

Miss Macphail's Weekly Letter From Ottawa

Parliament has been going a week. Not long enough to enable members to know each other, even by sight. There are so many new members that the veterans feel lonely. When two of them happen to meet they are obviously glad to see a familiar face, however cold they may have been to each other in the last Parliament. It will be many a long day before I am comfortable in a House that does not contain the skilled and hard-working U. F. A. members. To add to my difficulty I sit in the midst of the men who defeated them.

All the leaders spoke on the Address in reply to the Speech from the Throne. Mr. Bennett took four hours to cover a very wide field. He charged the Government with unfairly dismissing the Wheat Board headed by Mr. MacFarland and with handling the matter of sanctions against Italy badly, giving encouragement to Italy by the repudiation of Dr. Riddell.

Mr. Bennett in dealing with the results of the election pointed out that although the Government had 171 members in a House of 245, it had been placed there by less than 35 men and women out of every 100 of the population having the right to vote. He suggested that Canada might benefit by having compulsory voting, as has Australia and that the cost of the election in each constituency be strictly limited by law. Britain has found such limitation beneficial.

In his reply the Prime Minister, Mr. Mackenzie King, showed great vigour and the complete confidence which comes from an overpowering majority. Although in beginning he stated that he would not again make a four-hour speech, he just saved himself from it by half an hour. He jibed Mr. Bennett with having run a one-man Government and suggested that his long speech indicated it would be also a one-man Opposition. He taunted the former Prime Minister, too, with the desertion of his followers on the eve of the election, and with the defeat of twelve of his Ministers who did go to the country. "Those who live in glass houses had better not throw stones," he said.

In dealing with sanctions and Dr. Riddell's part in placing oil on the list of commodities to be kept out of Italy, Mr. King said that Dr. Riddell made the suggestion as a member of the Sanctions Committee, of which he was Chairman, and that he had done so as a member of the Committee and not as a representative of Canada. Dr. Riddell had cabled the Government asking their opinion, to which the Government had replied within an hour. But the matter had arisen in the Committee in Geneva in the interval between sending the wire and the receiving of the reply, with the result that Dr. Riddell, left on his own authority, made the suggestion for the oil embargo.

Newspapers in Great Britain and indeed throughout the world began calling Dr. Riddell's suggestion "Canada's proposal". It was only then that the Government felt it must clear up the situation by a statement which was made by Mr. Lapointe. Mr. King stated that the developments since that time had gone to prove the wisdom of the Government's action in relation to sanctions.

The two leaders had not discussed the condition of the people of Canada to-day. They had said little about unemployment, low prices for farm products, unplaced youth,—indeed their speeches in the main sounded unreal and remote from the day to day living of the mass of Canadians. It was left for Mr. Woodsworth, Mr. Blackmore, the leader of the Social Credit group, and Mr. H. H. Stevens to deal with realities.

Mr. Blackmore, who until a few weeks ago was a teacher in Lethbridge, is to-day leading a group of seventeen in the Commons, his task being made much heavier by the fact that none of them have had previous Parliamentary experience. As was to be expected he dealt largely with the need of the control of currency and credit and quoted the Prime Minister as having said during the campaign "once a nation parts with the control of its currency and credit it matters not who makes the nation's laws. Usury

once in control will wreck any nation. Until the control of the issue of currency and credit is restored to the Government and recognized as its most conspicuous and sacred responsibility, all talk of sovereignty and of Parliament and of democracy are idle and futile."

The Speech from the Throne does make a direct reference to the intention of the Government to bring under its control credit and currency and to make such changes in the ownership and control of the Bank of Canada as may be necessary to give the Government a predominant interest in the ownership as well as effective control of the Bank of Canada. Mr. Blackmore said that if the Government proceeded to carry out such a course they would have the support of the Social Credit group. He pointed out that such a change would be almost revolutionary, but until accomplished all attempts to deal effectively with unemployment, debt, the elimination of war, and foreign trade, would be vain.

A professor in Columbia University was quoted by Mr. Blackmore to show that the total debt of the world in the 1600's increased 47 per cent., in the 1700's 446 per cent., in the 1800's 12,000 per cent. and ever since debts had increased according to the curve established by the previous tremendous increase. How, he asked, can debt under such a system be paid? He urged the basing of currency and credit on the ability to produce goods and services, and said we must learn the economics of plenty and forget the economics of scarcity.

