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ST. JOHN, N. B., THURSDAY, JANUARY 26, 1922.

THE REAL REACTIONARIES.

During the election campaign "reactionary" was a favorite mode of reference by Mr. Mackenzie King to the policies of the Meighen Government. As a matter of fact there are few words less applicable to the late Government's policies than the word "reactionary." No policy the Meighen Government ever propounded favored a return to dead and gone conditions; their leading policy was to let well alone, and permit such conditions as had made Canada so prosperous to remain untouched.

The Borden and Meighen Governments were responsible for several changes in methods of administration, but one and all were in the nature of improvements upon previous conditions. One of the greatest of these changes was the abolition of patronage. One has only to look back to the rainy days of the Laurier regime to find evidence in abundance of the evils arising out of the patronage system. Its abolition was one of the boldest and biggest acts of the old Government. Every administration since Confederation had promised to abolish patronage, but it was not until Union Government came to power that an honest endeavor was made to carry out an election pledge on the question. Patronage in the Civil Service was abolished by it lock, stock and barrel. However, the Government never gained any credit for this progressive move. It is doubtful if it secured a single vote in Canada for its action in Ottawa the Civil Service, which gained most by the Government's legislation, actually voted against it. On the other hand, the abolition of patronage did much to break up political organization. The party worker, with no possibility of ever securing a job, no matter how small, lost interest.

Signs are now very apparent at Ottawa that the new Government contemplates an early return to the patronage system. The Quebec Liberals opposed in the House the abolition of patronage, and according to an announcement by Hon. W. R. Mackenzie King, Minister of Agriculture, the Cabinet is going to lose no time in restoring it. If this is not "reactionary," it would be difficult to say what would be. If this is to be the policy of the new Liberal Cabinet, what did Hon. Mackenzie King and the Liberal press mean by their protestations on the subject during the election campaign? Was it all hypocritical claptrap? The Government was condemned because it was said to be handing out "shameful patronage." Now that the Liberals are in power and the spoilsmen are crowding to Ottawa, they suddenly discover that there is no patronage and that the old Government had actually and really abolished it. The heifers are dissatisfied, and, according to Mr. Motherwell, patronage is to be restored with "the evils of the system eliminated," the said evils being wicked Tories.

The move to restore the patronage system can only be blocked by the union of the Conservatives and the Progressives. If ever there was need for an alert and active Opposition party at Ottawa, it is at the present time. The reactionary element of the Liberal party is in control, and unless Hon. Mackenzie King is a stronger and a more courageous man than he appears there will be a return to the old days when the rallying cry was "to the victors belong the spoils."

THE HEALTH ACT.

The Times has come to the conclusion that either political partisanship or ignorance is responsible for the opposition that is so prevalent in regard to the Public Health Act. We ourselves doubt very much if either of these alleged causes is the correct one. The real objection to the administration of the Act calls for the assessment of such large amounts of money, for nine-tenths of which no apparent benefit whatever accrues. No one is so partisan or so ignorant as to doubt or deny the necessity and importance of taking all measures calculated to preserve and improve the general health of the community; but rightly or wrongly the impression is abroad that the Act is far too full of fiddle and fads, which all cost money, and that the actual beneficial service that it is intended to provide, could be provided very completely and effectively for less than half the money. Nearly ninety per cent. of the amounts that the municipalities are asked to provide, is for salaries for an array of officials; and in the City and County of St. John public opinion leans very strongly to the view that equally good results were obtained under the old Board of

Health as under the present Act and that at about half the cost.

That many matters which constituted a menace to public health have been dealt with under the present Act, cannot be denied, but they could have been dealt with just as well under a much less elaborate and complicated system of working. Dr. Roberts has allowed his enthusiasm to run away with his judgment. New Brunswick is among the pioneers in making Public Health a separate department of government; and in creating this department, the dominating idea seems to have been to make as great a "splurge" as possible regardless of expense. Now the people object to foot the bills, when they don't see what they get for their money, that they didn't have before.

"Life," New York, says: "Does Reciprocity with Canada mean that we have to return the bottles?"

