

AN HONEST REDISTRIBUTION

Sentiment is being worked up throughout Eastern Canada and pressure is being directed upon the Dominion Government so that the Maritime Provinces may receive special treatment under the coming Redistribution Bill. A conference of the Provincial Premiers has been called to meet in Ottawa this month in order to draw up some proposal by which the Maritime Provinces may be guaranteed for all time to come the same number of Dominion representatives as they now have. Down by the sea this proposition assumes the form of a "demand" as though it were a matter of right and not of special treatment. A surprising amount of support has already been marshalled. Politicians who hail from the Atlantic seaboard are naturally anxious to take advantage of all the local sentiment that can be stirred up over this question. Powerful interests, which fear the growing radicalism of the West, are anxious to put whatever extra weight they may on the side of the East. The protectionist and plutocratic press are also coming forward to champion the Maritime plea for over-representation. They foresee that before many years, if the West is given its full weight in the councils of the Dominion the balance of power will bound so forcibly on the side of Free Trade and other progressive measures that the hoary iniquities so long sheltered in the East will be jolted from their secure position and totter to their fall.

What does this proposition for the maintenance of the Maritime representation mean? It means that the far East is to be favored at the expense of the West. It means that a vote in Nova Scotia or New Brunswick will count for more than a vote in Manitoba, Saskatchewan or Alberta. Thousands of the West's most enterprising farmers and citizens have come from the Maritime Provinces, and they will be the first to resent the weakening of their ballot so that two Eastern votes can outweigh three Western votes. One man one vote is the only basis of democracy and anything less than this will not satisfy the West. To hand over to any section of the country greater power in federal affairs than its population warrants is directly opposed to both the spirit and the letter of the British North America Act. And to crystallize into a permanent law any such favoritism as the far-East politicians are advocating would only prove a source of endless controversy and ill-feeling. Those who would violate the foundation principle of Confederation for the personal interests, for party advantage or even to please a small section of the country, are not the friends of the Maritime Provinces, but the foes of the whole Dominion. Why should any objection be made to the West securing all the representation at Ottawa to which its population entitles it? The Prairie Provinces have never been fairly represented, and the way Redistribution lags and loiters behind the census, the fast-growing West seems doomed to be always several members of Parliament short of its fair quota. At the present time the 937,955 people in the Maritime Provinces have 35 Dominion members, whereas all the population west of the Great Lakes, 1,715,189 in number, have only the same federal representation of 35. These are the census figures of 1911, and if account be taken of the hundreds of thousands of newcomers pouring into Western Canada year by year it is plain that the Western farmer's ballot today has only half the power of the far Easterner. The legal unit of population, found by dividing Quebec's population of 2,003,232 by 65, is 30,818. When the Borden Government brings down its Redistribution Bill, which, by the way, is long overdue, we trust that the plain rule of justice and democracy will obtain. Nothing less will be fair to any part of Canada. The West asks

no favors. Representation by population is its demand, and this is the only basis on which a harmonious Confederation can continue. The people of the whole Dominion should unite on this common platform of fair play and no favors.

CO-OPERATION AND PEACE

While the governments of the leading nations of the world are competing with each other in the mad rush to pile up armaments and each is endeavoring to outstrip its rivals in the creation of engines of destruction, the number of those who are hoping and working for international peace and disarmament is daily growing. The spirit of mutual trust and goodwill, which is essential to a peaceful understanding between the nations, is being promoted probably more than in any other way through international conferences, such, for instance, as the Dry Farming Congress, held last year at Lethbridge, the Medical Congress, which was held in London last month, and the Congress of the International Co-operative Alliance, recently concluded in Glasgow. At such gatherings, even though the evils of war may not be discussed, friendships are formed and a spirit of brotherhood is cultivated, which is bound to have its effect in helping to bring about a better understanding between nations. One of the strongest forces at work for peace is unquestionably the co-operative movement. William Maxwell, the president of the International Co-operative Alliance, in an article on this subject recently published, said:

"By the persistent advocacy of International Peace, which is synonymous with international co-operation, the bond of friendship is being drawn closer and closer between the workers of the world.

