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SIXTH YEAR.



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REVIVING THE CORN LAWS.

It is interesting to observe that while the Canadian senate has discussed, and somewhat committed itself, to a bounty on land cultivation, a certain amount to be paid by the federal government for every acre of new land that is turned up or tilled, Britain is already pledged to such a policy. The principle is the same, but the method of applying it is different. The farmer in Britain will be guaranteed a fixed price per bushel for his grain, and for a period of six years. This may mean an expenditure by the government of something like £44,000,000 per annum, and "the farmers may not produce any more grain," it is alleged. This does not appear to be sound argument since the more grain the farmer supplies the more money he will make.

While the provision was under consideration, and ably advocated by Mr. Phipps, of the greater production department, it was bitterly attacked and on the ground that it was reactionary and meant the revival of the Corn Laws. Parliament was asked to recall the time, in 1814, at the close of the Napoleonic war, when the farmers were protected in the cultivation of their crops to such an extent that they were able to meet all the food requirements of the people without importation. In time, with the restoration of peace, wheat could be laid down in England for less money than it could be raised under the protective system, and there was a demand for the repeal of the Corn Laws. Not, however, until 1846, and under the leadership of Richard Cobden, did the free traders succeed, and through the defeat of Peel and his government.

There is some ground for a reference to the Corn Laws in the proposals of to-day. Any measure respecting the cultivation of land or the maintenance of prices, must be based on present and war experiences, and when the war is over, (and may this, please God, be very soon), the occasion or reason to be will go and the law become considerable of an encumbrance. For the present everything which produces an ample supply of food seems to be justifiable. The future may see its grievances with palliative circumstances.

The Quebecers are not inclined to take the premier seriously when he says the Milkary Service Act will be put into operation at once. They had better, on this question, take him at his word.

A CHANGE IN CONDITIONS.

The period of prosperity following the war, somewhat unexpectedly and long continued, is nearing an end. The orders for munitions are falling away. Ere long they will cease so far as Canada is concerned, as both Britain and France have within their own areas the institutions which now afford supplies on a colossal scale and according to a system which guarantees their continuance.

The marked effect of this change of routine by the imperial government causes a depression in the munition industries of Canada. This effect is felt most keenly in Toronto. There, during the present month, about 10,000 employees, men and women, have been laid off, with a loss in wages totalling \$185,000 a week. The manufacturers will turn their huge plants to other works, the kind in which they were engaged when the war broke out and a con-

siderable time to come will be very busy producing the articles, wares, machinery and equipment, for which there has been an inordinate and unsatisfying demand. This work requires a large number of skilled hands, and these are not available. It may be that handy men and women may develop a usefulness quite equal to that which they displayed on munitions. But it is hardly likely, and the women may find it harder still to adapt themselves to new occupations and those which have hitherto been almost exclusively confined to men.

A readjustment in relations and wages may set in at once, and many will find it hard to accept of lower stipends, which mean a lower scale of living. Those who have been economical will be able to adapt themselves to the new circumstances. Those who have lived well, without anticipation of any serious crisis, will be surely and seriously embarrassed.

A case is proceeding in England in which £48,000 were being exacted by admiralty officers as their share of the profits on government contracts. The graft bug is as hard to exterminate as the Tussock moth.

PARLIAMENTARY DEADHEADS.

The question of passes for the members of parliament came up incidentally during a discussion, strange to say, upon railway rolling stock. There was a reported shortage of cars, and, under the circumstances, it became a subject of interest whether the members of the Railway Commission should accept the gratuitous use of them from railway companies. The minister of railways is reported to have retorted: "It is no worse than for members of parliament to accept passes." The rejoinder from Mr. Knowles was "That is my statutory right." What made it statutory? The presumption of parliament in passing an act and making it obligatory that the companies should load down the members of parliament with their passes. The argument was that if the companies had, by law, to supply transportation to the members, they would not be disposed to offer it to the representatives of the people in the way of a favor or a bribe. This was not a justification of proceedings that were indelicate and indiscreet to say the least of them. Mr. Bennett favors legislation which will prohibit, under penalty, any railway company from issuing passes to members of parliament or to judges. He may follow his threat with action, but it may be taken for granted that one who has enjoyed special privileges for so many years will not see the advantage or expediency of surrendering them.

The premier is shocked that anyone should suggest his retirement. Why not? If he cannot form a coalition government why should anyone else not be given the chance?

POLITICAL PARTIES CHANGING.

The information is that the winning party is gaining in all the provinces. An occasional member of parliament, in the house or out of it—witness the speeches of Col. Currie and Mr. Armstrong on their renomination—will talk in the old bitter and partisan fashion, and abuse political opponents. He does not reflect the sentiments of his constituents. In the far east there is not much said. In Quebec the nationalists are giving out a note of warning through Mr. Bourassa. Sir Robert Borden, in denouncing them he may bring down upon his devoted head the anathema of his friends. In Ontario there is an undoubted confusion of ideas, with an expression of independence which brooks defiance to the party men. In the far west there is an unrest and spirit of rebellion against parliament which is very remarkable.

The attempt to form a national government, through the help of western liberals, has brought out a new movement. It means the retirement of the old leaders, liberal and conservative, and the replacement of them with new men, who will make the success of the war their first demand, to be followed by such political reforms as may, on their success, mark the disappearance of the old parties. That is now the prophecy, and one must wait for the fulfillment of it, or otherwise, with the very greatest interest.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

Where is the evidence that the C.P.R. Company wants to acquire the C.N.R. and will get it if the government doesn't look out? Some one is trying to bunco parliament.

