

## The St. John Standard

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ST. JOHN, N. B., FRIDAY, JUNE 16, 1922.

## THE IRISH CONSTITUTION.

It is not possible at this writing to deal at any length with the provisions of the Irish Constitution which were passed by this country late last night, but a cursory glance over them shows them to be of an extremely liberal nature, to say the least. Its existence as a free and self-governing member of the British Commonwealth is conceded and all powers of government and authority of every description are declared to be derived from the people. Irish is to be the national language, but English will be equally recognized. The parliament of the country is to consist of the Crown, a Senate and a Chamber of Deputies, and no titles or honors are to be conferred except under special conditions. The representative of the Crown may withhold consent to any Act of Parliament, but in doing so he must act in accordance with the usage under such circumstances in Canada. There is to be absolute freedom of religion under all conditions, and elementary education is to be free to all.

The concessions granted to the nationalist sentiment are apparently as wide as could well be under any conditions other than an out and out republic; and while the Chamber of Deputies is, of course, to be elective, so is the Senate also. About the only thing the Irish people will not be able to do in the way of government, is to appoint the representative of the Sovereign.

The Constitution differs very materially from the powers of self-government conferred on the Southern Parliament under the Government of Ireland Act of 1920; and its success will, of course, depend wholly upon the manner in which it is carried out. With a man like De Valera taking a prominent part in affairs, the prospect will not look to many people like being any too hopeful.

## SIR LOMER, THE REAL MASTER.

That Sir Lomer Gouin is the real master of the Government forces has been more or less apparent on several occasions since Parliament met. The fact has become more than ever apparent since the Budget came under discussion. The Mail and Empire deals with the matter thus:

"If the Progressives were sore over the first Fielding Budget, they have reason to be still sorer over the second, which is still more to the taste of Sir Lomer Gouin than the first. But while the Finance Minister does the bidding of the Minister of Justice in the matter of mending his Budget, the Finance Minister delivers a second Budget speech in which there is more to exasperate Progressives, notwithstanding its special appeal to them, than the first. He has the audacity to tell them that in the last campaign he never mentioned the Liberal platform. Earlier in the Budget debate he was shameless enough to inform the House, though it was none of the House's business, that he had not voted for the platform when it was submitted to the convention that adopted it. Yet at that same convention, according to The Globe's report, he spoke of the platform as the 'marching orders of the Liberal party.' As a loyal member of that party he would surely be supposed to adhere loyally to the principles solemnly adopted at the party's convention, and especially when the statement of those principles was followed by the declaration that the party stood pledged to implement the articles of its platform by legislation when returned to power."

"This second Budget speech of Mr. Fielding's is interesting both as evidence of Sir Lomer Gouin's dominance in the Government and as self-revelation on Mr. Fielding's part. It shows the smallness of his gauge. It shows him in another way very much in the character of the fable of the Old Man and his Ass. His afterthoughts were imposed upon him as were the afterthoughts of the Minister of Defence. As Mr. Graham had to withdraw his first estimates on militia account and submit greatly reduced ones to suit Quebec Ministers, and as he had practically to wipe out his Canadian navy, at the same instigation, so Mr. Fielding had to issue a second edition of his Budget to make it more to the liking of the masterful Sir Lomer Gouin. Mr. Fielding pleads that it is a time for moderation, meaning, it would seem, that it is a time for falsehood to principle and to party pledge. The Progressives remember that the tariff plank he and his party in the House have thrown overboard is practically identical with the Progressive tariff plank being in fact 'lifted' from the Progressive platform by the Liberals for the purpose of winning Progressive support. Time and again Mr. King stated that the tariff policies of the two Liberal parties were practically identical."

## FORMER CONDITIONS.

Whatever The Globe's opinions may be on provincial politics, it is usually reasonably fair in its criticisms and general statements regarding such matters. This course makes all the more surprising the query in our contemporary's issue of yesterday, which was as follows: "Do the Kings County electors desire to return to the conditions that prevailed under the administration which preceded that of Premier Foster?"

In the first place, there is absolutely not one little of evidence which would tend to show that a return to the former conditions, which presumably The Globe objects to, would ever take place. There is not a single member of the former Government now in the House, and only half a dozen members among those who then supported it. Another thing, were conditions really so bad then as it has been frantically sought to make out they were? The public debt was not added to at the rate of a couple of millions a year—if the Valley Railway bonds be excluded; the annual charge for interest was then just half its present amount; there were no deficits of any where from a quarter to one-half a million each year; and with it all, the public services were looked after to the utmost extent the revenue would permit; and the province did not then face the prospect of direct taxation to augment the revenue, as is the case today.

