

The Toronto World

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TUESDAY MORNING, JAN. 1

Get Out and Vote!

Nothing should prevent the electors of the city from casting their ballots today. If they have any grievances it is because they have not taken sufficient interest in the elections of the past. Any man with a grievance today should go and ventilate it at the polls. That is where he counts. Tomorrow he will be too late and must wait another year. If he is short of coal, or if his children are not getting on at school, or if he has to hag on a strap every night and morning, or if his taxes are not equitable, today is the day that he can talk about these things with effect.

He should know who has been responsible for what he has suffered, and he should know who is most likely to remedy his grievance. Then he should vote.

The Board of Control.

There should be fair play to all the candidates in the election. We have not adversely criticized those whom we are not prepared to support, because we believe a man's record is usually sufficient. We have not made false assertions about candidates, as for example that Controller Cameron was against public ownership, or that Ald. Maguire was against taking over the street railway, when the contrary was the case.

It is better, we believe, for the electors to vote for the men they know, than blindly to accept the slates that are submitted by one authority or another. A vote on personal knowledge carries moral weight. The other kind may provide a city council, but the kind we have had in the past have been capable of improvement.

It is scarcely to be doubted that Mayor Church will be returned once more by today's vote. So, we think, should Controller O'Neill. Ald. Robbins, as representing labor, has great claims on the citizens. For the sake of having a younger element on the board of control we have selected Ald. MacGillivray, and Ald. Archibald, but undoubtedly Ald. Maguire and ex-Ald. McBride will make a strong run.

Coal and Frost.

As we foresaw last April the coal problem is now beginning to be recognized as the most serious which we have to face. All year long we have insisted on the necessity of providing for a situation which the experience of last winter made palpable. It was so obvious that it might have seemed unnecessary to call attention to it. Warnings and advice seem to have made little impression, and in the midst of one of the severest seasons of many years the coal shortage is exceedingly grave.

Excuses and explanations are to be had in abundance, but they do not remedy the situation. That was foreseen, but was not provided against. We have before us at least two months of extreme winter weather. This period may easily be doubled. The distress resulting from cold weather and lack of fuel is almost the worst form of human misery. The city tried to get authority to have a coal yard, and the government permitted the legislature to block the measure. The government should assume its responsibility for that act now, and do something effective towards relieving the distress.

The German Bluff.

Germany's appeals for peace arise out of a very real need. She is short of men and she is short of food. She is short also of military material. Her brave front to the simple Russians is a bluff, and the proposals which the Germans wish to have laid before the other allies indicate the depth of their need. But the old Adam is still strong in Germany, and in her eagerness for peace she does not lose sight of possible advantages.

Mr. G. Stanley Sidgwick has been calculating the strength of the German army, which he put recently, all told, at 4,500,000, and these included every male between 17 and 60. The class of 1920 has been called out, while the French have not yet called the class of 1918. Thus Germany is four years ahead of her normal drafts. Her mass drives on the Russians, the French, the British have brought depletion of their ranks, not victory.

Mr. Sidgwick thinks that at the end of two years the Germans would not have 1,000,000 men in the field. Hence it is that they have been so complacent to the Bolsheviks, and so anxious to make a peace which would release their men imprisoned there and make available for labor purposes the resources of the Russian peasantry.

The drive on Italy was carried out by 100,000 men, asserts Mr. Sidgwick, and was successful only on account of socialist panic and treachery in the Italian ranks. The French attack yesterday showed that the Teutonic forces have not great resisting power. The British are able to exert the initiative whenever they please in France or Flanders.

When the German collapse comes as it surely must, peace will not come dropping slow, but with a rush, like a spring shower. It is on the cards that the allies will call the German peace bluff one of these days with a statement which the German people and the German Government must discuss together.

The Labor Party in Canada.

The Ottawa Citizen, the loyally supporting Union government, is an independent paper, sometimes suspected of a leaning toward Socialism. It regrets that the Labor party, thru mistaken guidance, as it thinks, failed to make a better showing at the recent election, and says:

Labor has apparently failed to elect even one single independent representative to the house of commons. It is not in the best interests of Canada that the organized workers seem to be unable to express themselves thru political action, when almost every other civilized

state has a well organized Labor movement, and when the pioneer land of parliamentary government, Great Britain, is contemplating the prospect of a Labor government after the next general election.

The Citizen finds the failure of the Labor party in Canada at the last election to be due to the quasi alliance that seemed to exist between some of its official Labor leaders and the supporters of Sir Wilfrid Laurier. Had the Labor party as an organization given its adhesion to the principle of Union government and its support to the compulsory Military Service Act, The Citizen believes that it would have commanded the support of the Canadian workingman. As it was, the great majority of the men who toll, supported the Union government candidates.

This may explain the result of the last election, but does it explain the comparatively poor showing made by the Labor party in other campaigns? Why, for example, have Labor candidates as a rule made so poor a showing in the various elections that have been held from time to time for years past in the City of Toronto? Why was the Labor candidate badly beaten a few years ago at a by-election in London? Why have we no Labor party in Canada comparable with the Labor party in Australia or Great Britain?

