

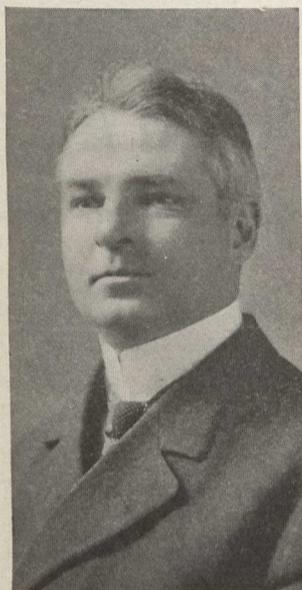
Corridor Comment

(By Our Special Correspondent.)

Ottawa, March 15th.

WHEN an irresistible force meets an immovable object what happens? Keep your eyes on the Canadian Parliament these days and find out. The parties have locked horns in a spectacular struggle which, at the time of writing, seems to have no possible end, unless one or other of the contestants recedes from its position.

As a matter of fact there is little chance of either parliamentary machine breaking down. Of course, there is some physical strain on the members, but this is not nearly so great as may be generally imagined. On both sides they work in relays of "eight hours on and sixteen off," a typical union schedule.



F. F. PARDEE, M.P.
Liberal Whip.

Leaders may enunciate rival policies; orators may keep Hansard going; members may cheer and supporters may counsel, but it is these two young men—both in the early forties—who, in the final analysis must be responsible for victory or defeat emerging from the dramatic deadlock. Let either of them miscue, make a strategic blunder, or slip a cog in their organization and disaster must overtake his party. Other men may discuss the merits of the issue; they are concerned with the technique of the contest. Other members may fill their assignments dutifully and then relinquish care with a light heart; they must follow each rumour, investigate every feature, take counsel with advisers, dominate and regulate procedure, give guidance in any situation, and assume responsibility for the whole plan of campaign.

The job is harder than it looks. On the Chief Whips rests the duty of carrying out the policies determined upon by the parties. They must be expert tacticians; shrewd, resourceful, possessing a keen understanding of the situation and all its possible complications, and, withal, an intimate knowledge of mankind. In the present parliamentary crisis the strain on these men is tremendous. They are playing chess with one another twenty-four hours in every day, sleeping or waking. It is true that each has at his service a staff of assistant Whips, one or more from each province, but it is upon the shoulders of the Chief Whip that the main burden rests—a battle of wits between two parliamentary generals; a contest between two men. Betting on the result of the parliamentary embroglio is betting upon the respective capabilities of Stanfield and Pardee.

Both are popular with the membership. They have to be. They must be men of iron, but they must wear the velvet glove. They must have a cordial smile for everyone and a sympathetic ear for every grievance, real or imaginary. They must cultivate team work and allot each unit his part. They must see that he does it, too.

In the present tactical struggle Pardee is the aggressor while Stanfield is on the defensive. They are well mated. There is a characteristic dash and daring about Pardee, and an equally typical caution about Stanfield. The members on both sides are divided into shifts, or watches, which must succeed

one another without a moment's intermission as regular as clockwork. On the Liberal side everything must be carefully planned out so that one speaker shall be ready to go on, a second ready to follow, and a third in waiting. The line of attack on every phase must be carefully prepared and the members who are to deal with them must have their speeches in hand. There must be no overlapping, and, above all, no contradiction, in the steady flow of parliamentary argument. It must have the excuse of relevancy, otherwise an astute opponent may rise to a point of order, and there must be absolutely no break in arrangements or procedure. To balance these Liberal necessities, the Conservative Whip must be sure that he always has a majority on hand to prevent a Liberal success in a strategic snap vote, the constant bogey of the besieged majority. Pardee may pick the battleground. He may make a bold frontal attack, or he may unexpectedly carry out a sortie at night. Stanfield must always be prepared. He does not know what his opponent's plans may be, but he must constantly be ready against any emergency. It is a game of parliamentary chess. A good move may mean tremendous advantage; a false move means certain defeat.

Fred Pardee is a lawyer and lives at Sarnia, Ontario. He is a graduate of the University of Toronto and Osgoode Hall. In both places he was a famous athlete. In politics he has already made his mark and is destined to keep a famous name to the forefront of Liberalism. John Stanfield is a manufacturer of underwear and resides at Truro, Nova Scotia. His friends call him "Unshrinkable John," paraphrasing the advertisements of his wares. And the two are warm friends.

The struggle is one in which the participants are well matched. Borden has the big battalions; Laurier has the strategy. Liberals must do the speaking and the cheering; but Conservatives have the trying part of waiting, waiting, in wearisome inaction. Both sides profess to be equally confident as to the outcome. Both sides are undoubtedly equally determined.



JOHN STANFIELD, M.P.
Conservative Whip.