It is true that there were some incidents which did not reflect credit on the last Government, somewhat on the lines of the Central Railway scandal, but they have been magnified and distorted by an unscrupulous press to an extent that makes the real incidents almost unrecognizable; and these distortions and exaggerations have been flung around with a savage recklessness that betrays a desire, not so much to protect the province in the future, as to vilify political opponents in the present. There is no more reason to blame the present leaders of the Opposition for acts that the last Government committed, just because they belong to the same political party, than there is to blame the Foster Government for the Central Railway and other scandals that were committed by the party to which it belongs.

## PROTECTING THE AUTO OWNER.

Automobile owners have a situation always confronting them, which, while they do not talk very much about it, perhaps, is still always more or less of a menace. It arises from the fact that there are on the roads hundreds of irresponsible drivers of motor cars who are jeopardizing the lives and property of others.

The most serious feature of all, however, is that the majority of these irresponsible drivers are entirely without property, and therefore when they do damage to others on the highways by collision there is no way to make them settle for the destruction done. It is not intended to convey the impression that the man who has no property should not drive an automobile, because many of the very best and most careful users of the highways are people of small means. What is meant by this assertion is that there should be some restriction whereby a man unable financially to make good any damages he may do to property should be forced to carry some sort of insurance for the protection of others.

An irresponsible driver may go out on the highways, strike another machine, perhaps throw it off the road, causing serious damage to it, and at the same time injuring the people who are riding in it. The ones hurt may have been using every care in driving, and the accident may have been due entirely to carelessness on the part of the irresponsible driver.

The result of the affair would be that a bill running into the hundreds of dollars perhaps for repairs to the machine would have to be paid by the man owning the machine and not in any way responsible for the accident, because the party who did the damage would not have funds with which to make good the other's loss. Again, the bills of the injured for medical attention, loss of time, and possibly permanent incapacity for work, would also have to be paid by the ones injured because the irresponsible party had neither funds nor credit.

So serious has become this situation in the State of New York that the Legislature of that State is said to be preparing legislation so as to make it compulsory for every owner and driver of an automobile on the highways to carry automobile insurance in order that the law-abiding users of the highways may have some protection and some opportunity to recover

damages for losses and injuries received.

The situation is equally to be met with in this country, and the several provincial legislatures might do worse than give the matter some attention.

## WHAT OTHERS SAY

The Big Interests (Montreal Gazette).  
 It is the habit of Progressive speakers, and not infrequently of some Liberal speakers, to point the finger of condemnation at what they like to describe as the big interests, to harangue their hearers upon the subject of great aggregations of capital, and to express indignation in their portrayals of the evils of watered stock. The policy of these politicians is to get up a catch-words and these catch-words are almost without exception, of soap-box origin; they have been coined for mob consumption, for the propagation of dissatisfaction and the promotion of mischief among the illiterate and among the larger and even more unstable class represented by men who have acquired that dangerous thing a little knowledge. It is not without significance that those who so freely employ the expressions referred to are rarely if ever willing to give chapter and verse to indicate explicitly the individuals or corporations whose operations they condemn, or to particularize with facts and figures in support of the general declamations in which they indulge. The Hon. H. H. Stevens, in his address on the Budget, last week, drew attention to this omission. Mr. Stevens' speech was replete with material and as far as it was forcible. He dealt, among other questions, with the suggestion that capital be assessed and he reminded the House that the great majority of industrial concerns in Canada are small institutions, built up from very small beginnings by means of hard and patient effort and the practice of turning back a proportion of profits for use in expansion and as reserves against periods of depression. When he condemned as a false doctrine the statement to the contrary he characterized it as "about ninety per cent. false and here and there, about ten per cent. accurate." He followed this with a challenge to those who "recklessly acclaim to the public that there is wholesale watering of stock, undue, or any other kind" to come forward with names and facts. This challenge will probably remain unanswered, not because of any unwillingness to provide the details asked for, but because the practice is, as Mr. Stevens has said, very far from being general. Instances here and there may be found, as we found, but that fact if it be established, does not warrant the assumption that stock-watering in Canada has become the evil which political demagogues represent it to be.

The First Essential (Washington Post).  
 Home building increased in this country last year, every fellow having put up his garage the year before.

Make Friends of the Children (Kingston Whig).  
 That is excellent advice as to children. To treat them as you would growing friends with whom you want to keep on good terms. It is wonderful what implanting the sense of honor, and therefore of responsibility, can do.