"International wars are not made by the workers, although by such wars the workers are made the sufferers. The acquisition of territory or the spoliation of a neighboring State can have no place in the workers' program; therefore, the closer alliance of the workers of the world will always stand for a peaceful and rational settlement of international difficulties. The history of the world proves that most of the wars of the past had their root in greed of territory or ambition to conquer.

"It is sadly to be regretted that the war spirit is still with us, if the menacing attitude of some present-day governments counts for anything. Who shall have the greatest number of engines of destruction seems to be the ruling passion of our European administrations. This means extra burdens of taxation for the worker, with no return. A thorough understanding amongst the millions of co-operators throughout the world, to protest against the barbaric arbitrament of war, would go far to insure the blessings of International Peace in every part of the world."

Thinking people throughout the world are rapidly coming to realize the truth contained in this statement. The work of the co-operative movement in reducing the cost of living and promoting thrift and independence among its members is a noble one; its work for international peace and goodwill is far higher and nobler.

THE HIGH COST OF LIVING

Statistics are not required to prove the fact that the cost of living in this country has increased very rapidly during the past few years. We all know that whenever we purchase either the necessities or the luxuries of life we get less for our money than we did ten, or even five years ago, and that unless our incomes are considerably larger than they were we are worse off than we used to be. This condition is not confined to Canada; it exists in every civilized country in the world and consequently it must be attributed to some world-wide cause which Canada, by itself, has little power to cope with. A report recently issued by the British government, however, reveals the fact that while the cost of living has increased all over the world, Canada has the distinction of being the country in which the greatest increase has been recorded. In England and in France, the increase between 1900 and 1912 was 15 per cent.; in Australia

and in New Zealand it was 16 per cent.; in Germany it was 30 per cent.; in Belgium, 32 per cent.; in Austria-Hungary, 35 per cent., and in Canada 51 per cent. The United States figure for 1912 is not given in the report, but other reports place the increase in the cost of living in that country at 50 per cent. The huge economic waste involved in the maintenance of huge naval and military armaments, and the increased production of gold are the chief causes to which the rise in world's prices is attributed, but these figures show that besides the general causes there must be local conditions to account for the fact that prices have increased to a much greater extent in Canada and the United States than in other countries.

He would be bold, perhaps, who would undertake to put his finger on any one thing and declare that that was the only cause for the much greater ratio of increase, but there can be no doubt that one thing which has caused prices to rise so rapidly in Canada and the United States is the development of trusts and combines which control the production and consequently the price of many of the necessities of life. England, instead of combines which raise the price of food and clothing, has co-operative stores which keep down the cost of these commodities to the lowest possible level. Another condition which is responsible for the increase in the cost of living in Canada is the craze for speculation in real estate, which has resulted in a large increase in rents. In England rents have been practically stationary during the period covered by the report, some sections, including London, actually showing a small decline.

Evidence is certainly accumulating to show that while nature has made Canada one of the richest countries in the world, its people are being exploited and pillaged to an extent that is not equalled in any other part of the planet.

The new Solicitor General, Hon. Arthur Meighen, is going to be a busy man if all that the newspapers say is true. Among the work already mapped out for him is a further investigation into ocean freight rates, a portion of the work hitherto in the hands of the Minister of Justice, including that of dealing with applications for clemency towards convicts, and the organization of the Conservative party in Saskatchewan in preparation for the next election. We hope he won't be too busy to tackle the question of reducing the duty on agricultural implements. Mr. Meighen made a fine speech on that topic in 1911, when his party was in opposition, and it will be a great pity if he forgets it now he is a member of the government.

William Travers Jerome, deputy attorney-general of the State of New York, said in court the other day:

"The State of New York wants back a man whom it regards as a homicidal lunatic when influenced by his insane delusions, and a vicious degenerate at other times—a man criminal in his lucid intervals and dangerous in his insane ones."

This, he it remembered, is the Harry Thaw for whom hysterical women at Coaticook and Sherbrooke, Que., cheered and wept when he was endeavoring to escape the penalty of his sins by seeking sanctuary on Canadian soil.

When we tax British goods we fine ourselves for buying from our brothers. Free Trade with the Motherland would be both patriotic and profitable.

The C.M.A. are loyal to the British Empire so long as it helps their business, but when there is a clash between patriotism and profits, the purse wins out.

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