked in the calculations of the skeptics opposing the radials. Nor have they admitted on the other hand the advantage to the farmer of getting electric power and light cheapened by the same division of overhead charges with the radials. There is no other way in which the farmer can be served with this civilizing factor. It is to be hoped that the Royal Commission will be able to make up its mind as quickly as the eminent capitalists would in the case suggested and that there will be as little delay as possible in recognizing the value of this provincial asset.

The New Prime Minister.

Hon. Arthur Meighen assumes the premiership with the good wishes of his party. It is felt by many students of the political situation that his choice for the office indicates a belief on the part of other possible candidates for the office that a prolongation of the coalition of 1917 could not be expected long to continue. The withdrawal of Hon. Mr. Rowell lends weight to this view. He has been one of the ablest supporters of the coalition, and no man has gained more weight and respect in the country in spite of the hostility he has undoubtedly incurred at the same time from those opposed to the policies with which he has been identified. The refusal of Sir Thomas White to accept the leadership is quite accurately based on the state of his health and his private affairs, but it is possible that had a less strenuous prospect been presented in the duties lying before the new premier he might have been induced to take it. There does not seem to be any real confidence in the continuation of a coalition government among those who know most about practical politics. Coalition is simply a pis aller in view of the break up or break down of the old party systems. In this respect one party is no better off than the other. So they support coalition in the hope of possible benefit therefrom. The political signs throughout the country indicate the necessity for the creation of new programs, the recognition of new issues, the choice of new representatives. What is most urgently needed is reform in electoral methods, and the success everywhere attained by the method of proportional representation where it has been applied, points to its adoption by the Federal government as the very best means of composing the present disturbed, or at least disorganized, conditions, and recovering the political poise of the country? The first virtue of P. R. is in its discovery of the strongest men of the nation. When the strongest men get elected, which they admittedly do under the present electoral system, they will speedily evolve working relations, reorganize party methods, and raise the tone of the whole political life of the country. Few men object to party government with such ends and aims; it is partisan government that arouses the enmity of the honest and induces the despair of the wise. Proportional representation presents the most practical path to the purification of party politics.

The Chippawa Development.

Somewhat unexpectedly work on the Chippewa development was resumed after an agreement between the Hydro-Electric commission and representatives of the labor men, which was brought about by Mayor McBride of Brantford, and George Halcrow, another member of the Legislature. The conference, which included Tom Moore, Joe Gibbons and John Flett, as well as Sir Adam Beck and the Hydro engineers, sat all day and well into the night, and arrived at a settlement which was said to be perfectly satisfactory to all parties. In regard to the ten-hour day, which was accepted for part of the men, a straight ten-hour wage was agreed upon, avoiding the difficulties of the overtime charge. As many men as could possibly be placed on eight-hour shifts were arranged for, and this three-shift plan it is hoped will work out according to estimates. The necessity for getting the work finished so as to assure the delivery of power to the amount required at the stipulated time, is the real reason for using the two ten-hour shifts, loss of time by weather and other causes rendering the extra work necessary. Four hours off are required for pumping and other necessary adjustments. The Commission, in order to facilitate the work of construction and to make up for the time already lost, has purchased five more locomotives, 60 cars and two more of the huge Mogul shovels. It is reported privately that eminent independent engineering opinion states that the Chippewa station is in the best possible place, that the work will be finished at the time agreed upon, and that the cost will be within the estimates. The skeptics as usual will refuse to believe until they see Chippewa power operating the Hydro radials and supplying Premier Drury's farm with light and power.

The Presidential Nominations.

