

The Toronto World

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FRIDAY MORNING, DEC. 1.

The British Government's Struggle With the Merton

The British Government, at Sir Robert Borden's request, has cabled its position on the nickel question, and no doubt done its utmost to place the Canadian Government in as favorable a light as possible. But it falls far short of justifying our government's action, and certainly gives an entirely different version of what has been done than does the solicitor-general.

It is a fact that his majesty's government have approved from the first the arrangements made by your government for refined nickel to American plants. It is recognized by his majesty's government that it would be impossible, and indeed manifestly injurious in the conduct of the war to prohibit the export of Canadian nickel, and they have concurred in the method of supervision now being adopted, which seems to be the best practical method.

When and where did anyone suggest that Canadian nickel should not be exported for American plants? So long as the war goes on and American plants are making arms and ammunition they must get Canadian nickel. The most that has been suggested is that Canadian nickel matte should not be exported from Canada, but rather should be refined in Canada, and the disposition of the nickel product thereby more easily controlled.

It is the export of nickel abroad after it gets to the United States, where it is now refined, that has been objected to as uncontrolled, or as insufficiently controlled.

Mr. Meighen has labored hard to place the responsibility for such methods of control as do exist on the shoulders of the British Government; that government now shifts back the responsibility to him, and retorts that whatever arrangements there are of his own making, and that they have been observed in them. This reverses Mr. Meighen's picture, painted on the night of his address.

And now for Henry R. Merton & Son, notorious enemy traders, those contributing to the export of Canadian nickel abroad. Henry R. Merton & Son are a powerful trust, which controlled in the past most of the necessary metals, and it has taken the British Government two years to squeeze the German element out of them and to get in a position, in a sense, to make use of them. Why? Because this powerful trust was unwilling to let go its grip on the metals essential to the war, and permit Great Britain to obtain the necessary control; or, to put it in the words of the despatch, because “such control, owing to present conditions, could hardly have been secured without their help.” They had control and had to finally give it up after the German was squeezed out.

But the Canadian Government was not in any such humiliating position with respect to Canadian nickel; all it had to say to the International Nickel Co. was “this big trust, this controller of metals, must not control our nickel.” And the International Nickel Co. would have found other agents or done their selling direct, or subject to such control as the Canadian Government might devise.

Or the International Nickel Co., finding the British Government in the grip of the metal trust, might have said to Merton: “You shall not control the export of Canadian nickel.”

Is it because they did not in some such way come to the aid of the British Government when struggling at home with the German metal octopus that the British Government has turned away from the International Nickel Co. and Henry R. Merton & Son to establish with their own money a new British-Canadian nickel mining and refining company, with whom it has contracted for all its supplies of nickel?

As the nickel discussion goes on

Mr. Meighen must not any longer lay the blame for what has been done, or what has been left undone, on the British Government. They have advised the Canadian prime minister that all they have done is to censure in his arrangements. And the acts of the British Government, which speak louder than words, seem to indicate that the arrangements in which they have been called upon to concur are not very satisfactory to them.

Suppose instead of leaving the British Government to fight with Henry R. Merton & Son for the elimination of its German control, the International Nickel Co. had voluntarily discarded them as agents, what a lot of trouble and anxiety they would have saved the poor old British Government, already overburdened with far too many difficult tasks in very anxious times.

Why does the International Nickel Co. stick so tight to Henry R. Merton & Son?

Health Department Benefits

Dr. Hastings' letter to the board of control dealing with the failure of council to accept his recommendation that Miss Dyke and Miss Forsythe, two nurses who had taken advanced qualifying courses in order to fit themselves for more efficient work, and who had done so at their own expense, should have increased salaries. It is a document that should be studied by the taxpayers as well as the aldermen. Its immediate effect on the board of control was to secure the sending forward of the recommendations without comment.

Dr. Hastings accuses the aldermen of not having ever approached the health department “to obtain a first-hand knowledge of any detail bearing on the question from which he was asked to express an opinion and to register his vote.” He includes the chairman of the board in this charge.

Dr. Hastings also protests against the false charge of extravagance brought against the department. His impudence can be understood if these protests are to be considered in the light of the custom of the aldermen not to seek information on matters upon which they have to decide. Dr. Hastings defies the council to place a finger on one single item of extravagance in connection with the department's administration.

It is not surprising to hear criticisms around the city leveled against the health department in utter ignorance of what the department has done. The reduction in the death rate is of less importance to some people than the higher price of some commodities. The cost of milk, for example, is said to have risen. It would appear in many cases that the price is unchanged, but that more milk and less water is sold for the same money than formerly. A pint of real milk at ten cents would make two pints of alleged milk at five cents each. Any citizen can practice this deal in the privacy of his own house, but it is no longer possible to do so in public in Toronto. Formerly there was an average of 20 per cent. water added to the milk, but the health department has stopped this.