A WESTERN COMPLAINT.

The Vancouver Sun declares that the Western Provinces are handicapped by "the operation of international discriminations applying to Westerners just because they live in the West." We would like to know wherein conditions that apply to the Western Provinces are more irksome than those which are to be found in the Maritime Provinces? These last Provinces are shut off from the remainder of the Dominion by reason of the heavy freight rates that prevail; hence their trade and manufacturing industries are crippled for want of access to and from the markets of the country. When the Maritime Provinces entered Confederation, they did so on the definite understanding that railway facilities should be provided that would link them up with the remainder of the country. They got the railway all right, and for a number of years all went well, until the thousands of miles of non-paying railways in the Western Provinces came to be linked up with the Maritime. This linking up an enormous increase in rates, an increase large enough to almost strangle industrial life in the Maritimes. And now comes the Vancouver Sun which declares that the Western Provinces are being discriminated against in favor of the Eastern Provinces and some of the American States!

The Western States say they want better markets, lower freight rates and tariff reductions. Eastern Provinces would be vastly benefited by the same things; but the Government's point of view is that in none of these matters can one law be made for part of the country and another for the remainder. It is a matter of law for the remainder, and the thing to do is to try and pull together and not in different ways. The West may think it is subjected to needless hardships, but Western Canada also has its problems, with which it finds it very difficult to get Western Canada to sympathize.

STREET CAR CONSTABLES.

Toronto Mail and Empire:—The employment of street car motormen and conductors as special constables to prosecute motorists who pass standing street cars has been tried in St. Thomas. The city police court officials arranged to pay to these street car operators half of the fines collected in cases in which they were the complainants. In November nine constables were registered against motorists and all informations were laid by Manager Johns, of the street railway. The amount of the fines payable to him and the operators was \$20. But considerable feeling was aroused among motorists at this method of law enforcement, and one of the City Council committees was induced to pass a resolution against the practice. There is a good deal to be said for using street car crews as traffic policemen. In Toronto, for instance, the regular police can see comparatively few violations of the motor laws. As a rule, only when an erring motorist lands into some smash by infraction of the law does he get checked up. Street car conductors and motormen have an excellent chance to take the numbers of motor cars that endanger car passengers getting off or on, and should be encouraged to lay complaints in grievous cases. But when there is reformers' reward, as in the case of the fee system for paying constables who are out for speedsters, many charges may be laid unjustly. Motorists are sometimes the victims of constables by supposed enforcement of the law. The use of street car crews for

checking reckless drivers might be capably handled in Toronto through special efforts of the Transportation Commissioner, which, as a civic body, is interested especially in protecting the public from reckless drivers.

Bootleggers in Toronto complain that their customers cannot pay the \$7 a bottle that it is found necessary to charge if there is to be any profit in the business. This phase of the trade depression can be borne with certain calmness. The money the law-breakers do not get may be available for the purchase of non-contraband goods.

A Lynn (Mass.) young man complained that a girl upon whom he attempted to call had thrown him out of the house had torn his belt and slapped his face. The young lady explained that her parents had given the man permission to call but that she had not. Unanimous consent in such cases is always judicious.

WHAT OTHERS SAY

The Alternative is Collapse. (London Morning Post.) Lenin has one most effective reply to all his critics. The alternative to negotiations with the Western Powers is the collapse and extinction of Bolshevism. That is why Bucharin, the Cheka, Trotsky, and all the other smartwits must follow Lenin, reluctantly perhaps, to the House of Rimmon.

Cult in a Huff.

The reason Lloyd George is still in office when all others of his contemporaries have passed into obscurity is that he has done that. Often enough, the really great. The fact remains that he quit mad when he should have fought mad. It is the sixth time he has done that. Often enough, the really great. The fact remains that he quit mad when he should have fought mad. It is the sixth time he has done that. Often enough, the really great. The fact remains that he quit mad when he should have fought mad. It is the sixth time he has done that.

In the Mist of Life.