Possibly to understand this we must study the political conditions that have prevailed on this continent rather than those which have prevailed in Europe or Australia. The Labor party in the United States has been little more successful than the Labor party in Canada. In both countries the men who toll have divided at one election after another on old party lines.

One reason perhaps is to be found in the small progress made on this continent by co-operative movements of every kind. A second reason may be found in the overwhelming influence wielded in party politics in the past by the great corporations. A third reason may be found in the fact that nearly every general election is in the nature of a plebiscite, where you vote "yes" or "no" on some particular issue. The vote "yes" or "no" in 1917 had no choice but to vote for the Union government candidate; to vote for a Labor candidate was simply to throw his ballot away. In 1911 the man who wanted to defeat reciprocity had no choice but to support the Conservative party. In the United States many of the presidential elections have turned on a single issue like the free silver question which no man could straddle or disregard; he either had to be for the gold standard or against it. If he were for the gold standard he had no choice but to support the Republican candidate, no matter how anxious he might be to encourage the Labor party.

Possibly Union government will give the Labor movement a better chance. Public ownership will do more than anything else to bring it success. The abolition of the patronage system and the campaign fund should greatly help independents in every election. Proportional representation and more adequate representation for city constituencies would also help. The 500,000 people living in the City of Toronto have little more voice in the government of this country than the 90,000 living in the Province of Prince Edward Island. More city seats would help the Labor party, but proportional representation would help it still more.

Reverting to the difference in conditions between the old world and the new it must be remembered that many men returned to parliament in Canada may not be members of the Labor party, but may fairly be considered representative of Labor. They are men who have risen from the ranks; have known in their time chill penury, and done much hard manual labor. In Great Britain, on the other hand, until the extension of the franchise and the advent of the Labor party, the membership of the national legislature was largely recruited from landed proprietors, university graduates, scions of nobility and members of the learned professions. The Labor candidate, when he appeared in the mother country, represented laboring men and made a peculiar appeal to them when opposing a titled banker, a distinguished lawyer or the cadet of some aristocratic family. Here in Canada the Labor candidate can seldom make a similar appeal. The candidates of the old parties may be well-to-do men in the community, but they are often self-made men who have served their apprenticeship at the forge, the carpenter's table, the shoemaker's bench, or in the machine shop; and may have put in more years of hard manual labor than the Labor candidate.

Other People's Opinions

A Labor Party Needed.

Editor World: Mr. W. J. Hastie hits the nail fair on the head when he says: "What we need in Canada is a Labor party," as the two old parties are beyond redemption—never were the working men so sick and tired of that farce called politics. The working people of this generation are paying a big price for a lesson for which they will receive a good profit for their children. Capital and Labor cannot be classed separately in future, for what is capital? But labor! Put all the capitalists with their gold on an island and the labor on another and return after a few years and see the results. The last election result is not to be taken seriously. I know a fact that 90 per cent. of the working men in Toronto were tied by family reasons for not voting one way or another. There should never have been an election until the war was over, and then the Liberal and Conservative gruffers and chin wags will be surprised. G. Vincent, 42 Lewis street.

Roads a War Necessity.

We do not urge the extravagant outlay of money at this time for joy-riding thoroughfares, but highways are a war necessity and because of existing conditions immediate attention should be given them. England has appreciated the value of highways in war time. Her appropriations this year for the purpose are greater than ever before. The first step should be the determination of what highways could be used as substitutes for short railroad hauls, thereby releasing rolling stock for other service. Such work as is already under way should be completed, and if we are to profit by England's experience new projects of highway development that will relieve the food situation should be put under way at once. —New York Evening Sun.

Not Much In It.

An old South Carolina dandy was sent to the Hospital of St. Xavier in Charleston. One of the gentle, black-robed sisters put a thermometer in his mouth to take his temperature. Presently, when the doctor made his rounds, he said: "Well, Nathan, how do you feel?" "I feel right to the bone," "Have you had any nourishment?" "Yassir." "What did you have?" "A lady done gimme a piece of glass ter suck, boss."

The Railway Question

The railway question will not down. The west is up in arms against the 15 per cent. increase in passenger and freight rates authorized by the Dominion Railway Commission. The decision will undoubtedly be appealed to the governor-general-in-council, but the government in the meantime will be urged to take possession of all the roads and prepare for their nationalization. The railway commission chose an unlucky day for handing out their judgment, for it so happens that on that day President Wilson issued his proclamation bringing all the United States roads into the possession and under the control of the national government. Those who protest against the rise in freights are therefore ready with an alternative policy. They point to Washington.

Premier Norris of Manitoba has wired an emphatic protest to Ottawa. He denies the right of the Dominion Railway Commission to virtually override the contract between the Province of Manitoba and the Canadian Northern Railway Company. That agreement guaranteed certain freight rates to the shippers of Manitoba, and by the decision in the Regina rates case these rates were extended to the entire prairie west. Neither does Premier Norris see why the Canadian Pacific, whose offers are bursting with an unwelcome surplus, should increase their toll of taxation upon the traffic of the country. He talks about an appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada, which can only be allowed by the chairman of the railway commission, as no jurisdictional point is involved, and also of an appeal to the governor-general-in-council. He is on a firm ground, however, when he appeals to the government, not as a judicial tribunal but as an executive, to take immediate action.