Who Can Think of Anything Else? (Buffalo Enquirer).  
 Another moonlight automobile accident appears in the day's news. The circumstances seem to be about as usual—lonely road, pretty girl strolling young man, unexpected curve. It is suspected the young man was driving with one hand and three-quarters of one eye. This set of circumstances produces many accidents. Nothing has even been done about it. It might be as well to enact legislation requiring all passenger cars to be constructed with built-in drivers' seats.

THE LAUGH LINE  
 On the Hill  
 On a steep hillside, to all airs that blow  
 Open, and open to the varying sky,  
 Our cottage homestead, smiling tranquilly,  
 Catches morn's earliest and eve's latest glow.  
 —Paul Hamilton Hayne.

Startling Production (Punch).  
 With reference to the music-hall ban on old jokes it is said that Mr. D. W. Griffith is already at work on a tremendous film masterpiece, entitled, "The Birth of a New Joke."

Putting Go in Golf (Irish Paper).  
 An I. R. A. notice:—  
 "(1) Musketry practice will be carried out by troops on portion of the golf-links on Wednesday, 19th inst., between the hours of 2 p.m. and 5 p.m.; (2) Persons are requested not to loiter on the range during the above specified hours."

His Master's Voice (Salt and Pepper).  
 Mr. Stocks (slumming on the East Side):—"Well, well, poor boy; so your father is dead. How did he die?"  
 Urich (who can't be bothered with no questions):—"Aw, he strangled to death. He was sittin' in a lunch room eatin' some horse meat when some guy yells 'Whoa' and the stuff stopped in his throat."

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## Benny's Note Book

BY LEE PAPE

Saturday afternoon pop was sitting in the rocking chair out in the yard stretching himself and looking comfortable, and I said, Say pop?

Say it, pop sed, and I sed, There's a swell new Charlie Chaplin picture around at the Little Grand today, will you take me around to see it, I bet you'll like it like anything.

Then you lose your bet, because it would be a sin and a shame and a waste of time to spend this afternoon in a close, stuffy, dark moving picture theater when the sun is shining so beautifully and the sky is so blue and the air is so refreshing and invigorating, pop sed. If you had suggested taking a nice walk in the sunshine or in fact anything that would keep you out in this wonderful weather I might of listened to you, haven't you any feeling for nature? he sed.

Yes sir, I sed. And just then ma came out, saying, O Will, let's catch a lovely day I think it would be just an ideal time for you to take me out to the park and give me another tennis lesson.

O, well you see, as a matter of fact it would, only I was just telling Benny I might take him around to see the Charlie Chaplin picture and I'd hate to disappoint him, pop sed.

Me thinking, G herry, and ma sed, Well, they say his new picture, is very funny altho it's a little vulgar, they say, well, I think I'll go around with you.

Fine, pop sed. And he went in to put his coat on looking unsatisfied, and we all went around to the Little Grand, me laffing at everything and pop laffing at some and ma not laffing at any.

TEACHER DEFIES  
"LOYALTY" TEST

Tells New York State Advisory Council He Will Not Undergo Secret Inquiry.

New York, June 15.—Alexander Fichandler, principal of public school No. 106, Brooklyn, N. Y., declined today to appear before the State Advisory Council, which is investigating the loyalty of public school teachers. He made known his decision in a letter to Archibald Stevenson, secretary of the council. He is the third teacher to take such action.

In his letter, Mr. Fichandler wrote: "I am in receipt of your request to appear before your council and assist you in clearing up any doubt as to my qualifications to serve in the public schools. I know of no reason why such doubt should have arisen except the nature of my political, social and economic beliefs. Permit me to state that those beliefs are and have always been fundamentally and wholly in accord with the ideals of liberty and justice, which underlie the very existence of our republic."

"It is at all necessary to investigate those beliefs of mine it should be done in the open, fairly and squarely, and before proper constituted and competent authorities. I must therefore decline your invitation. Mr. Fichandler entered the New York public school system in 1898, and for the next seven years taught in elementary and high schools. In 1907 he was made an assistant principal in the elementary schools. Two years later, he was promoted to principal, the position in which he is now serving. He was elected educational director of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union in September, 1920.

"He has been an active member of the Socialist party for several years, and has been a candidate for various offices on the Socialist ticket. Before the United States entered the war in 1917, he was elected for having put 'I Didn't Raise My Boy to Be a Soldier,' a song popular at the time, on the singing programme of the pupils' assembly, but he was exonerated of any blame for this by the Board of Education.

Small ambitions are the enemies of great achievements.

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