

The British Whig 84TH YEAR



Published Daily and Semi-Weekly by THE BRITISH WHIG PUBLISHING CO., LIMITED.

J. G. Elliott, President; Leman A. Guild, Managing Director and Sec.-Treas.

Business Office: 243; Editorial Rooms: 229; Job Office: 222

SUBSCRIPTION RATES: Daily Edition: One year, delivered in city \$6.00; One year, if paid in advance \$5.00; One year, by mail to rural offices \$7.50; One year, by mail to United States \$12.50; Semi-Weekly Edition: One year, delivered in city \$1.00; One year, if not paid in advance \$1.50; One year, to United States \$1.50; Six and three months pro rata.

MONTREAL REPRESENTATIVE: R. Bruce Owen, 123 St. Peter St.; TORONTO REPRESENTATIVE: F. C. Hoy, 195 Traders Bank Bldg.; UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE: E. R. Northrup, 225 Fifth Ave., New York; F. R. Northrup, 1510 Ash St., Chicago.

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DON'T KNOW MINISTRY.

The Hearst will be recognized as a don't know ministry. This is indicated by several occurrences in the legislature during the last week. Dr. Pyne, for instance, introduced a bill which aims at the establishment of a superannuation fund, the maintenance of which will depend upon the contribution of the teachers at a rate of 2 1/2 per cent. The minister of education had been told by some one, his deputy probably, from a certain number of teachers the annual receipts would amount to a certain sum. But when asked what the demands upon it were likely to be, through the retirement of teachers at various parts, he had to admit "he didn't know."

The government committed itself—some think advisedly, and some inadvisedly, to the main trunk or automobile road from Windsor to the boundary of Quebec, (the point not defined), and when asked for an estimate of the cost of the commissioner of public works confessed that "he didn't know."

Hartley Dewar found that increases of salary had been decided upon, and asked for a statement of the plan which had guided the ministers in this matter. He noticed that some of the older officials had been disposed of with additions of \$200 or \$300, some for even less, but that a new hand, a brother-in-law of the inspector of charities, had been given an addition of \$800. Mr. Dewar did not challenge the deserts of the officials. He only wanted to know by what principle the ministry had been governed, and "they didn't know."

Mr. Bowman detected the favoritism which had been practiced in the purchase of drugs. They used to be ordered from the local druggists in the various towns and cities, in recognition of the spoils system. Now they appear to go in bulk orders to another relative of the same inspector of charities, a Sarnia man, to be sent by him to Kingston, Brantford, London and other places where there are public institutions. When the opposition pressed for information as to why this should be the case no member of the government could answer. They simply "didn't know."

Hon. G. Howard Ferguson was heard before the commission which met in Toronto to enquire into the treatment of invalided soldiers. He talked about what the Ontario government was doing. When asked how far the Dominion government was expected to assist in settling the retired soldiers in Ontario, "he didn't know."

Why are some men occupying the seats of the mighty? They are supposed to know what is going on in the several departments of the government. They represent the people. They are paid to think and act and serve. They are expected to impart the fullest information with regard to the expenditure of the province. It is no excuse to say that they "don't know." They ought to know.

Some members of parliament are on several commissions. How can they attend to the multifarious duties that devolve upon them? And there are a few liberals in Canada who are willing to serve during this war.

AN EXPERIMENT: A LESSON. Lord Shaughnessy, in a discussion of what Canada needs, at this juncture and later, makes a very important statement. Whatever the origin

of the disease—and the theory is that it was in the individual, slumbering as it were, and developed by the discipline of the army—the fact is that tuberculosis has attacked hundreds of the Canadian soldiers. At once they were invalided—and cast aside or abandoned as worthless for war purposes. Not a bit of it. They are committed to sanitariums, where in open air, with conditions that are suitable, with proper diet and treatment, many, or most of them, are cured.

Then the Shaughnessy philosophy takes hold. "If," said he, "the same systematic care was applied to civilian consumptives, the gain in health and wealth to the country would be simply enormous. As many Canadians have been killed at home by tuberculosis since the war began as have been killed by the war itself. Yet it is an entirely preventable disease. If we stop its ravages, we shall more than make up for the ravages of the war. If we stay in the war, and let this enemy go on killing our people at home as fast as the Germans can kill them at the front, then the less we talk about our national intelligence and enterprise, the better."

The loss of life by the war is prodigious. It is greater through the ravages of the White Plague, and our governments act as if they were helpless in the matter. The experience with the soldiers is having its educational value. It shows what can be done under certain conditions. Success following this experiment, it will amount to nothing short of criminal negligence, if the governments abstain from giving to all people afflicted with tuberculosis—the treatment that will cure them and extirpate the disease from the land.

