

FORESEES LABOR WIN IN NEXT BRITISH ELECTION

LLOYD GEORGE IN ATTACK ON ELECTORAL SYSTEM SAYS BRITAIN FIRST BECAME A DEMOCRACY IN 1917

Even Today a Freak Group System of Representation Enables a Minority of Electors To Guide Kingdom's Fortunes for Five Years—But the Situation Is Changing.

MITCHAM AND EDGEHILL ARE PROPHETIC

By DAVID LLOYD GEORGE.

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London, March 24.—The startling English, by the elections of the last few weeks, have called attention to the workings of the new electorate in Great Britain and set men pondering about its possibilities in a way a general election failed to make them think. Democracy in the sense of government of a great state by the absolute and unfettered majority of its own citizens of all ranks and conditions is a modern experiment. The United States of America is the oldest democracy in the world today.

How many realize that Britain became a democracy for the first time in 1917? Until then, the majority of its adult population had no voice in the making or administering of the laws that ruled their lives.

The United States, France and Italy have adopted universal suffrage as the basis of authority for many a year. So have the British dominions, but Britain herself, the pioneer of representative institutions, until recently shrank from the experiment of adult suffrage. Before the reform act of 1832, the total electorate of this country numbered only three per cent of the population. The distribution of power amongst this small percentage was so arranged that even three per cent represented in effect no more than at best one per cent of power. A generation of turmoil and agitation, almost unending in revolution, succeeded in forcing through a measure which increased the three per cent to 4.5 per cent of the population. It is true that the distribution of votes was more equitable, but even with that, to call this ridiculous percentage a democracy would be ridiculous.

Another generation of growing agitation ensued. This also ended in violence. Then Mr. Disraeli, one of the boldest and most venturesome of British statesmen, doubled the electorate. This measure increased the number of voters to 3 per cent of the population. Disraeli's audacious change horrified some of his aristocratic supporters and shocked many Whigs. But Lowe had already foretold the calamities that would follow Gladstone's more cautious proposals. Seven years later saw the election of the first Tory parliament since 1841. So much for the prophecies of men who always fear evil must follow from justice.

Fifteen years after the Disraeli measures, the Gladstone administration added another 7 per cent to the electorate. The Gladstone proposals which raised the number of voters to 10 per cent, were so vehemently contested that they nearly precipitated a constitutional crisis of the first magnitude. Ultimately, however, they were carried and there the franchise remained until the war.

War-time Electorate. The electorate, that through its representatives accepted the German challenge in 1914 and was therefore responsible for involving the country in the most costly and sanguinary war it ever waged, represented one-tenth of the population and about one-third of the adults.

The conscription act converted this country to the injustice of this state of things. Millions of men were forced to risk their lives for a policy which they had no share in fashioning, nor had they any share in choosing the parliament which determined an issue of such grave moment for all citizens. Millions of women faced anxieties and torture worse than death in the pursuit of the same policy, and yet no woman was allowed to express any opinion as to the selection of the rulers who led them to this sacrifice.

It was felt to be so unjust that in the exultation of war, which lifted men to a higher plane of equity, this obvious wrong was redressed. Hence the greatest of all enfranchisement acts, the act of 1917, that for the first time converted the British system of government into a democracy.

How has it worked? It is too early to speak of its results. Mr. Austen Chamberlain, in his letter last week, has called attention to one aspect of its operation. He emphasizes a fact which is already known to every man who has passed through the experience of a contested election, that nearly one-half of the new electorate is attached to any political party.

If you deduct out of the total the numbers of the old electorate which had already formed ties of a party character, you will find from the re-

British Electoral System Gives Power To Minority

Amongst many disquieting factors there is one which ought to be dealt with ere another election arrives. Under the present system, a minority of electors may usurp absolute dominion over the fortunes of this kingdom for fully five years. This is one of the freaks of the group system.

The present parliamentary majority has been elected by an aggregate vote which represents something a little better than one-fourth of the total electorate and one-third of those who recorded their votes.

Nearly 6,000,000 of the electors were not sufficiently interested in the contest to take the trouble to record their votes. Our municipal elections tell a still more dismal story of apathy.

How does the record compare with democracy in other lands? France is no better. Voting in America fluctuates according to the interest excited in the particular election. The Germans polled at their last election 89 per cent of their electorate.