In the nomination of James M. Cox, Governor of Ohio, as Democratic candidate for the presidency of the United States, Ohio, has had a unique experience in the recognition of its "favorite sons", the Republican candidate, Senator Harding, being also a resident of the Buckeye state. Moreover, both men are newspaper editors and proprietors, and both were newsboys when their age justified such occupation. The selection of these men indicates not a weakness in the principles of democracy but a weakness in the methods of democratic machinery. It is quite certain that could a poll of the people of the United States have been taken without these nominations that neither of them would have been anywhere near at the head of the poll. It is quite possible for a minority vote to elect one of these gentlemen president of the republic, which is supposed to be governed by majorities. So it is not quite fair to speak of the failure of democracy when it is the failure of democratic methods that is in question. It is clear that both men were nominated in default of agreement upon stronger men. They were chosen without regard to paramount foreign considerations in order to gratify domestic sentiment on domestic issues. To Canadians it is a matter of indifference which worthy editor fills the presidential chair. Perhaps the League of Nations and the world's peace might fare a little better at the hands of Mr. Cox, but American politics are never what they seem.

German Competition Ahead

"The German nation," says The Observer, "is unmistakably recovering that sheer power of work which was the chief secret of its former strength, both in peace and war. This is the big fact that our own more easy-going democracy will soon have to reckon with." And this fact has behind it for all easy-going workers that competition is still the animating principle of business, and in the struggle of competition the easy-going worker is bound to lose out. He insists on higher wages, and this would be a simple matter if he produced accordingly, but if he fails to produce in profitable measure his markets go to his competitors who are not afraid to lay their backs to their work because they know that not only their own living but their national existence depends upon it. Nor will co-operation ever wholly abolish this need of honest labor. For nations can only live by exchange on an equitable basis, and those who fail to produce cannot expect to fare equitably in the world's markets. There is the alternative of living self-contained in our own national boundaries, but no one seriously proposes that plan.

— AND THIS IS NO JOKE!!

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON.

Lesson IV. July 25.

DAVID SUCCEEDS SAUL AS KING.

Printed Text—2 Sam. 2: 1-7; 5: 1-5.

Golden Text.—

"Trust in Jehovah with all thy heart,
And lean not upon thine own understanding."

—Prov. 3: 5.

Historical Setting.

Time.—1063 and 1055 B.C. Place—Hebron.

Daily Readings.

Monday, July 19.—Death of Saul (1 Sam. 31: 1-6). Tuesday, July 20.—David's Lamentation (2 Sam. 1: 17-27). Wednesday, July 21.—David Made King of Judah (2 Sam. 2: 1-7). Thursday, July 22.—David Crowned King of all Israel (2 Sam. 5: 1-10). Friday, July 23.—True Success (Matt. 25: 14-29). Saturday, July 24.—Winning a Crown (1 Cor. 9: 16-27). Sunday, July 25.—A Crown of Righteousness (2 Tim. 4: 1-8).

Comments.

2: 1 Between the last lesson and this occurred David's year and four months among the Philistines and exile, because of Saul's wrath (1 Sam. 27-30). The Philistines were enemies, but David managed it by becoming a vassal of the Philistine king Acish. In a comparatively short time Saul died (2 Sam. 1: 1-10). Hebron was twenty miles south of Jerusalem.

Verse 2. At this time David was in an entangling alliance with the Philistines, who had overwhelmed the northern tribes of Israel, and was somewhat distrusted by his own countrymen.

Verse 3. Being practically an outlaw, David gathered about him his own people and a nondescript group of others—"debtors, fugitives from justice and discontented persons generally." Some of these made his bravest soldiers. They all now came to Hebron.

Verse 4. Samuel had already anointed David privately (Lesson XI., second quarter), but this was his public formal inauguration by the people of Judah.

Verse 5. David here expressed personal gratitude to the people of Jabesh-gilead for their burial of Saul (1 Sam. 31: 7-13) and also held their loyalty.

Verse 6. David was not an enemy to Saul, though Saul was David's enemy. David was really grieved because of Saul's unfortunate, disastrous career. Saul was Jehovah's anointed and David's king.

Verse 7. Saul's kingdom was tottering to ruins, and David's announcement of his own kingship was welcome.

5: 1. David was about thirty years old when anointed king of Judah. Seven and one-half years elapsed before he was anointed king of Israel. Read intervening chapters.

Verse 2. It was really David who was their hero up to the time of his exile. They remembered Goliath and David's signal victory over him.