Editor Asselin some time ago deserted his party to enlist and serve his country. Now Mr. Blondin wants to command a regiment. Of course he repents of his wild talk about shooting holes in the flag.

PROTECTING THE SOLDIERS.

The friends of the returning soldiers everywhere must deprecate the mistaken kindness which their alleged friends have been showing them at various places. The soldiers have not been seeking intoxicating liquors, and yet they have suffered from a deluge of these while passing through Quebec. So unfortunate were the experiences that the militia department had to appoint an officer for each contingent, and for the purpose of guarding it from intrusion and unwelcome kindness.

The result is a happier trip across the country. In the Queen City, however, the officers in command of the invalided men say they are frequently subjected to interference, and from those whose regard is expressed in contraband goods. Prohibition was enforced, hurriedly, in Ontario for the sake of the soldiers, and the federal government has failed to sanction a law which will protect them by forbidding the exportation of liquors from Ontario into Quebec.

The evidence given before the commission which has been sitting in Toronto this week should have a direct effect upon the minister of justice. It should induce him to do his duty, to amend the law of last year. Under it a province that is dry is expected to be protected from the excesses of a province that is wet.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

Mr. Bourassa must be disgusted with his compatriots.

Austria is suing for peace separately. Is Germany casting her off? Or is the Kaiser willing to go it alone?

Economy! The people of Britain are besought to practise it and they have spent £450,000,000 in drink since the war began.

Strange that a pharmacist in Sarnia should supply the drugs of a Kingston institution, that is the report that comes from Toronto.

The daylight saving bill will be pressed upon the Dominion parliament. Is it a wise preliminary to an election, and an election is at hand?

The great German offensive, we are told, will set in on April 6th. If the date had been made April 1st we could have understood it the better.

The United States navy has decided that it will enlist women. These want all the privileges of the men, and will fight, therefore, as well as vote.

Following this unprecedented season of extravagance and waste, it will be remarkable if there is not an unprecedented period of want and suffering.

The government has expropriated the Ross factory and some day will make the Lee-Enfield rifles. The war will be over, however, before the factory can be put in operation as a government enterprise.

The Regina Province, a conservative paper, has announced its party independence. It is in favor of free trade in wheat, free trade in machinery, aid to milling and packing houses, and federal prohibition in support of provincial prohibition.

Some gentlemen at Ottawa had better get their ears to the ground.

Hon. Mr. Bennett made a remarkable admission in Toronto. It was this: "Officialism is worn out and broken down. We want a little more electricity." Dr. Marlow supplied a few sparks in Toronto.

Sir William McKenzie has come back. He answered Sir Adam Beck with regard to the Canadian Northern Railway—and he is not going to accept a tax in nature in a double style mood. The gladiators will meet again.

Wounded and invalided men must be promptly dealt with and get all that is coming to them. The government should have someone in every business centre who is especially looking after those deserving one.

Sir Robert Borden in England says the manhood of Canada has been split into three divisions. Those who should fight, those who should work, and those who should pay. The theory is alright, but it has not been worked out in practise.

The Toronto World prefers that parliament shall appropriate five millions of money for election purposes, three millions for the party in power and two millions for the opposition, rather than spend large large sums on public works "and ten per cent. given to the boys."

KINGSTON EVENTS 25 YEARS AGO

The police caught an old offender to-day, and he was compelled to pay a fine of \$52.35. The money was due for two years.

The crossing between Wolfe Island and Cape Vincent is not in a safe condition.

Architect Ellis has gone on a western trip. He will visit many cities to study the question of school accommodation.

GLORIFICATION OF PIERRE BLONDIN

The action of the Postmaster-General will be an inspiration to French Canada—and a promise to the Allied world. One such personal sacrifice will offset months of mischievous mouthing, and flame as a beacon-lighting the path to glory and honor. It comes just at the moment when the obscene Hun is being hurled from the soil of France, and every French soul is singing the Te Deum, the long-delayed liberation. This gesture of practical sympathy from French Canada will touch the heart of Old France as nothing yet has; and again will they see that "blood will tell"—that the separated sons of Normandy are Norman still. Mr. Blondin has grasped the fiery cross in the hour of greatest crisis, and he will set Quebec "righteously" aflame from Ottawa to the Gulf.

He who runs may read his opponent's inaugural address.

Random Reels

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

THE GAB-FIEND

The gab fiend is an engaging individual with a retreating forehead and a tongue which can accelerate to 60 miles an hour from a standing start.

The tongue is one of the greatest blessings man enjoys, but it was not constructed for race track purposes. The mission of the tongue is to promote digestion and enable the family doctor to tell at a glance whether the patient has liver trouble or a sprained ankle. It was never intended that the tongue should be utilized to discharge vast volumes of detailed, itemized conversation which never gets anywhere in particular and finally trails off into space like the exhaust from a hot-air furnace. Yet all around us we see gab-fiends whose tongues run in a bath of oil and who take three-quarters of an hour to tell you a story that should have been strangled in infancy.