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A similar turnover of votes in every constituency would place them easily in that position. America has brought its vast electorate under what seems to us to be a perfect discipline. But in the process it has passed through much of the same process, including the furnace of a terrible civil war. Italy has been impelled to express the working of the democratic institutions by a display of force. Britain may mobilize and drill its electoral forces with less trouble. But it has a Socialist party which has grown by millions within less than a decade—and is still growing.

Its most eloquent member proposed in the House of Commons a solemn motion for the abolition of private property. Deputies chosen by four and a quarter million of British electors will vote on this proposal, and if four years hence they add another million and a half to their poll they will be in a position to place that motion on the statute books. Their increase between 1918 and 1922 was greater than that.

Compare these results with the two elections which have occurred since the 1917 enfranchisement. At the 1918 election, 64 per cent only of the voters could be induced to make the acquaintance of the ballot boxes. This might be explained by the inevitable political apathy which follows a great war. The old party organizations had through five years of neglect fallen into complete disrepair—the new party had not yet had time to perfect its machinery. Hence the failure of competitive effort to induce at least 6,000,000 of the new voters to take sufficient interest in their new privileges to exercise them at the election.

The next four years were a period of growing political activity. The new party was especially energetic. Their chief organizer, Mr. Arthur Henderson, M. P., is one of the most gifted party managers of this generation and his achievement is an outstanding feature of political organization in this country. The old parties also had time to repair their machinery; by the time the election was called their organizations were in full working order.

Ready For Struggle.

The only party which had no organization worth speaking of was the National Liberal party. The others were ready for the struggle. Nevertheless, when the elections came in November, nearly 6,000,000 of the electors were not sufficiently interested in the contest to take the trouble to record their votes.

It showed an improvement of 10 per cent on the previous election, but there still remained nearly 20 per cent—making allowance for death, sickness, removals, etc.—who stayed at home and could not be persuaded by personal or public appeal or pressure exercised by three or four great organizations, to walk a few hundred yards out of their way to place a simple cross on the ballot paper that was awaiting them.

The municipal elections tell a still more dismal story of apathy. But that's an old story. It was with difficulty that the old electorate, with all its long training, could be coaxed to visit the polling booths where the good government of the towns in which they breathed, lived, toiled, enjoyed themselves and rested, was being determined. At their worst, however, they made a better show than the newly-enfranchised voters.

How does the record compare with democracy in other lands? France is no better. On the whole, I understand, it is worse. The voting in the United States of America fluctuates according to the interest excited by the particular election. In this respect, America does not differ from Britain.

I cannot lay my hand on the percentage of the poll at the last presidential election, but I gather it was higher than ours at the general election. The Germans polled at their last election 89 per cent of their

fine relation to the bench that he had to the bar.

Praised Mr. Buchner. He expressed his deep appreciation to Mr. Buchner for arranging the dinner, and thought it unfortunate that the Middlesex members did not meet more often than they have in the past.

The Middlesex Bar, he said, ranked high in Ontario. It boasted a long line of distinguished lawyers. In a number of the younger lawyers he saw the same high qualities which their predecessors had possessed.

Albert Murphy, one of the younger lawyers, stated that from what he had gathered during the evening, from anecdotes and reminiscences expressed, the ancient bar had disappeared with that bar association with Mr. Rowell, and is now a matter of ancient history.

The hope was expressed by him that the younger members would be able to follow the trail blazed with the names of such illustrious men who had been mentioned in connection with the history of the Middlesex Bar.

Albert Judd, another of the younger set, found in Mr. Justice Fisher a man who was always willing to help the younger members of the bar. The opportunities the younger members had were due to the courtesies and help extended to them, he believed. He congratulated Judge Fisher on his appointment.

J. F. Moore proposed the members drink to the health of Mr. Buchner, who had arranged the evening's affair. Judge Fisher, in return, hoped the dinner would be an annual one, on the occasion of each anniversary of Judge Fisher's appointment. He had arranged the banquet.

Mr. Buchner, in replying to the many compliments directed toward him, thanked the members of the Middlesex Bar for their thoughtfulness and their kind words, and expressed regret that he had been forced to leave his work as a barrister, of which he had such pleasant memories.

P. J. FLANNERY RECEIVES POSTOFFICE PROMOTION

Formal announcement of the promotion of P. J. Flannery, night chief of the London Postoffice, to supervisor of mails despatch, reached the city yesterday. A month ago definite assurance was given that Mr. Flannery had been appointed to the position, and he then assumed his new duties on the day staff.

Mr. Flannery has been in the service 25 years, and the department's recognition of his faithful work in appointing him to the position of supervisor of mails despatch is received with favor by all the local employees.