Verses 3-5. Doubtless the covenant stated "the duties and rights of the king of a limited monarchy and of his subjects."

Illustrated Truth.

The wise person is not merely the one who seeks direction, but also the one who seeks it in the right place. (v. 1.)

Illustration.—David could doubtless have found many people who were willing to advise him, but he did not risk human counsel. A physician was called to see a woman who seemed to be dangerously ill. There were some puzzling symptoms, therefore he questioned the patient closely. She had been sick for some time, she told him, but hadn't been able to tell what the trouble really was. "You should have consulted some one," the doctor said severely. "Oh, I did," was the reply. "I asked everybody in the neighborhood what I had better take, and a number of them gave me medicine, but it didn't seem to do any good."

THE BRAIN BOX

By E. Gunn-Ramsay

WHICH WAY ARE YOU LOOKING?

In that quaint old story by John Bunyan called "The Pilgrim's Progress", which pictured often so true to life, the various tribulations and rejoicings which may befall a man in his journey through this old world of ours, there were two characters who took the opposite side upon every question.

One was an optimistic fellow who always looked upon the brightest side of things, and had the faith to expect some good even where evil migat abound.

The other one was always in the depth of despair and appeared to delight in predicting all kind of tragedies and difficulties

Mr. Hopeful and Mr. Despair are still trotting around this world. In the guise of teachers and preachers, writers and merchants, statesmen and workers of all kinds, they still live on. They are scattered throughout society, the two opposites, of pessimism and optimism, and when you meet an optimist you think, "My, that fellow is quite a tonic; his point of view has certainly cheered me up," and when you meet the other fellow, who is groaning with predictions of future disasters, you think, "Thank goodness the whole world isnt made up of just kind of nature."

But, "bide a wee," as the Scotsman would say, there is such a thing as a happy medium,—to have the wisdom to know the signs of the times, and yet—to refrain from being too dire, or to be wise enough to guard against an over-foolish confidence in what is practically non-existant.

Which Way Are You Looking?

You may tell me that for your part you are sitting actually on the dividing fence between these two positions, and so you are able to give a glance in both directions, and sum up your own conclusions. So far, you are wise, but there are sure and certain indications to-day that we are upon the eve of a change. What the change will mean to Canada, during the next year, who can prophecy? It is interesting just now to read various statements by men who should know conditions. For many months past we have been careering along at a mad pace with high wages, high prices, everything on the rise. Many business men now say that there is going to be a halt. Others say that when the halt comes, it will bring with it a slackness which will mean that many will be looking for work.

Which Way Will You Look Then?

Are you indispensable? or do you only think you are?

Are you one of the people who is earning a good salary today? What are you doing with it that your future may be safe?

Without urging you to pessimism, or looking for trouble, it would be a wise move upon the part of every worker who is making good money today to save all that he possibly can. Let the high price of all kinds of articles be your excuse for saving as much of your surplus money as you possibly can.

In times of slackness of work, it is the misfits, those who just take their job from month to month, in the same routine without seeking to improve their methods or their output, who are the first to go.

What About Your Work?

Are you a real asset in the place where you work?

It's great to be optimistic. We need optimists, but true optimism does not mean failure to "look ahead." Just think if a period of unemployment came upon this country, would it touch you? Could it touch you? What are you doing with yourself and your work for your own protection? Have you always thought so much about the value of your work, that when a crisis comes, you would be one of the last that your employer could spare.

WHICH WAY ARE YOU LOOKING?

LOOK AHEAD!

Foolish Francesca

By Olive Wadsley

(Continued from last week.)

So all day, and every day, Francesca rose gaily and put on one of her cheap outre little frocks and danced up the stairs to the sunshine and Wynton.

He found her an extremely welcome relief to the tedium of his days. Cowan and Dasent, who were both going back on sick leave, were laid low.

The excitement, the sense of coming gaiety and freedom induced by the knowledge that he was going home, his own fitness, and the emptiness of the days, made him a dangerous companion.