Sir Sam Hughes says in a Toronto paper that he has nothing to say about parliamentary matters. Had he struck this gait a long time ago he would now be minister of militia.

Mr. Bourassa tells, in Le Devoir, about the emissaries of the premier who waited upon him in 1911 for an election alliance. Sir Robert Borden had better not play with the humble bee.

It cost \$3,750,000 to float the last Canadian loan of \$100,000,000 in

New York. Interest and brokerage expenses in two years, if the loan is then paid, will total \$15,750,000. The nation, like the individual, that borrows has to pay for it.

Australia is raising, by voluntary enlistment, into which some pepper has been put since the election, about 5,000 recruits a month. This will not take care of the wastage in the Australian troops which is now going on at the front.

Mark H. Irish, the director of labor in connection with the Munitions Board, admonishes the munition workers to save all they can from their earnings. Advice which would have been more appreciated if given to the workers two or three years ago.

Australia is providing homes for its permanently disabled soldiers. They will cost millions of dollars, but the money is well spent. Canada must follow this example. The Mowat Memorial Hospital, for instance, would make a good permanent sanitarium for all it could accommodate. It has been well-named.

The hundred millions of dollars which were borrowed by Canada from the Americans recently was not to pay interest, but was negotiated to balance exchange. Thus, as the Ottawa Citizen observes, the country pays in two years nearly sixteen millions of dollars for the benefit of those who do business with the United States.

PUBLIC OPINION

Judge Galt's Laugh.
(Windsor Record)

Mr. Justice Galt must enjoy a laugh up his sleeve every time he thinks of Bob Rogers' excuse for leaving the Borden government.

Well Described.
(Toronto Star)

From this distance the Prussian Junkers, as described by Ambassador Gerard, look a good deal like ostriches with their heads poked into the sand.

A Great Tax.
(New York Times)

In one day the Senate voted to add \$75,000,000 to the income taxes, which, as laid in the Senate scheme at present, are expected to reach the enormous sum of \$850,000,000.

Relief to Both.
(Montreal Herald)

By the way, "wonder which of the two Roberts is breathing the easier over what resignation—the Hon. Robert or Sir Robert? Or is it a profound relief to both?"

How Much?
(London Advertiser)

How much of that \$120,000,000

for the Canadian Northern will percolate into the Conservative campaign chest in the coming election? Is it another Pacific scandal?

Liberal Pressure.

(Belleville Ontario)
After much pressure the Liberal members in the House have compelled the Government to see to it that Canadian privates, prisoners in Germany, may get the same facilities as officers for receiving parcels.

TWO LATE VIEWS OF HON. MR. ROGERS.

Montreal Star.

It is one of the weaknesses of the party system of Government that an active fighting partisan is apt to create such an atmosphere of outside antagonism against himself personally as occasionally to handicap the political group with which he is connected with. By his very zeal for his party he may weaken it.

No one questions the business ability of Hon. Robert Rogers as an executive official. He has proved himself broadminded, efficient and unflinching. Few men in Canadian public life have more friends who regard him with real affection. But Mr. Rogers had always been a strong two-fisted party man. He delighted in political struggles and when he considered a blow was necessary for his party's advantage he struck it, no matter who was at the receiving end.

The result was inevitable. Not only did he make many personal enemies, but he attracted to himself most of the political lightning that is always forming behind the clouds of partisan strife. When Sir Robert Borden came to the conclusion that it was his duty as a war measure to broaden his ministry by taking in opposition and independent elements, he found this feeling a real obstacle in his path. By Mr. Rogers' own act this obstacle is now removed.

Toronto Star.

Mr. Rogers is out. He is late in getting out, but better late than never. The Excess Profits Tax, the abandonment of which after December 31st was announced on July 25th by the Finance Minister, has been declared as a tax to be continued next year. Both these steps are in the right direction, and both we have urged and have been denounced by partisan Ministerial organs for urging. The criticisms we have made have all been in the direction of making the conscription of men justifiable, acceptable, and possible, and we have urged nothing except reforms and improvements towards that end which there remained time to make, and which, if neglected, would endanger the success of compulsory service.

FRENCH AND BRITISH ARMIES ON FRONT

Literary Digest, New York.

In a published letter to Secretary Baker, the French Commissioner says that France has 3,000,000 men at the front, an increase of a million since the war began, that reserves

Rippling Rhymes

VANISHED BOOKS.

I lend my friend a silver buck, a bone that's fair to see, and when he's had a change of luck, he brings it back to me. I lend my friend my hunting pup, on rabbit trails to roam, and when he finds his time is up he brings my bow-wow home. I lend a man my eight-day clock to cheer his lonely shack; through hail and deluge he will walk to bring my time-piece back. But when I lend my neighbor books, I say to them, "Good by! These volumes nevermore, gazooks, will greet my loving eye. The cherished works of Bertha Clay, Nick Carter's precious tome, no more will gladden night and day in this my previous home." I hold it strange that men so square they would not swap a dime, will pinch my volumes, rich and rare, my books of prose and rhyme. I know a man who'd walk from dawn to darkness to return a nickel he'd in error drawn, a cent he didn't earn. He always walks in virtue's track, he is the soul of truth, and yet he does not bring me back my volumes by Old Sleuth.

—WALT MASON.

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