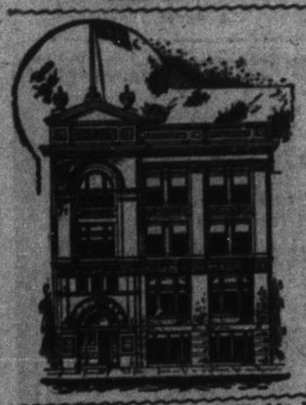
The British Whig

64TH YEAR



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THE FUTURE: WHAT OF IT?

The comment of a correspondent of the Toronto Star upon the movement for national government, and apparently against it, was that he saw no Lloyd-George in Canada who could rally the forces and take for his aim the greater efficiency of the government. The remark is perfectly true. There is not among the younger members of the ministry, or of the opposition, one who, having experience in the administration of public affairs, and a vision in connection with the war peculiarly his own, comes forward to preach a doctrine that will electrify the people. At least no one with the ability and the tremendous energy which the occasion requires, makes any sign of life, and a movement of this kind does not take form in a day.

There has to be the realization that the government under present conditions is not right, and that it can never be made right with the parties constituted as they are at present. There has to be a motion towards a change, gathering momentum from day to day and with the sure and certain result that sooner or later it will sweep its way to the front and displace every impediment. There must be some straining of the bonds that bind men to their parties, some breaking of personal and political ties, but these command little consideration when compared with the greater issue, the welfare, aye, the very salvation, of the country. It took a mighty effort for Lloyd-George to bring himself to contemplate the seeming usurpation of the place his honored leader held, and Mr. Asquith has borne testimony to the fact that Lloyd-George did not covet the premiership and did not conspire to secure it. He simply and reluctantly let his name be used in connection with the proposed change while he counselled and meditated and made himself see the import of passing events. When the climax came most of those who were responsible for it felt satisfied that it was for the national good.

Time has passed—not a long time, but sufficient of it to enable all parties to the state to measure up the situation and figure upon its possibilities. They are satisfied. There is greater enthusiasm among them all excepting the liberals, and these are not quite certain or quite pleased about what has happened. They are silent and contemplative. Their attitude will be determined by the demands of the hour. Meanwhile, the empire, so far as its emotions can be expressed by its public men, see in the plans of the new war council the one thing to be desired, namely, the concentration of energy upon plans which must eventuate in the success of the Allies in this war.

The Ross rifle debate in the House of Commons saw Sir Sam Hughes at his wildest, and Sir Robert Borden "up a tree." It is a strange procedure to pay for 80,000 more Ross rifles after the arm has been discarded. No doubt Sir Robert will turn the excess supply over to the Boy Scouts and the Girl Guides.

TIME FOR ACTION—NOW.

Further light has been shed upon the friction which has taken place in Toronto between the Army Service Corps and the Hospitals Commission. This appears in an article which has been extracted from the Star and is published in an adjoining column. The difficulty is largely due to the political expediency which has to be considered in connection with almost every feature of the war. The government is losing the confidence of the people in consequence. Its several departments are supposed to be conducted for the public good, and they are not. In the militia department, where all is supposed to be free from politics, everything is being tinged in a political way, with the usual results. It is simply deplorable that when appeals are being made to the people to unite for a specific purpose, and that purpose the successful prosecution of the war, the partisan spirit should appear and leave its ugly effects. This trouble is likely to do good. It will emphasize the evils of partisanship in a way that must lead to a rebellion against it and with some show of a remedy. An election with all its disturbing effects, cannot be desired by any reasonable person, still, no one can countenance the worst form of politics in the conduct of this war. The evidence is accumulating that the time has come, not only for a change of government, but a change in the conditions of government, for the formation of boards and commissions that can institute reforms of the most necessary kind.

Mr. Pardee forced one when he demanded a change in the manner in which returned soldiers were being provided for, a change to which the premier readily assented, as if weary of his experience with the incomplete and incompetent methods that had been followed in dealing with a serious question. What Canada wants just now is a non-political and efficient administration of all its war departments, and the people will not wait long for a reckoning with the government unless improvement is vouchsafed without further delay.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

Prince Tarnowski, the Austrian ambassador to the United States, will probably have to return home. His plight is that of Bernstorff's, and he is getting away from the United States as fast as he can.

The director-general of National Service in Britain will not stand for any man or woman looking on while others are in the struggle of the war. Would that the Canadian director-general took a similar position.

A colored sailor may cause the United States to enter the war. The United States has shed much blood already over the negro race, who are quite as much entitled to the protection implied as any other citizens.