Francesca amused him immensely. Her opinions on things, views freely aired and primarily culled from Phrynette or Paul, her casual bonhomie, which seemed so grown-up and was, in reality, merely an effect of self-conscious youth, all made him entirely fail to realize her as she was.

If he definitely pondered the matter, he usually ended up by defining her as a "precocious, sporting little kid."

Frankie possessed only one of her attributed qualities; she was really small for her age! Her supposed precocity was merely the result of always having lived with people older than herself, and of having been accepted by them on their own level!

She was immensely ignorant for her age on many matters.

She had read, largely, novels of a certain type, "Ouida-like" ones, which contained a marvelous and noble hero, and an ill-used but saintly heroine. Love, as a real thing, she had never thought much about; as a nebulous, queer and, perhaps, fascinating event, occasionally.

Paul had said once or twice with a smug complacency that he "rather fancied Frankie was a deuced sight better brought up than most girls, and he'd seen a few."

In essentials it was true.

She had absorbed certain cheap ideas about position, breeding, and the "correctness" of things—unimportant details after all in the scheme of life—from Phrynette, and she was rather lax about money matters, and sometimes shiftless with regard to the truth; but she was, in the big things, straight, and she had never, in all her seventeen years, heard about, worried about, or discussed sex problems.

She was a child with a girl's intuition and charm.

Wynton was a man of the world and an accomplished flaneur, and the weather was ideal and he discovered that Francesca had a voice. She whispered the great ambition to him shyly—she wanted to be a singer.

"I shall earn money as a governess or something, and then when I've got a little go to Mr. Fawcett—he's our lawyer, you know—to ask him to make Phrynette let me have just enough to help me live while I take lessons, and then—afterward—afterward—"

Her eyes glowed, she flushed delicately.

"Well, afterward? What then, you excited small person?" Wynton queried.

Francesca caught hold of his arm with both her hands and pressed it tightly.

"Life, and all the world in front of me," she said. She was trembling with eagerness, with the tumult of hope.

"You seem to have the temperament all right," he said, smiling at her.

"D'you mean you think I'll be able to act? Act, I mean in grand opera?"

"What ambitions!"

"What's the good of going in for anything if you're not ambitious? All the while I keep saying: 'I believe in it and it will come true.' Things do, you know, if one believes hard enough and goes 'all out' to get them."

"Do they indeed?" he said teasingly.

"You're rotting me, laughing at me, but it's true all the same. If you want a thing hard enough and never stop wanting it, and do anything in the world you can think of to get it, you will get it."

"And by that time you won't want it," Wynton murmured.

She flashed round upon him.

"Oh, won't I? You just wait! I'll bet you if I do make a success that I'll adore it. I think it must be simply gorgeous to get there."

Wynton taught her one or two things about singing. He had an attractive voice himself, and had trained under Duroy in Paris for a few months.

Francesca was too young, of course, he decided; but she could sing. He was right, she could. And together every morning they practised and played.

Frankie loved it all: Wynton's clothes, his way of speaking, his infectious laugh. Everything about him seemed to her very splendid and right, and he devoted himself entirely to her—until the end of the week when the swell abated, and people began to come up again on deck.

For the first day she thought, perhaps, he was ill. She saw him once after lunch sitting beside Mrs. Willson, leaning over her chair. He looked rather serious, she thought, and pale.

He smiled at her, though. But when three days passed and he never came, or only for a few minutes occasionally, she suddenly found that she was infinitely distressed at his absence.

She felt shy, and afraid, and forlorn, and after waiting all one afternoon for him, she sent a note to his cabin by the steward:

"Please come and talk to me tonight. I'll wait at the top of the stairs at half past eight. Are you cross with me?

"FRANKIE."

Wynton read it, and since he was merely ordinarily selfish and not wholly inconsiderate, and was also only moderately attracted by Mrs. Willson, decided to keep what, to Cowan, he described as "the indiscreet assignation."

"Silly ass you are, Christopher," Cowan returned rather shortly. He did not consider Wynton was quite playing the game. Francesca looked too young, too much a flapper, with her short curls and her skimpy little frocks.