The gab fiend is a soothing solace to the business man who has laid out his work for the day and would like

to get through by midnight. It is a maddening experience to have an industrious and careful employer deposit himself on the opposite side of the desk and after taking careful aim at his victim turn his vocabulary loose upon the surrounding atmosphere. Inasmuch as the conversation of the chronic, steel-hardened gabber is always confined to first-hand information on religion, politics and crop situation, after it has been stretched out for a few thousand cubic feet it becomes slightly monotonous in character. One of the sorest trials in business life is the gabbing employee who is unable to work and talk at the same time. One of the crying needs of the age is a mute which can be attached to employees with swivel-tongue action, so that men who are working in the same room will not have to add up a column of figures four times in succession. Paralysis of the vocal chords is a distressing malady, but it sometimes seems that if it were more common in business circles the harassed employer would have a chance for his white alley.

Rippling Rhymes

THE SINGING WIFE



My wife is singing as she works, of orange bloom and lovers' knots, while cleaning knives and forks and dinks, and scouring sundry pans and pots. The wives of rich men journey by, she sees them from the kitchen stoop; their gorgeous raiment stuns the eye; but Sarah doesn't care a whoop. I cannot load her down with furs, I cannot buy the precious stones, no shining limousine is hers—we have to save the hard earned bones. And in her no suspicion lurks that I'm a frost, a false alarm; my wife is singing as she works; she wouldn't trade me for a farm, cannot cut a swath that's wide, I am not built to cut much ice; each day some comfort is denied, because I haven't got the price. You doubtless think it sorely irks the frau to see the rich go by; my wife is singing as she works—could there be goodlier reply? Though many times my boat has sailed, to bring no more than ballast back, I cannot think that I have failed, while she is singing in the shack. You never could convince my wife that I'm a ten-cent 'n'er-do-well; she sings, and singing cheers my life; you really ought to hear her yell. —WALT MASON.

WHAT'S EXPECTED IN RUSSIA

The Liberals of Russia are not pacifists. They have not broken the shackles of Russian autocracy to bow their necks to the galling yoke of German militarism. One of their most prominent leaders, Professor Milukoff, the editor of the Rech, has published the program of the reformers regarding peace terms. They have fought for a reformed and constitutional Government, but it is a Government that will wage relentless war against the arch-enemies of the Slav nations. The war will not end until the territorial demands of this New Russia are wrung from the defeated Teuton powers. These demands include the annexation of Constantinople, Armenia, and all the Polish territories now occupied by Austria-Hungary and Germany, and embrace the Mazurian Poles of East Prussia, who are Germanized and Protestants. Professor Milukoff also insists on the permanent occupation of the mouth of the Vistula, separating East from West Prussia. The partition of Austria-Hungary is to be a most drastic nature. The creation of an independent Bohemia must carry with it the annexation by Bohemia of additional territory, some of which is the most German region of the Austrian Empire. In these demands the Liberals of Russia are likely to meet with opposition from some of their western Allies but the publication of these objectives of war shows that the New Russia is too deeply tinged with Slav traditions and Slav sentiments to halt in this war until the enemy is at her feet.

NEW AND BETTER BRITAIN COMING

Lloyd George at Carnarvon. When the smoke of this great conflict has been dissolved in the atmosphere we breathe there will reappear a new Britain. It will be the old country still, but it will be a new country. Its commerce will be new, its trade will be new, its industries will be new. There will be new conditions of life and of toil, for capital and for labor alike, and there will be new relations between both of them and forever. There will be new ideas, there will be a new outlook, there will be a new character in the land. The men and women of this country will be burnt into fine building material for the new Britain in the fiery kilns of the war. It will not merely be the millions of men who, please God, will come back from the battlefield to enjoy the victory which they have won by their bravery—a finer foundation I could not want for the new country, but it will not be merely that—the Britain that is to be will depend also upon what will be done now by the many more millions who remain at home. There are rare epochs in the history of the world when in a few racing years the character, the destiny of the whole race is determined for unknown ages. This is one. The winter wheat is being sown. It is better it is sown, it is more bountiful in its harvest than when it is sown in the soft spring time. There are many storms to pass through, there are many frosts to endure, before the land brings forth its green promise. But let us not be weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap if we faint not.

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Illustration of Allegory. A fine illustration of the allegory may be seen in Paul's Epistle to the Galatians iv, 24, where the apostle gives an allegorical interpretation to the historical narration of Hagar and Sarah, drawing from it a deeper sense than is conveyed by the immediate representation.