Meantime the whole of the internal economy of the Parliament Buildings has been completely reorganized. The morning of Monday and the evening of Saturday prescribe one parliamentary day. Pages, messengers, reporters, caterers and sessional help of all kinds work in relays or shifts, and know no day or night. The flag flies continuously from the tower.

THERE has been comparatively little humour throughout all the long hours of debate. It has been, as a whole, intensely serious and earnest. There have been, however, a few occasions when laughter relieved the situation. Mr. Charles Wilson, the bilingual member for Laval, was responsible for one of these. "I hope the Chairman will excuse me," said he, "if I speak two languages at once," apologizing for a speech which alternated between English and French.

"I am quoting from the Moose Jaw *Times*, an evening paper which comes out every evening," said Mr. W. E. Knowles, of Moose Jaw, and the House roared.

Mr. G. H. Boivin, the young French-Canadian member for Shefford, was responsible for a bright sally which tired representatives much enjoyed. "I venture to guess," he exclaimed, speaking in English,

"that the Government is afraid to go to the people at the present time."

"It's a wild guess," put in Mr. H. H. Stevens, the Conservative member for Vancouver.

"Quite so, a wise guess," wilfully misquoted the young Frenchman, and amid much laughter the Vancouver man had to rise and spell his interruption before the French-Canadian would permit himself to understand.

ONE of the humorous incidents which occurred during the first long week's vigil, and escaped general notice, happened when a member whose seat is immediately below the Press Gallery was speaking. One of the Liberal newspaper men "on night shift" and anxious to take a few moments furlough, leaned over and asked the speaker:

"How much longer are you going to hold the floor?"

Without apparently noticing the query, the member continued his speech thusly:

"Once more I say, Mr. Chairman, that whatever the people of Canada do—I intend to give those fellows opposite Hail Columbia for another hour—whatever we do, Sir, we should do voluntarily."

The weary correspondent in the Press Gallery caught the answer thus sandwiched in; and asked another question:

"Who is going to follow you?"

"We, on this side of the House, conceive our Empire as a glorious partnership of self-governing, self-respecting, self-reliant nations—(no, you'll have to get in touch with Fred Pardee)—not as a collection of contributory and tithe-paying colonies."

Even the alert Hansard man did not catch the answers, although he looked rather mystified.

THE trials and tribulations of Hansard have been many. Towards the latter part of the protracted sitting the force of official skilled stenographers was augmented, but for some days and nights at the beginning of the siege weary record-takers were on duty for twenty-four hours at a time, snatching occasional winks of sleep on lounges and chairs. As a result several amusing mistakes occurred in the official record. Dr. Michael Clark, the prominent free-trader from Red Deer, in the course of his speech quoted a statement "by Cobden." Hansard the next morning gravely assured its readers that the eloquent Britisher had quoted approvingly a free trade statement "by Cochrane." Again one morning the official record calmly credited a part of the speech of Hon. Dr. Pugsley to his fellow New Brunswicker and political opponent, Hon. Mr. Hazen, and the Minister of Marine was represented for a paragraph or so as urging reasons against the naval policy which comes under the jurisdiction of his own department. The newspaper men, who have, like Hansard, been on duty twenty-four hours in every day, working in relays, have also been responsible for some amusing blunders. "Why substitute Canadian dollars for Canadian daring?" asked Chief Liberal Whip F. F. Pardee, in the course of his appeal for the establishment of a Canadian navy. And a Vancouver paper published it: "Why substitute Canadian dollars for Canadian darlings?"

EQUALLY illuminating was the black-typed, six-column heading on one of the Ottawa newspapers, which read: "Day and Night Ceaselessly Since Monday the House of Commons Has Been Setting." But perhaps the journalistic reference which has occasioned more comment than any other was that of a staid, sane, Montreal paper which gravely informed its readers that "Mr. Borden spoke with an eloquence which sprang from his deep-seated conviction of the grave pass we have reached, basing his proposals upon the significant memorandum which the Almighty had prepared at his request."

ALL is grist that comes to the mill of the Liberal parliamentarian these days of continuous speech-making. Dr. Michael Clark was a guest at a private dinner one evening, and the perpetual subject of "the emergency" came up for discussion. The epigrammatic Red Deer man was sitting next to a young lady during the discussion, during the course of which one of the guests quoted in support of his contention the ancient proverb: "Si vis pacem pare bellum."

"Well, if I wanted peace I wouldn't get things ready to fight with," observed the young lady. "I'd prepare for peace."

The Doctor said nothing, but the young lady, sitting next day in the Speaker's Gallery of the House of Commons, was surprised to hear him in an earnest exposition of her theory, and a paraphrasing of the quotation to "Si vis pacem pare pacem."

H. W. A.