SPEAKS TO KIWANIS.

Special to The Advertiser.

Ingersoll, March 24.—J. V. Buchanan was the speaker yesterday at the weekly noon-hour luncheon of the Kiwanis Club. His subject was "The Empire, the Crown, the King." Miss Ruth Kirwin also favored the gathering with a reading.

SAYS PLUMBING NO ATTRACTION FOR YOUNG MEN

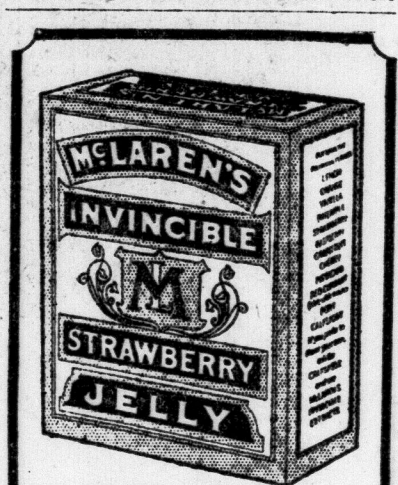
George Broomfield Tells Plumbing Inspectors Youth Prefers Selling Automobiles.

ALDERMEN SPEAK

Health Officer Addresses Delegates On Questions of Common Concern.

The third annual convention of the Plumbing and Drain Inspectors' Association opened in the city hall council chamber at 2:30 p.m. yesterday.

The president, F. C. Palmer, sanitary inspector of Oshawa, delivered the opening address, in which he outlined the constitution and motives governing the association. He laid particular stress upon the fact that there was no monetary consideration influencing the association as a whole.



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or its members as individuals. He said, "Both as individuals and as civic officials we are prompted and led only by a desire to serve."

Following the president's address, Fred Young, London's sanitary engineer, introduced Dr. W. S. Downham, of this city.

Welcomes Delegates.

Dr. Downham welcomed the delegates on behalf of the city of London in the absence of Mayor Wenige. He then read an instructive paper on ventilation and its connection with the heating phase of the plumbing interests. In this paper he pointed out that the old theory of foul air in over-crowded or close rooms, where an overcharge of carbonic acid gas was thought to work the depressing and nauseating effects, was absolutely exploded by conclusive experiments.

"There are three basic factors governing proper living conditions in any room," he said, "temperature, humidity and circulation. It would seem that given these factors in their proper proportions, air may be quite healthy even with overcrowding and closed windows."

During the latter part of the afternoon meeting it was resolved that a copy of the plumbing trades, joined with a full report of the convention, be mailed to each member of the inspectors' Association.

Read Reports.

The reading of correspondence and the reports of the treasurer and secretary occupied the attention of the convention until 5:30, when the meeting adjourned for the evening recess.

From the city hall the delegates betook themselves to the De Luxe Cafe, where a splendid supper was tendered them.

During the course of the banquet short and pithy speeches were given by Aldermen Watt and Douglass and Mr. Seabrook, City Engineer. Near, Rev. John Garbutt, former member of the Ottawa Board of Health, George Broomfield of Brantford and James C. Young, local plumbing inspector.

Toronto Inspector Speaks.

The delegates convened again for further discussion at 8 p.m. A well-prepared paper by Inspector R. J. Leaman of Toronto was read. He gave a very clear outline of the work of the plumbing inspector and asked for a greater degree of co-operation between the inspector, the plumber, the medical health officer and the public.

He explained that the inspector was the point of contact between the civic health board and the plumbing contractors.

Following Mr. Leaman's paper a discussion of the points involved was entered into and much valuable information gathered.

Discuss Apprentices.

The second speaker of the evening was Mr. George Broomfield, who gave a very witty though pointed impromptu address entitled "What Has Become of the Apprentice?" He drew attention to the fact that an apprenticeship training was in the past the backbone of the plumbing industry, but that today plumbing had sunk into insignificance when compared with the more attractive and remunerative work of selling stocks or automobiles.

PLAN TO TRANSFER NAVY TO THE MEDITERRANEAN

British Strength To Be Moved After Near East Crisis Settled.

Associated Press Despatch.

Malta, March 24.—It is stated in naval circles here that when the present Near Eastern crisis is settled the greater part of the British naval strength will be transferred to the Mediterranean. Only a comparatively small fleet will be retained in home waters, thus restoring the situation as it existed before the German naval menace compelled Great Britain to keep the balance of naval power in the North Sea.

HELD FOR AUTO THEFT.

