



FIRST CABINET MEETING AFTER THE GENERAL ELECTION
London crowd watching Cabinet Ministers arrive at No. 10 Downing Street.

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Lords, Commons and People

ONE of the four newspaper men sent from Canada to study the British elections made a confession after he came back. When he landed in England he was duly and deeply impressed by the things that were established. Anything that had moss and age written on its profound respectability had a charm for him. He was a Canadian who had never seen much in the way of cathedrals and castles and powdered wigs and the impressive dignity of the feudal system. In uncontrolled astonishment he wandered about among the ruins and the monuments in the presence of a civilisation that had been centuries old before Jacques Cartier sailed up the St. Lawrence; a picture that made even ancient Quebec seem as modern as a western town by comparison.

He was several days in this elysian bewilderment. He saw lords and dukes and belted earls pass before him as figures in a splendid dream. He saw that the thing which had been sealed by time and sanctioned by custom was threatened with a rude and blustering hand by—the plain and the common people; and he said to himself that it never must be.

After a few days he came to himself and followed the drift of the life of London; not to the drive-ways of the castle gates nor the lanes of the lords in the rural parts; but the idly shuffling and dejected crowd that gluts and stupefies the east side and the Thames embankment; the out-of-works and the unhopefuls; the derelicts of an Empire; the hungry ones and the homeless ones and those who are "out-of-doors" not because they have horses to ride and hounds to follow, but because they haven't much elsewhere to spend most of their time and scarcely know why in the name of heaven it is.

Then the Canadian newspaper man said to himself: "By George! these are the people of England that make the problem. These are the folk for whom budgets are made. The best of these are more like the plain people



Mr. Buxton, Post-Master-General.

I came from on the Canadian farm than any of the gilded lords in the castles. These people are in the main—right. The House of Lords is not a sacred thing. It needs amending. By Jove! I believe after all—I'm a Radical."

Well there are thousands of observant Canadians who might have felt much as this man felt. There are the two extremes: the lords and the poor. Between them are the Commons and the Cabinet. The Liberals are in again; and the Lords must be amended. The ministers went away after the election for a vacation. On Thursday, February 2nd, they came back and went one by one and two by two and three by three to Downing Street to a meeting of the Cabinet Council. And the plain people about whom most of the revolutionary fuss had been made, stood by thousands to watch them go by.

"The lords of life I saw them pass"—if any of them happened to know Emerson; though the situation and the scene were more for the pen of a Carlyle. The pictures on this page delineate the procession; the moving spectacle of British political life which for the past few months has been of more absorbing interest to Canadians than almost any general election in Canada. The thing was the last act but one in the play, the last being due to go on by the House of Commons assembled. The House assembled on February 21st. The address from the Throne dealt with the two great issues, the veto and the budget. The general expectation is that the budget is of more immediate interest than the veto. Indeed, there is one prominent Canadian journalist who says that people who blink at tariff reform in England are exceedingly stupid; wherefore in the stupid class he probably includes most of the dignitaries seen on this page and a good many more besides.

On Monday of this week the Premier's motion to put all government business ahead of the veto was carried without even a division. Not until after recess will the House wrestle with the problem of delimiting the Lords.



Earl Carrington and Rt. Hon. Mr. McKenna.



Lord Wolverhampton on the way.



Sir Edward Grey, Mr. Winston Churchill and Lord Crewe