In an interview given at Winnipeg yesterday Mr. Norris said: "The railway situation in Canada seems to have reached a stage where drastic measures are required. I am impressed by the wisdom of the course followed by the Governments of Great Britain and the United States in taking over all their roads for the period of the war. The time may come very soon when that measure will be adopted in this country."

Meanwhile the November statement of the Canadian Pacific Railway shows that the gross earnings of that company have smashed all records by crossing the fifteen-million-dollar mark. Operating expenses have undoubtedly been steadily increasing, and have now reached the abnormally high ratio of 64.4 per cent. of the gross earnings. Yet the C. P. R. will still pay a 10 per cent. dividend and carry forward a good surplus every year. The value of its western lands must be enormous, but this does not appear on the balance sheet.

The railway magnates are not in agreement as to how much the recent railway rate increase will cost the people of Canada. D. B. Hanna, vice-president and general manager of the Canadian Northern, reckons that the earnings of the roads will be increased by \$23,000,000 per year, but Vice-President Dairymple of the Grand Trunk lines says this estimate is entirely too high.

President Wilson's proclamation not only takes over all the railways, but all terminals, sleeping and parlor cars, private cars and private car lines, elevators owned or controlled by the railways, and coastwise or inland water transport lines operated by or in connection with the railways. Radial railways and even intraurban street railway systems may be taken over in whole or in part later on should the president deem it expedient. The president, by the way, rears his proclamation upon the direction of congress in declaring war on Germany; that he shall employ not only the land and naval forces of the United States but all the resources of the country as needed for the efficient prosecution of the war.

The Winnipeg Telegram says: Complete nationalization of Canadian railway systems for the duration of the war is likely to be urged upon Ottawa by Winnipeg business men as an alternative for the 15 per cent. increase in freight rates granted by the railway commission and announced yesterday.

It is stated today that the Winnipeg board of trade, the live stock interests, lumber companies and grain men are preparing to offer vigorous representations to the government in opposition to the increase. Members of the board of trade declare that the policy of subsidies to companies actually requiring them is vastly preferable from the public standpoint to a general boost in all rates. This suggestion was made to the railway commission, but it involved a matter beyond the board's jurisdiction and could not be considered at all.

A. E. Boyle, secretary of the board, stated today that no developments of general interest have yet occurred as a result of the representations made at Ottawa by the shippers' section of the board. A telegram was received announcing that in the absence of Hon. N. W. Rowell the board's message had been handed to Hon. Arthur Meighen. The board is now waiting to learn the attitude of the government. If it is willing, detailed representations showing the alleged unfairness of the increase will be taken to the cabinet in an effort to have the cabinet override the decision of the railway commissioners.

Along with alternatives for the general rate advance, Winnipeg interests will ask the government to seriously consider the advisability of the government taking over all railways as a war measure on terms similar to those arranged in the United States. The Manitoba Free Press has an interesting editorial on the railway question, a considerable portion of which was telegraphed east. We quote an additional paragraph which views the rates increase from a new angle: "In the United States an application for a 15 per cent. increase in freight and passenger rates has

JACK CANUCK MAKES SOME NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS



long been pending before the Interstate Commerce Commission. Decision has not been rendered; and in the interval the United States Government has dealt drastically with the railway problem. Beginning today the government takes over all the railroad systems in the United States, and will operate them as a unit while the country is at war. The government becomes responsible to the shareholders of each company for certain fixed payments in the form of dividends; and subject to these charges the combined revenues of the roads go into the public treasury. If, now, the Interstate Commerce Commission orders an increase in the freight and passenger rates the United States public will regard the new impost as war taxes for

the state, and will pay them with cheerfulness."

The Monetary Times gives prominence to the deliverance of a Port Arthur man that the solution of the transportation problem of Canada is to be found in the construction of the Georgian Bay Canal. This looks to us like a stall or a side-step. We believe the solution of the transportation problem is to be found in the immediate nationalization of all the railways of Canada.

MISTAKE IN ADDRESS.

Thru an error in giving out an address, Elizabeth Wilson was reported as living at 1240 Shaw street. This is not the case. Mrs. Wilson never lived at this address. The World regrets this mistake.

EDITH CAVELL CLUB ENTERTAINS CHILDREN

Santa Claus Present at the Club Rooms Saturday for Kids' Delight.

The club rooms of the Edith Cavell Women's Club, 556 Adelaide street, was the scene of a jolly Christmas entertainment Saturday evening when the children of the neighborhood gathered to enjoy a musical program and a Christmas feast. After supper games and music preceded the entrance of Santa Claus, who came to distribute the gifts from a monster Christmas tree. Great prizes were bestowed upon the president of the club, who, assisted by the entertainment committee, had provided such a fine treat for the children.



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