



## Keep Faith in Parliament

PARLIAMENT in the British Empire has never been so jeopardized as at present. We are in danger of losing our historic confidence in this great institution of government by debate if we substitute for it any form of oligarchy or government by newspapers. Oligarchies are sometimes useful in emergencies. Government by newspapers may often be relied upon to create the emergencies. The War Council of Premier Lloyd George is a quintette of brainy men. But these men cannot afford to exercise the full extent of their powers without reference to Parliament. In concentration and unity of purpose they naturally excel Parliament or a general Cabinet. But their function is mainly executive. They are a specialized junta of business managers whom, with the consent of Parliament, and by the aid of the newspapers, the people of England have empowered with almost absolute jurisdiction. We credit these commissioners of democracy with far too little common sagacity if we expect them to administrate without calling Parliament into their counsels. An aggregation of 640 members of Parliament cannot successfully administrate. A full Cabinet of several dozen members cannot in a time of special crisis created by a great war manage the affairs of the nation without losing time and wasting energy in debate. But Parliament still stands as the most representative body of brains and public business in the country. It is the source from which Cabinets and Councils derive their authority. It is the democratic and responsible medium between the unorganized masses of the people and the highly specialized activities of the Emergency Council. As such it must continue to be respected by the nation. There is an idea more or less vaguely abroad in England, as well as Canada, that the organized public opinion of newspapers, day by day, working on the masses, is a more effective medium between the people and the ultimate executors than Parliament can be. This is a mistaken doctrine for which any nation that adopts it will be sorry. Newspapers cannot organize public opinion unless somebody organizes the newspapers. Whoever that somebody may happen to be is likely to regard himself as a dictator. He is in effect another Kaiser. We do not want Kaisers. We cannot afford so to organize the Press in place of Parliament that public opinion is strangled. No one doubts the genius of Lord Northcliffe. Does any sane citizen imagine that his patriotic purpose is greater than that of Parliament? We outline these suggestions merely to reaffirm what we have twice stated already that even in Canada there is a tendency to retire Parliament to the attic or the cellar in order to put in its place some mysterious small body of men who are supposed to have more wisdom than Parliament, so long as they are supported by enough newspapers.

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## Another Lord of Montreal

WHY is it that Montreal gets two new lords within six weeks when no other city in Canada, except Ottawa, has ever had one in a hundred years? The recent elevation of Sir Hugh Graham to the peerage is one of those phenomena which can never be regulated by mere science, whether natural or political. It was fore-ordained in the stars that Hugh Graham, founder and proprietor of the Montreal Star, should become a peer of the realm. It was Sir Hugh Graham's privilege to be the human instrument by which the purpose was carried out. A writer in one of the New York papers alleged that Sir Hugh was the first Youtive-born Canadian to become a peer. This is not as sde kind to Lord Beaverbrook. Where was Max containiin born if not in Canada? Surely he has never post-card his birthplace since he went to England. which will, more than half the age of Sir Hugh Graham to his family, led him in the peerage by six weeks.

fax's elevation to the House of Lords was

never fore-ordained by the fates. It was one of those strange phenomena that by their remarkable departure from recognized scientific laws compel our admiration for science. Lord Beaverbrook is a new phase of nature. Lord—whoever he may choose to be—of Montreal, is merely an inevitable result. We can follow the hand of nature in preparing Sir Hugh Graham for the peerage. Lord Beaverbrook is what may be called a novus homo. But the House of Lords is a most catholic institution. It makes room for oddly contrasted personages. The two new Canadian lords are about as diverse in character as any two in the peerage. The one feature common to both is their Canadian parentage, and the fact that the city of Montreal made each of them famous in this part of the Empire before he transferred much of his activity to England.