Galt, March 24.—Fred Fisher, a parole man, and Stanley Vasoloff were arrested by the local police and charged with the theft of an automobile from the Graham Garage, which they are alleged to have taken for a joy ride, returning it to the garage badly damaged. They were remanded to the county jail until Tuesday.

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Bar Association Honors Justice Fisher At Dinner

Members of London Legal Fraternity Gather At Tecumseh House To Celebrate Anniversary of Judicial Appointment.

Members of the legal profession in London and Middlesex proved last night that the spirit of the Middlesex Bar Association still lives when they gave a dinner at the Tecumseh House in honor of Hon. Mr. Justice Fisher, on the occasion of the anniversary of his appointment to the supreme court bench.

Of speeches there was an abundance, some serious, many sparkling with wit, and a great many filled with reminiscences of the days gone by, and of the leading figures of the bar, who as one speaker aptly put it, were "gentlemen, every one."

Pleased at Appointment. "No one received with greater pleasure than I, the appointment to the bench of Mr. Fisher," declared Judge J. C. Judd. He described Judge Fisher as a man who was always affable, and who had earned the position to which he had been elevated.

To the members of the bar he gave some sound advice. Among other things he cautioned them to be punctual always in affairs connected with the courts, punctual in attendance, punctual in having their cases ready, and punctual in obtaining judgment.

Hon. Mr. Justice Masten, trial judge at the present assizes, declared himself to be "one of those who believe that when he becomes a judge he does not cease to be a member of the bar."

"It was well," he said, "that forms and formalities should be preserved in court. It was for the good of the country that should should be the case."

He always thought it well, he added, never to forget he was a judge when on the bench, and never to remember it when off the bench.

The judges at Toronto were a sort of closed corporation, Judge Masten declared. "They," he said, "were of the opinion that Judge Fisher was highly commended himself to his brethren of the bench."

John M. Gunn, in replying to a toast to "The Junior Bar," remarked that he was delighted when a year ago Judge Fisher was appointed to the bench. He recalled incidents of years ago, incidents which showed the high calibre and the sterling qualities of the men who in those days were junior members of the bar.

Was Reminiscent. E. T. Essery, K.C., was also reminiscent, and called to mind many interesting affairs of the "old days," when London was a real city and did not have suburbs patched on here and there.

Speaking of some of the members of the procession whom death had called, he asserted: "They were good men, not only as leaders of the profession, but as decent citizens, always ready to serve the man or woman who had not a dollar."

T. G. Meredith, with whom Judge Fisher had been in partnership just prior to his appointment, declared he did not take credit to himself for the attainment of Mr. Fisher and others from his office who had been appointed to the bench, but declared he did take credit for keeping them quiet and placid.

To Judge Fisher he paid compliments because during their association in business there had never been a "scrap" and very little friction; that Judge Masten he paid tribute for his patience in dealing with cases when he presided over Middlesex court sessions; and to Mr. U. A. Buchner he gave the credit for the arrangement of the gathering.

T. H. Purdon, K.C., declared it would be well if the "History of Middlesex Bar," which he and another had written were continued, if the more recent history was linked up with that recorded in that volume. The Middlesex Bar, he continued, had always been like one family.

Among its past and present members were poets and song writers of note, he remarked, announcing the preparation of a paper on this matter.

As evidence of the ability of members of the bar as poets he quoted: "Canada" by the late Beverley Cox, and "Achievement" by John M. Gunn. Others mentioned in this connection included the Hon. David Mills and P. P. Betts, K.C.

Mr. Purdon felt sure that Judge Fisher would succeed in his latest capacity.

Crown Attorney J. C. Elliott, K.C., was firm in his belief that Hon. Mr. Justice Fisher would bear the same

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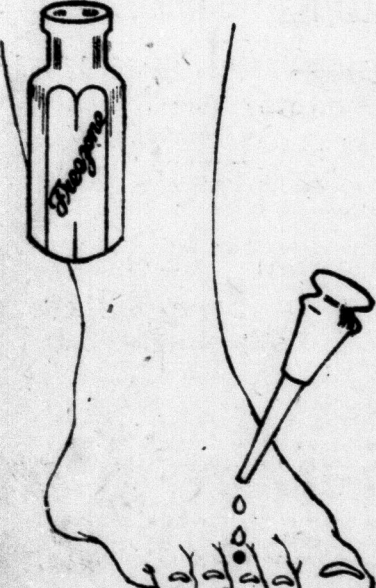
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