By far the most arresting speech this session was made by Mr. H. H. Stevens and it received the unusual tribute of perfect attention by all members of the House. The strength that was necessary to break from his party and the suffering involved not only in the break but in the fact that he was returned without a following, showed in the speech. Mr. Stevens spoke with power and authority. He made a plea for the common people, those who work in field, factory and office and took almost as a text a statement by the philosopher Kant that democracy should function so as to treat humanity as an end and never as a means.

Mr. Stevens pointed out that the great struggle of to-day is in the economic field. Political liberty has been won but great numbers of people are economic slaves and slavery is the denial of democracy. He pointed out that the farmer has nothing to say about the price he gets for his products and the worker no effective voice in the wage he receives for his work.

He reminded us that the House of Commons means that the members represent the common people and not special privilege. He believed that a strong attitude against exploitation on the part of the members of the Commons would do much to improve prices and wages and conditions, even without law, and cited as an example the investigation into the affairs of the Imperial Tobacco Company and the indignation of the members of the Commons and the people outside when it became known that the prices of tobacco were forced down from 30c. to 16c. or 14c. a pound and that at the same time exorbitant bonuses were paid to the executive officers of the Company and excessive profits made. The power of public opinion has since caused a rise in tobacco prices to the former level, together with new and fairer arrangements with retailers and much improved working conditions in the factories.

"I am not asking for the moment that we fix prices," said Mr. Stevens, "but I am asking Parliament to declare as one of the fundamental principles upon which the economic structure of this country was based that fair prices should be paid to the farmers . . . and fair wages to the workers." Mr. Stevens believed that by raising the purchasing power of the farmer and worker such a demand for goods would result as would greatly improve conditions.

In closing he made a moving appeal to the new members in the House to remain true to their conscience and their determination to serve the people and not the party and he expressed the belief that if they did so this Parliament would do much toward finding solutions for the pressing problems of this day.

TOWNSEND LAKE

Cold stormy weather and bad roads at time of writing. It looks as though we are to have an old-fashioned winter.

S. S. No. 4 has been closed the past two weeks owing to sickness among the pupils and the stormy weather. The measles are very prevalent in this section.

Mr. Charles Jackson has been spending the most of the winter with his sister, Mrs. M. Steer, in Markdale.

Glad to report Mr. Dan Brodie has recovered from his recent illness and is able to be about again, also the Ellisons.

Mr. John McNulty of Guelph spent a few days visiting relatives here while in attendance at the funeral of the late Chas. Moran.

The sympathy of the people of this locality goes out to Mrs. Chas. Moran in her recent sad bereavement.

Miss Irene Duggan of Irish Block

is visiting her sister, Mrs. John Barry.

A goodly number of neighbors spent an evening recently with Mr. and Mrs. John Vasey.

Mrs. Frank D'Arcy of Kindersley, Sask., was a visitor at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Moran last week.

Mr. Jas. Gillen of Glenelg Centre visited his mother for a few days last week.

Mr. Chas. Moran, a Life-Long Resident, Passes

The many friends and relatives of Charles Moran were shocked to hear of his sudden passing at Dornoch on Jan. 23rd, he having apparently been in his usual health. Mr. Moran was a life-long resident of this district and one of the most highly respected farmers in this section. A son of the late Mr. and Mrs. Thos. Moran, who were among the early pioneers of Glenelg, having come here from Guelph. He was born across the road from where he re-

sided on the old homestead 62 years ago. In Sept. 1912 he was happily wedded to Miss Annie Malone of Glenelg and to them was born one son, Patrick, who died at the age of 16 years. He is survived by his sorrowing widow; one sister, Mrs. J. T. Vasey of New Westminster, B.C.; and three brothers, Joseph on the old homestead; Thomas and Richard in Holland. The funeral took place on Saturday, Jan. 25th, to St. Paul's R. C. Church, Dornoch, of which the deceased had been a life-long member. Requiem High Mass was solemnized by the pastor, Rev. Father Sullivan. Father Kennedy preached the funeral sermon and officiated at the grave. The pallbearers were all neighbors, Messrs. Pat. Malone, John Barry, Wm. Priel, George McClung, John Priel and John McNulty. Among those from a distance in attendance for the funeral were Mr. John McNulty of Guelph; Mrs. John Jamieson of Toronto; Leo and Leonard D'Arcy of Markdale, and Joe and Pearl O'Connor of Traverston.

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