We have been brought up to remember that in the midst of life we are in death. Does not the motor-omnibus that lines the descent of Bodice's war-chariot remind us of it every day? We shall continue to get shaved, smoke cigarettes, cross Piccadilly, or even the Champs Elysees with the same quantity of life as before. There are too many of us who suffer no ill on these accounts. If we stopped to reflect on all life's possible perils we should be afraid to get out of bed. Yet, when one comes to think, that is the most dangerous place of all. Do not most people die in it?

Substituting Culture.

(Indianapolis News.) There is some question as to how good these subsidies do to how much in effect to a tribute to foreign culture. Grand opera in many countries is the flower of a widespread desire for an emotional appeal in which only a highly cultivated man can find pleasure. Plucking a flower at enormous expense, and exhibiting it for a minor purpose of aesthetic display, and a major purpose of ostentatious display and municipal glory, is not especially laudable, but the process leaves its stamp on the seeds of a genuine culture, rooted in the people.

Forgotten in the Heat of Battle.

At the same time with the experience of the late war behind us, it is worth asking ourselves how much value there is in the rules of war which prohibit weapons from being used in particular ways. Before 1914 there were elaborate codes of such rules drawn up at The Hague and signed by Germany; and after 1914 Germany never scrupled to break them without aid, whenever it served her purpose. Thus rules were of no value indeed, of less than no value. These were like a rotten rafter to a bridge, which is worse than no rafter, but which it tempts you to lean on, and if you do you will fall into the water.

What Will Poincare Do?

(Brooklyn Eagle.) A destructive critic of government himself, M. Poincare is now in an exceedingly difficult position. He must be constructive or he must go down, he is compelled to choose between the adoption of policies left uncompleted by M. Briand or "watering into new fields where France would find herself isolated from her former allies. He has already shown a marked preference for the former course, not because he has a real liking for it, but because he is obviously afraid of the alternative. He has always been the strongest in attack. Suddenly shifted to a defensive, with powerful enemies ready to aid in pulling him down, his future is cloudy indeed.

Britain and the U. S.

(London Daily Telegraph.) The International Conference at Geneva which is the object of our own statesmanship to bring about for the economic restoration of Europe would yield only advantages to America, and would be by far the more effective with America participation. It seems that this is not to be expected, and the best must be done to save the situation without it. A habit of mind cherished for more than a century is not to be thrown off at short notice. Its existence does nothing to impair the deep and intense satisfaction felt in this country in regard to the new warmth of friendly relations between the two great sections of English-speaking mankind.

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Benny's Note Book

BY BEN PAGE

Me and Fude Simkins was both talking to Mary Watkins, Fude telling her compliments so she would think he was grate, saying, "Mary Mary, I bet you're the smartest girl in school, I bet you're smarter than all the other girls put together, I bet."

O I don't know, and Mary Watkins making a modest face. Me thinking, "Durn that guy, he's just trying to make a hit, that's all he's doing. And Fude said, 'Sure you are, Mary, every time the teacher asks a hard question yours the only one can answer it, you certainly are smart.'"

O I'm not so smart, the others are so dumb, that's all, said Mary Watkins. Me thinking, "Aw how's that dumb guy know who's smart and who isn't? And Fude said, 'Well G. Mary, didn't I hear your teacher tell our teacher that you get the best reports in the class? Sure I did, heley snooks, you're so smart it's a wonder you had to go to school at all.'"

O I don't know, and Mary Watkins with a expression as if she didn't hardly believe it herself. Me thinking, "G. that guy thinks he's grate, I wouldn't lower myself talking that way, G. I wish I could think of something to make up to tell her."

Well just then I did, saying, "Mary Mary, do you know something, I heard somebody talking about you and they said you looked just like Mary Pickford in the moving pictures and I think you do too."

O Benny, do you really, O I meant that perfectly wonderful, said Mary Watkins looking as if she believed it innately, and Fude said, "Aw, he just made that up."

Fude Simkins, you just keep quiet, I don't speak to you, said Mary Watkins. And she kept on looking at me as if she thought I was much greater than was Fude was.

Proving it don't matter if a compliment is true or not as long as the person is glad to hear it.

A BIT OF VERSE

HYGIENE IN THE HOME.