Those who jeopardize the efficiency of a system which has reduced infant mortality by thirty per cent, in the last five years are just as culpable, says Dr. Hastings, for the death of the innocents as the zeppelin raiders or the Lusitania wreckers.

It is unfortunate if the aldermen prefer to trade on the ignorance of the voters rather than on the intelligence of the city health department.

The Welsh Coal Mines

There was no other way out for a settlement of the Welsh coal mines difficulty but for the government to assume control. Whatever may be thought of the case from one side or the other, it must be admitted that if the miners were to continue to drag along their disputes and produce no coal, the navy, and in turn the whole empire, would suffer. When men arrive at a stage when their own interest is more important to them than the fate of the empire, or of the race, it is high time for some authority to interfere. The government necessarily had to take action in Wales.

As to the merits of the case there is no doubt whatever that the mine owners were making huge profits. The miners had had a fifteen per cent. rise in their wages, but food prices and other expenses have been rising much higher in proportion, and they asked for a further fifteen per cent., which the owners refused to concede. There is no doubt at all about the increased cost of living. Those on stationary salaries or scales of wages know that while the owners and capitalists may be thriving, the majority of people are poorer than five years ago. They have to pay more for the same quantities, or take less for the same money. In one case they get behind. In the other they starve. When it comes to this point, inter-

ference of some kind by some authority cannot be far away.

Tagore on India

Sir Rabindranath Tagore, who has recently arrived in New York after a journey across the continent from Seattle, has been expressing the views of the most enlightened and cultured section of Indian opinion upon the future of that nation.

“My ambition,” he declares, “is to bring the ideals of the east before the people of the west. We of India cannot achieve anything by imitating the west, which is hampered by all kinds of difficulties. We hope to be able to show the world that we have something to give, not merely to receive.”

Sir Rabindranath, who received the Nobel prize for his poetry some years ago, represents the finest ideals of India, and has a just title to speak for his countrymen. He is entirely with the entente allies on the issues of the war, and declares that there is trouble in store for India if the Germans win.

“I can't quite see then how the people wish to see Great Britain lose,” India has its place in the war problem and has done with magnificent generosity what it was not compelled to do. Its voluntary sacrifice for the empire must not be overlooked nor forgotten.

“We are a witness,” says the poet-philosopher, “the war, to my mind, is the outcome of overgrown materialism, of an ideal based on self-interest, not based on harmony. It is understood in Germany is merely a survival of feudalism, a system which is dead or moribund elsewhere, and which cannot be revived to replace the increasingly vigorous democratic spirit of modern government.”

India, like other nations, has been touched by the new note of democracy, but there has been no desire among her wisest advisers to hurry her into premature efforts at self-government. The proclamation of Queen Victoria after the mutiny more than half a century ago, recognized the principle of self-government as one that India must have yielded to her with the progress of her development. The war has done much to acquaint the various members of the empire with its different parts. As a better acquaintance with India spreads there will probably be less reluctance to recognize the principle expressed by Queen Victoria, and resented by almost every governor-general since that time.

BANK OF TORONTO BRANCH.

The Bank of Toronto has opened a branch at Sibbald, Alberta, under the management of James Murray, formerly manager at Kipling, Sask. branch. James Maguire, manager at Colonsay, Sask., has been transferred to the Kipling branch, and Barry J. Meyer, the accountant at Colonsay, is made manager at that point.

APPOINTED ADJUTANT.

Kingston, Nov. 30.—Lieut. Charles Crozier, who was taken prisoner at Langemarck and was held in Germany five months, has been appointed adjutant of the Special Service Company.

CANADA PERMANENT Savings Department

We accept any sum from one dollar upwards and credit interest at

Three and One-half Per Cent. Compound interest materially assists the growth of the account.

Toronto Street - TORONTO

WILLIAM KERXES SCOURGES THE RUDE SEA



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OPIATE PROVED FATAL TO MAJOR MEREDITH

Officer, Troubled With Insomnia, Had to Resort to Narcotic.

OVERDOSE WAS TAKEN

Verdict of Death by Misadventure Returned by Coroner's Jury.

London, Nov. 30.—A verdict of death by misadventure was given in the case of Major John Redmond Meredith, 38, of the 85th Canadians. He was the son of the chief justice of Ontario and was found dead on leave at Shorncliffe at the Regent Palace Hotel Saturday. Capt. William McBrien said he and the deceased arrived in England in June.

The deceased suffered from insomnia and derived much benefit from a preparation called Somnos. Both were very anxious to go to France, and the deceased at the hotel Saturday told the witness he intended to take a bath and go to bed, as he was not feeling well. When the witness returned to the room they shared, he thought the deceased was asleep, which will appoint teachers, arrange salaries and decide upon the course and various branches of training which will be taken up. In addition to classes in practical grammar and business arithmetic, it is planned to give men a training in mathematics, plan drawing and blue print reading, and for ladies courses in baking, cookery, dressmaking and millinery.

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