A. L. Davidson, M.D., is posing as a statesman. His claim to this distinction lies in the fact that he dismissed an old public servant in the county of Annapolis who had failed to bow the knee to him. A statesman, is this the way he acts?

A California preacher gathered five hundred social sinners into his church and asked them the cause of their downfall. They unanimously declared by a show of hands that they fell from grace, because before the fall they could not earn a living. Is this a true bill?

The United States is providing a vocational training for its young people, beginning with the boys in the public school, and at a cost of about $2,000,000 a year. The more one thinks of it, the more he regrets that Canada did not embark in this movement when Dr. Robertson reported upon it over five years ago.

The Orangemen of Kingston are splendidly housed in their new quarters on Princess street. The chamber for the gatherings is spacious, well ventilated, choicely decorated and ornamented. It is free of debt, a fine thing these days. Auspicious as was the opening it will be the aim of the Orangemen to propogate their doctrines so that the hall will constantly be the rendezvous of Kingstonians animated with lofty convictions of liberty and patriotism.

KINGSTON EVENTS 25 YEARS AGO

The best ice harvest in many years is looked for.

E. E. Horsey was elected president by acclamation at the annual meeting of the Kingston Christian Endeavor Union.

All the merchants have signed a document pledging themselves to close their places of business early on Saturday evening.

A speaker in the Salvation Army meeting claimed that before his conversion he had been accustomed to represent several dead men at Kingston elections. He voted the Conservative ticket.

WHY SOME PAYS ARE DELAYED

Mr. Ames, M.P., in the Commons.

One word in connection with failures to receive assigned pay and separation allowance: The paymasters of several regiments went to England, taking their pay rolls with them, and it was not until we had them cabled back that the office here could work on the assigned pay and separation allowances. In those cases the mistakes were due entirely to the ignorance of the paymasters who were new men.

Then, a great many men who enlisted failed to fill out the necessary cards for their separation allowances and assigned pay. Quite a number enlisted as single men who were really married, but who were afraid to say that they were married because they thought they would not be accepted. These matters have occasioned some trouble, but we are getting them rectified.

Where avoidable mistakes occur, as they do occur sometimes, and when it is brought to the attention of one of our branches that a woman is not getting her assigned pay or separation allowances through some reason not explained, she need not suffer, because the Patriotic Fund will give her all the money she needs until the rectification is made.

BORDEN GOVERNMENT CALLED DOWN

Toronto World.

Absolutely nothing has come out of all the talk about getting more recruits to supply the wastage at the front among Canadian troops. The men who are giving their lives are writing home to their friends and telling them what they think. A society has been formed of the soldiers' kin and they are taking up the questions in which soldiers and soldiers' dependents and relatives are interested.

One soldier, writing from the front, said: "It will not be good for the politicians or the people who refuse to help us out here when we get back, if we ever do." The tardiness of the government about taking action; the reluctance to do anything effective or useful; the plaintive wails of the premier over the fact that $6,000,000 were spent in sending unfit men across the ocean, all indicate an unintelligible inability to appreciate the situation.

Had proper means of recruiting been adopted, or the Militia Act been put in force, these 6000 unfit men would never have been sent forward, and the six millions would not have been wasted. The government have sat as lazy spiders do at the centre of an ineffective web waiting for stray flies to buzz in. The wretched inefficiency of the Crimean war arrangements has not been absolutely paralleled in the Canadian management of the war, but it is the only similar affair that readily occurs to mind.

The fatuous resolution to spend $2,000,000 more on rifles, which will be of no use at the front, and are certainly not required at home, is on a par with other governmental acts and policies. Any company that can hold up the government of Canada for $2,000,000 useless expenditure must have "strong medicine" to operate with.

And of what avail are entreaties on the part of the government for the people to be economical, when the government itself is slapping money around in this way?

No wonder the people ask an efficient government, by whatever name it be called.

A RAW PEN PICTURE OF BERNSTORFF

Toronto Globe.

To him nothing was sacred, neither truth nor honor nor any of the courtesies of civilized life. If the whole story were told—and the indisputable evidence will yet be given to the public—there are but few crimes of black dishonor and shameless villainy that would not have a place in the indictments against him and the staff of specialists in intrigue and criminality which have been attached, in one way or another to the German Embassy. Murder and incendiarism and explosions are perhaps the most spectacular but by no means the most heinous of their crimes, and Capt. Boy-Ed and Von Papen were only a little more conspicuous than others as criminally involved as they.

