

TAINING SPRINGS AT THE SOURCE

FREEDOM of speech; the independence of the press; the untrammelled expression of the people's will through the ballot; frank and honest discussion of all public issues in Parliament, on the public platform and in the press—these are the safeguards and the security of the welfare of Democracy under the British system of responsible Government.

Hon. W. S. Fielding, in retiring last month from the presidency and chief editorial control of the new Montreal newspaper combination, the Herald-Telegraph, because he was not convinced that the ultimate control of the paper would be in the hands of men whose sincerity of purpose for the public weal would be above suspicion, has given to Canada a striking instance of honesty of purpose in serving the public interest, whether in politics or in journalism.

The contrast of Mr. Fielding's action with the unmistakable tendencies of the men in control of the administration at Ottawa to use every covert and insidious means of directing, or rather, misdirecting public opinion as a means of retaining office is significant.

The means adopted may be briefly summarized.

The influence of patronage as a means of securing the active support of political workers and of filling the Civil Service with men who could be trusted to serve the party first and the State second was adopted from the outset. The dismissal of thousands of Liberal office holders and the re-placing of them by active Conservative workers tells the story.

The Macdonald by-election with its gross intimidation, and the arrest of Liberal workers was a first step in the series of by-election iniquities, culminating in Chateauguay, which involved almost every form of **electoral corruption and crookedness**. The ballot is the people's weapon against bad Government. The political machine developed by Hon. Robert Rogers would blunt or destroy that weapon.

The attempt at **the centralization of power** in the hands of the Executive rather than with Parliament in regard to the expenditure of money, is another instance of the devious methods of the Government to control one of the most effective

means of influencing public opinion. That was the underlying motive of the Highways Bill twice introduced in the Commons, and twice amended by the Senate, because of the danger seen; it was the motive underlying the Branch Lines Bill, certain features of the Naval Aid Bill and the gift of 15 millions to Mackenzie and Mann. The practical doubling of expenditures since the Government came into power is due to the belief on the part of the administration

tendency of all is in connection with the obvious and persistent attempt to undermine the independence of the press, which quite as much as Parliament is the people's forum. **The control of the editorial opinion of newspapers**, and to an extent the control even of their news columns, is exercised to a degree little realized by the public. At least three of the ministers have a financial interest in, and practically control the politics of three of the big daily newspapers in Canada. In Montreal the situation created by the dominance of Sir Hugh Graham leaves that great city and the Province of Quebec practically without a single English daily free to express its opinions where the interests of the masses conflict with corporate or Conservative interests.

An unmistakable evidence of the Government's effort to **subsidize the agencies directing public opinion** lies in the fact that during the fiscal year 1912-13, notwithstanding the Government has its own printing Bureau employing hundreds of men, something over \$1,400,000 of public money was distributed among newspapers and printing companies favorable to the Government. For advertising alone the amount totalled \$373,834, distributed among some 800 odd newspapers throughout Canada. What the amount spent out in this way during 1913-14 may come to is not yet known. It will probably vastly exceed 1912-13. Under such circumstances, how can papers receiving this form of Government patronage, amounting in several individual cases to over \$20,000 truthfully say:

"Here shall the press the people's rights maintain,
Unawed by influence and unbribed by gain"?

Accompanying this article is a list of a few of the papers scattered throughout the Dominion with the respective amounts they received in the fiscal year 1912-13 from the public treasury at the hands of a Government whose interests they serve.

The amounts paid to some of these papers exceed what it requires to administer important branches of the Federal Government, including salaries and all outlays on administration. They are more than enough to pay all the salaries of the entire staffs of many printing offices.

The Subsidised Press

PUBLIC FUNDS PAID TO FAVOURED PUBLICATIONS IN ONE YEAR.

(From Report of Auditor General of Canada for fiscal year 1912-13)

The Gazette, Montreal.....	\$30,234
La Patrie, Montreal.....	23,408
L'Evenement, Quebec.....	23,372
The Times, Moncton.....	21,884
The Telegram, Winnipeg.....	20,337
The Standard, St. John.....	16,133
The Herald, Halifax.....	13,312
The Mail and Empire, Toronto	12,641
The Chronicle, Quebec.....	10,975
The News, Toronto.....	10,165
The World, Toronto.....	9,067
The Free Press, London.....	7,799
The Standard, Kingston.....	7,393
The Citizen, Ottawa.....	6,678
The Telegram, Toronto.....	3,946
The Journal, Ottawa.....	3,835
The Northwestern, Winnipeg...	3,051
The Gleaner, Fredericton.....	2,222
The Hemiskringla News, Win-	
nipeg.....	2,167
The Province, Vancouver.....	1,948
The Journal, Edmonton.....	1,931
The Intelligencer, Belleville...	1,571
The Orange Sentinel, Toronto.	1,554
The News-Advertiser, Vancou-	
ver.....	1,487
The Catholic Register, Toronto	1,413
The Province, Regina.....	1,376
Le Devoir, Montreal.....	1,312
The Times Journal, Fort	
William.....	1,242
The Star, Montreal.....	1,139
The Herald, Calgary.....	1,138
The Courier, Brantford.....	1,081
The Courier, Brandon.....	1,081
The News, Port Arthur.....	1,034
The Eye-Opener, Calgary.....	261

that the expenditure of public funds and the control of votes may be made to go together.

The adoption of the closure rules in Parliament by arbitrary and unconstitutional methods was a further step in the direction of placing the Government in a position to curtail freedom of speech by the people's representatives in the House, check criticism of its policies and facilitate the general process of hood-winking the electors.

But possibly the most dangerous