



## "The Rise of Irresponsible Government in Canada."

There may come a day, if the destruction of our archives continues at the hands of efficiency experts, when all that we know now as a fearfully distinct and actual present may be regarded as a legendary past, and Macaulay's New Zealander, seated on a broken arch of the Interprovincial Bridge to sketch the ruins of the Printing Bureau, may wonder if Griffenhagen was a real personage or only a generic term to represent the influences at work in the Capital of Canada at the time of the Great War.

He may conclude, as well he might, if he follow the practice of other delvers in the shadowy depths of antiquity, that the European records were at fault and, instead of Canada remaining an integral part of the British Empire with a paid-up membership in the League of Nations, she became by some unaccountable quirk of fate the fief of the conquered, or at least a sort of Isle of Elba to which the deposed Kaiser was sent and allowed to monarchise under a euphonious name.

But better judgment will prevail. Some Hallam will appear who will be able to separate the accidental from the essential, and he will prepare for all time a clear account of the Rise of Irresponsible Government in Canada. The book may be published about the year 2010. We can imagine the learned critic of *The Moose Jaw Melodeon* expressing himself thus as he hails the new historian:—

"Our gratitude is due to Mr. Hallam for his rescue of the name of Ottawa from the prison house of oblivion. Too long have these small towns that played a not unimportant part in the development of our national institutions been neglected. True it is that the childish imagination, which does not desert a people after all its progress, has coupled the

memory of Ottawa with the name of Griffenhagen, but we must not forget that brave men existed before Agamemnon, and that a subtle Macdonald and a gentle Laurier labored for our land before the establishment of the Chicago Dictatorship. These others must have their meed of praise, a praise not denied them in the scholarly work of Hallam.

"The inception of parliamentary institutions was not their doing, but we see the culmination during the years when these accomplished statesmen directed the affairs of the young commonwealth. Happily they labored in the years of peace and plenty and did not have to adjust their ideas of government, derived from the constitution of England, to the needs which the War of 1914-18 imposed upon their successors.

"Mr. Hallam has not made as clear as he might the record of the early invasion of Griffenhagen. One might infer from a reading of his book that the Dictator, to give him the title by which he is as well known, was asked to come to Canada, as William of Orange was invited to assume the English crown in 1688. This is, of course, fortunately, not the fact. From fragments of history, well authenticated however, we are able to clear the name of our country from the stain of being compelled at any point in its history to call in a foreign prince to maintain law and order.

"That there was a sort of invitation extended to disguised emissaries of the Dictator admits of little doubt, but one would be as much at fault in crediting those who sent the invitation with treachery as he would be in denouncing as traitors those Trojans who admitted the wooden horse of the Greeks into their city. In this connection it may be well to note that in the early part of the twentieth century it was

often stated that it was the Trojans who were taken in. We refer to this as showing how careful one has to be in accepting statements at second hand.

"It appears now pretty generally accepted that in 1918, a resident of Chicago, then a populous city, came to Ottawa and registered at the Laurier Inn as Arthur Young. The story that he strung a high wire from the inn to the tower of Parliament Building, destroyed in 1914 by German air-raiders, is apocryphal, as well as the other story that he showed graphically (we suppose "visually") how that the "high cost of living"—a phrase now happily forgotten—was a figment of the imagination, proving his contention by balancing himself on the high wire, holding by their hair a civil servant in his one hand and what was called a "profiteer" in his other.

"The only real evidence that connects Arthur Young with Griffenhagen is a reference to them jointly in a line of that wondrous lyric of our early days by Silas Wagg (or Wegg) entitled a "Hymn of Haste," in which they are represented as departing from the country simultaneously. As, however, the poem's internal evidence places its composition at not later than 1921, and as Griffenhagen still flourished in 1941, the inclusion of the name of Young might have been only for purposes of rhyme, a device often resorted to by the illustrious Wagg, and the ode itself may be regarded as the expression of a pious hope rather than as a record of an accomplished fact.

"Fragmentary evidence in other writings preserved lead us to believe that a certain Telford gained the confidence of the government and had a kind of Doomsday Book prepared, in which were set down most minutely the duties of each public office. The book itself has