But the head and front of this whole offending, reaching from Canada to Mexico and from New England to California, and absolutely without parallel in the history of international relations between any two nations, civilized or savage, is this polished master of scientific devilry, who is dignified by being given passports by the Government at Washington. The only passport Von Bernstorff has earned since he set foot in Washington would be for a one-way trip to a felon's cell.

SITUATION THAT IS NOW INTOLERABLE

Toronto Star.

There is seething discontent in the Army Medical Corps in this Military District, which may break out at any moment in such a manner as to compel the attention of the Militia Department and the Government at Ottawa. The resignation of Col. Marlow, Director of Medical Service, is foreshadowed. In fact it is well known that there are very few officers who have been so plain spoken with the Militia Department, and very few officers could have retained their positions had they indulged in the straight talk handed out by the Colonel, unless good grounds existed for the language.

It is declared by friends of the Army Medical Corps, that the work of the Hospitals Commission in dealing with the care and repatriation of returned soldiers, is incompetent, inadequate and that politics have interfered, as indicated by gradual transfer of work from the Army Medical Corps to the Hospitals Commission. There is a feeling in the Army Medical Corps that the biggest medical problem which Canada has to face has been given by the Government to a "bunch of laymen." Even if officers overseas had to be brought back from overseas they would have to come back through the Army Medical Corps.

Much friction is caused by the fact that a great number of officers have been desirous of going overseas for some time. There are a great number of doctors in Canada qualified as officers who are willing to place their services at the disposal of the Army Medical Corps. But how can they be of use when the great work of the Army Medical Corps in Canada is being taken over by the "Hospitals Commission, laymen and politicians"?

It is well known, state those who know, that what organization there is at the present time is the result of work done by the Army Medical Corps. When the order-in-council was passed creating the Hospitals Commission the only work for them to take over was the work in the district. Since then the Army Medical Corps is smarting under a condition which makes it actually responsible for the treatment of returned soldiers, and gives it no say in the work which is done in this connection. Being thoroughly dissatisfied with the work of caring for returned soldiers at present, and the Army Medical Corps is determined to end an intolerable situation.

Random Reels

"Of Shoes and Ships and Sealing Wax, of Cabbages and Kings."

Gumption

Gumption is a mild explosive which acts like a bottle of strawberry pop with a tack hammer. It is one of the most useful ingredients man can have in his system, unless it is allowed to ferment too rapidly, when it becomes more dangerous than the sinuous hind leg of an aggrieved mule.

No man ever took the count in business life until he ran out of gumption. The young man who starts out with nothing but the proceeds of his father's farm will not get very far unless he has a good stock of gumption to put with it. The only man who ever comes back after falling into the hands of a receiver is the one who never learned how to spell "quitter." The reason why so many men retire hurriedly from the general merchandise business and drift like an autumn leaf on the mill pond is because they let their gumption ooze out the same hole that swallowed up their book accounts.

When a man has real gumption nothing is going to stop him so long as his breath keeps coming. Some of the greatest fortunes in this country have been made by men who ran out of money several times, but always had a reliable, ball-bearing brand of native gumption to fall upon. Many a father who had fought and clawed his way to the top with the aid of some good old Scotch gumption was not able to leave any to his son, which accounts for the large number of two-legged vacuums who would rather play golf and suck Chartreuse through a straw than keep the business from sliding down hill backward.

Preachers talk a good deal about the importance of love in marriage, but love which is not hooked up with gumption on both sides is a greater disappointment than a tongue-tied telephone operator. It is very often the case that a wife will have all the gumption there is in the house, while her husband will be too unnerved to do anything but sit on a rock and fish. This teaches us that the superiority of man over woman is a myth with a hole in it.

Rippling Rhymes

THE NEW IDEA

WALT MASON

Last fall I heard a candidate stand on a rostrum and orate. To those assembled in the hall, he talked good roads, and that was all. He'd primed himself with useful facts, and dished them up in cateracts. He told how taxes go to waste when we make roads in sloppy haste. I went to hear his rival speak; he talked and talked almost a week. An old time politician he, who boomed the Boom of Liberty. Our Freedom was his foremost brag; he wept when speaking of the Flag. He painted with impassioned skill, our victory at Bunker Hill, and talked a while of Valley Forge, and threw a harpoon at King George. And when election day arrived, the good roads candidate survived, while he who talked of Precious Boons, was handed forty kinds of prunes. I'm glad we are outliving mush, and tommyrot and bunk and slush. I'm glad old tricks are in disgrace, that patriots who want a place, must talk horse sense and cke brass tacks, or leave the course with broken backs.

—WALT MASON.

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