(On learning that there is a right and a wrong way of blowing the nose and that "disease germs lurking in nasal reservoirs may be expelled if effectual rather than merely effective methods are adopted.")

Away with the feeble musicians.

When giving his poor exhibition Of how to mangle a nose, Who fiddles and fumbles discreetly And handles that organ as if He feared it would fracture completely With anything more than a sniff!

O treat such attempts with derision.

And play through your piece like a man— Get hold of your neb with decision And blow it as hard as you can. Remember the thing is a fixture And won't come uncoupled or loose— Lay hold and strike with a mixture Of forthright and bellowing moos.

The neighbors can like it or lamp it.

Be polite or regard it with great— You practise away on your trumpet So long as it brings you relief. And friends can explain to surround— Inquiries who run from afar, "It's only dear Archibald sounding A chord on his famous catarrh!"

THE LAUGH LINE

The Absent-minded One.

Professor Batt—"I can hardly say I like this tooth powder you purchased this morning; it has a very disagreeable taste. His wife—"What next? That isn't tooth powder." Professor Batt—"Dear me; what is it then?" His wife—"Insect powder."—Houston Post.

Already Informed.

Modern novels teach us that youth is taking charge of things in the world. They teach us grown-ups, that is, Youth has known it right along.

Juvenile Logic.

The teacher had been explaining fractions to his class. When she had discussed the subject in length, wishing to see how much light had been shed, she inquired: "Now, Bobby, which would you rather have, one apple or two halves?"

The Little chap promptly replied:

"Two halves." "Oh, Bobby," exclaimed the young woman, a little disappointed, "why would you prefer two halves?" "Because then I could see if it was bad inside."—London Opinion.

Two Methods of Confession.

First Small Boy—"If my mother knew I had cigarettes in the house she'd burn them up." Second Small Boy—"I'll say mine would too—and she'd burn a match off me for her first puff."—American Legion Weekly.

The Author's View.

"You frankly confess that your novel failed because of a lack of literary skill?" "I do," answered the author; "the man who wrote the advertisements was no good."—Passing Show.

He'd Remedy That.

"It's very nice of you, Jack, dear, to praise my singing, but you know I haven't any range." "Never mind about the range, dear, when we are married I'll buy one."—Efficient.

Efficient.

Alice—"Gladys is an expert gossip." Virginia—"Tells everything." Alice—"No—knows just what to leave out."—Life.

Poetry.

There was a young fellow named Plummer At skating he was thought quite a hummer. He tried a fanciful stroke, The ice beneath him broke. When rescued he was growing numb— And so was Plummer.

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TAKE ANOTHER

PROVIDE

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Special to The Standard.

Hampton, Jan. 25.—The Kings County Municipal Council took another crack at the Provincial Health Act to day, and dismissed its former appointees to the Board of Health and appointed, in their place, three members of the Council who were instructed to curb the doctors of the board to spend money. Dr. Gilchrist was present at the morning session and paid his respects to the members of the Council who had made charges of extravagance in connection with the building of the municipal hospital.

It was decided to memorialize the Government to repeal the dog tax, so far as the county of Kings was concerned, and to assess the sum of \$1,000 toward the cost of a monument to be erected to the 104th Battalion, and other fallen heroes of Kings County, the same to be erected at Hampton. Estimates to the amount of \$31,000 were passed. The draft bill to amend the present rates and taxes bill was approved, but the draft of a bill to provide a superannuation fund for municipal officials did not meet with the favor of the councillors. The proposition to make the assessment for the care of pauper patients in the Provincial Hospital apply to the general county assessment, instead of the houses from which the patient came, was defeated.

Warden Gorham occupied the chair and all the councillors were in their places at both sessions today.

Morning Session

The council was called to order by the warden at ten o'clock. The first business was a resolution, moved by Councillor Walton and seconded by Councillor Sear, that, in the opinion of the Council, it would be advisable to have the law requiring a tax on dogs repealed.

Councillor McAulay, in supporting the motion, said the reason why the dogs had gone out of the sheep business was not because of the dogs, but because they did not fence property

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