Sir Hugh Graham may, if he chooses, place himself in the same category as Lord Northcliffe, who climbed to the peerage on a ladder of newspapers. Perhaps he will choose otherwise. In many respects he is mentally superior to Northcliffe. And we doubt if even Harmsworth could have created an English-speaking evening newspaper in the city of Montreal big enough and powerful enough to land him in the peerage. There is a peculiar brand of organizing ability in Sir Hugh Graham. It has found expression in a large number of ways. He has always been a shrewd Scotch estimator of public taste and a moulder of public opinion. An article by Mr. C. Linton Sibley in a previous issue of The Canadian Courier explains how skilfully Sir Hugh built The Star from being his own little man-peddled proposition with the subscription labels pasted on by himself. That story is full of homely and obvious philosophy. In fact, Hugh Graham had begun the strange business of carving out a peerage from the democracy of public opinion before Alfred Harmsworth started his first little paper. Sir Hugh has been no man's imitator. It is a safe conjecture that no other man in Canada will ever successfully imitate him. We should be delighted to join in the conventional salvos of appreciation that have been keeping the wires warm to Sir Hugh Graham's office. We prefer not to do so. We have always regarded Sir Hugh Graham as a character whose peculiar psychic quality never could be put into a straight-jacket even of the peerage. He is the intellectual Houdini of Canadian newspaperdom. The prison cell or the straight-jacket that keeps so many average men, of apparently as much brains as Sir Hugh, in a lifetime of respectable bondage, never could keep him from getting loose. Now that Sir Hugh has obeyed the injunction of fate by getting out of the straight-jacket of common democracy into the House of Lords, we may expect him to sit back—basking in the colour of his robes?

Oh, no, Mr. Graham is stronger than Lord —, whatever he may be. But for the love of representative government in this country, the next time the King wants to make a Canadian lord, let him pick one from some other city than Montreal—which has four lords already, dead and alive.

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## Weakens the Law

A WINNIPEG man was sentenced to five years in penitentiary for the theft of food for his family. Another Winnipegger, on the same day, we understand, was given "suspended sentence" after being found guilty of embezzlement. The records of our courts are full of just such things. A well-dressed man was allowed to go by a Toronto magistrate recently after pleading guilty to the petty charge of issuing a check which the bank returned marked "N. S. F." That same morning, in the same court, a shabby Jew was given a sentence for doing precisely the same thing. So recently, also a girl in an eastern Ontario town was punished severely for stealing a baby carriage, while a man who had fooled with a trust fund was let off with a warning.

There are often good reasons for these seeming inconsistencies. Perhaps the seemingly favoured person has a clean record, as against the unclean record of the other offender. Perhaps it is a case of what would be the best sort of punishment. Certainly the fact of "suspended sentence" would mean as much to some men as a ten year term in penitentiary. Yet these inconsistencies should be looked into by the Department of Justice at Ottawa, or by the various Attorney's-General in the Provinces. It is not the interests of the offender we have so much in mind as the interests of the law. The vast mass of ignorant people is always willing to credit the law with favouritism. Examples such as are cited above serve to strengthen that attitude of mind. Thus such cases weaken the position of the law and tend, indirectly but certainly, to promote offences against the law.

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## Diagnosed

YOUR house isn't quite warm enough. Your office is too hot. There's something wrong with the air; it smells queer. The afternoon sun falls in usual places on the east wall of the room. Seems impossible to get any work done as it ought to be done. Railway advertisements have a strange fascination for the eye. It proves easier to pace the floor than to sit down to work—and more pleasant to move around, thinking about nothing, than to compose "Dear Sir:—Yours of the 11th received, and would say—"

There's something wrong somewhere. What is it? Spring's coming!

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## The Youngster

A GOOD many parents might with profit pay more attention to the germs in their children's minds than to the germs in the children's feeding bottles. The science of protecting the bodies of children against the kinds of disease that can be diagnosed and fought, has been exploited by women's magazines and doctors until from being a reasonably good thing it has become a silly fad. On the other hand, the science of making the children good men and women has yet to be discovered. Sunday schools don't make character. Kindergarten systems don't do it—whatever the sayings of the German students on that subject may be. What mars countless children on this continent is too much attention to their blessed little carcasses. What makes the strong young men and sound young women—referring now to character chiefly—is the influence of EXAMPLE in the home. In no department of human activity is the precept better applied, that "Example is better than precept," than in the raising of children. But how many young parents can you not count on your fingers who seem to think they have filled their duty when they have begotten off-spring and settled themselves down at thirty, or thirty-five or forty to be nursemaids for the rest of their lives? Heaven knows it isn't an agreeable spectacle to see parents desert and neglect their children, but it is an open question whether such children, brought up by wise strangers, or even subject to the discipline of an orphan's asylum, are not better off than those others who are nursed into nervous trouble before they are sixteen, or allowed to form the habit of expecting entertainment, diversion and excitement before they are ten? It is a wise parent that can suppress his own or her own natural desire to fondle and humour the child, long enough to train the little persons to respect authority, and to be content with simple things. How often does not the sordid story of some youthful tragedy read just like a glorified episode of the baby who demanded the rattle and would not be denied—the rattles, as children grow older, become more expensive, more difficult to obtain, and more dangerous to handle.