It was nearly nine before Wynton reached the little shelter at the back of the stairs where so often in the evening Frankie and he had sat. In the music-room, just below, Mrs. Willson was singing.

"Hello, Frankie!" Wynton said as he turned the corner of the door.

"Oh, Kit," Frankie's voice said, almost despairingly. They had been "Kit" and Frankie" almost at once. Wynton had said it was absurd to be strictly formal.

"Oh, Kit, are you cross?"

She came toward him, her short curls blown up from her brow, her eyes wide and distressed.

"You funny little kid, but of course not. Why should I be?"

"You never came, once, all these days," Frankie said unsteadily.

Wynton laughed again easily.

"One must put in a bit of attendance with the wife of one's C. O., you know, kiddie," he said. "Come along, sit down and be good. So you've really missed me?"

Frankie nodded.

"Oh, if you only knew how much," she said happily. "You see, I've never had a friend like you before, and it did leave a blank when you went away and never came back."

She leant toward him. She was rather over-scented with some sweet, clinging perfume which was reminiscent of jasmine. A curl blew against Wynton's face as she moved her head.

The words of a song floated to them, one clear, soft note semed to linger:

"I hear you calling me—"

With a little sigh of pleasure at the loveliness of the voice, Francesca said: "I wish I'd heard you calling me lately!"

She laughed very softly, and for an instant placed her hand on Wynton's.

He started a little. The slight caress, the haunting refrain of the song, and Francesca's obvious real unhappiness because he had forgotten her; all combined to induce a sense of quickened interest in her.

He turned and looked at her in the dim light. She smiled back at him, her small, pale face alight.

"Dear little girl," he said suddenly, "so you'll miss me, will you, at the end of the voyage?"

"Shan't I ever see you in London?" she asked blankly. "You said you'd be in London, too, in a month or so; and surely Shepherd's Bush—that's the place I'm going to—isn't very far away. You put 'London' after it in addresses."

"Would you mind if I didn't come?"

"Frightfully," she said. "Oh, Kit, you will, won't you? You are the only real friend I've got—anywhere."

"Poor little, lonely lady!"

He put his arm round her protectingly; she seemed very small, and alone, and unprotected.

With a little murmur she leant her head against his shoulder.

Mrs. Willson began to sing "The Rosary."

"I love that song," Frankie said, a little breathlessly. "It sort of wakes me all up, and makes me feel happy and yet unhappy. Have you ever felt like that?"

He smiled a little.

"I'm not such a bundle of emotions."

(To Be Continued.)

NEWSPAPER RIGHTS.

There are some men who have peculiar ideas about a newspaper. They regard it not as a business, but as a convenience. If the paper reaches them late, or fails to give every item of news, or its conduct toward them is in a manner they do not like, they then very properly make a business matter of it, because they have bargained for something they are not getting. They make these issues every day in the year, except the first day, when the business idea is forgotten, and the only thing uppermost is a plea to get out of paying what they honestly owe the paper.

These same men will meet the newspaperman with a smile, offer him a cigar, and then ask him to say in his paper they are the most enterprising and progressive citizens in the town. That's their idea of business.

Now, the newspaper is a business. It is not a glory machine. It can no more live on sentiment than can its employes. It may surprise you, but typesetters don't work for nothing and no amount of persuasion will induce them to do it. It's true you may only owe us $2 for a year's back subscription, yet if three or four hundred subscribers reason like you, that we collect the news for the fun of it, printers work all week just to print it out for you, the paper mills give us the paper just because they want to see us do well, the machinery men give us machinery for the same reason, then it becomes a different matter; instead of $2 worth of glory it is $200 cash each week for help and supplies.

The newspaper business is made up of small things, and it is such items, which, if collected, enable the proprietors to improve the service and pay off all obligations promptly, but which if deprived of for trivial reasons makes the cash account short and the newspaper man has to grovel along under a weight of about sixty pounds to the square inch.

Perhaps you have never given any thought to our subject on this line; if not, then, if this article serves to call your serious attention to it, its mission has been accomplished.