The St. John Standard

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ST. JOHN, N. B., THURSDAY, JUNE 3, 1920.

THE KING'S BIRTHDAY.

Today his Most Gracious Majesty King George V. celebrates his 55th birthday, and from every corner of His Majesty's loyal dominions will come congratulations, coupled with the earnest prayer that he may be spared for many, many years yet to come to reign over peoples in whose hearts is enshrined a deep-seated affection for a monarch who has proved himself to be every inch a King. Since he ascended the throne ten years ago, his Empire has been called to undergo trials hitherto unknown to it, and throughout them all the knowledge that their King was sharing with them the anxieties and worriest of the troublous times, acted as an incentive to the people to put forth greater efforts to overcome them. While, of course, not permitted himself to take any active participation in the conduct of the war, he nevertheless sent two of his sons, one in the Army and the other in the Navy, to take their places with the other young men of the Empire in upholding its honor and plighted word. No Monarch ever held a firmer hold upon the hearts of his people than the present King; and it is no mere lip-loyalty that today prompts the shout, "God Save the King; Long may he reign."

THE BY-ELECTION.

The decision of the convention of the opponents of the Foster Government not to put forward a candidate in the forthcoming by-election in this city will be a considerable relief to the friends of the Government, who have been on tenterhooks for the past few weeks for fear that the Minister of Health would be opposed. The decision not to contest the seat was arrived at without much difficulty in view of the fact that only a short time can now elapse before a general election must be called on, and the time between now and the election day is too short to permit of much effective organization being carried out. In view of the decision arrived at, it was not necessary to submit the names of any suitable candidates to the meeting, though the Executive was prepared with the names of two or three gentlemen who would have made excellent representatives, and would have proved most acceptable to the electorate. Taking everything into consideration, the decision to "let Roberts finish his work" is perhaps the wisest course to adopt under present conditions.

THE BUDGET DIVISION.

After a debate lasting more than a fortnight, in the course of which only very few speeches of really statesmanlike quality were heard, Mr. Fielding's "milk and water" amendment—to use Dr. Michael Clark's expression—was defeated by a vote of 120 to 94, and the House will now go on with the routine of supply. The result is a substantial triumph for the Government, and a direct refutation of the free trade theories of those who claim that in that policy lies the salvation of the country.

The closing hours of the debate were enlivened by a speech by Hon. T. A. Crerar, ex-Minister of Agriculture and now leader of the Agrarian party in the House. It is noticeable that the hon. gentleman carefully avoided any extended dissertation upon the sources of revenue which he would tap in order to compensate the Dominion Treasury for loss occasioned by the repeal and reduction of duties which he advocated. The Dominion Council of Agriculture, of which Mr. Crerar is chairman, in its platform proposes taxation upon unimproved values of land and upon incomes as a means for meeting the shortage in revenue resulting from adoption of its tariff plank. Mr. Crerar, however, found it convenient not to refer to the fact that a Manitoba commission, of which two representatives of the Grain Growers of the province were members, had reported that taxation of real property by local governing bodies was right and proper, but resort to such taxation by the Dominion Government would be a retrograde step.

Apparently, too, the ex-Minister of Agriculture sees no reason for development in Canada of industries other than those based directly upon natural products of the Dominion. Having advocated the repeal of duties upon implements and machinery employed in agriculture, fisheries, mining and lumbering, he said: "I have never been able to see the sense of creating a cotton industry, which is an artificial one; we don't produce the raw material; we have to import every ounce of it." He declared that the development of the tinplate industry had been an injury to the United States. The decline in agriculture in Great Britain was solely due to the land policy. Labor in England had as many advantages as labor in Canada or the United States. He took the report of one member of the commission on British steel and iron against the unanimous opinion of the other seven. He dealt very little with the Opposition amendment or policy, contenting himself with joining with Dr. Clark in describing it as "[illegible]". He did not desire to offend his protectionist allies, so dropped this subject. In conclusion, he declared it was time to get away from all make-believe on the tariff and adopt a direct policy to develop natural industries.

Altogether Mr. Crerar's contribution to the debate hardly enhances his reputation as a debater; and while he may know the grain trade and prairie conditions, it is very evident that he is not cut out for parliamentary leadership, and the advent of the Agrarian party to any dominating influence in Parliament, with him as its leader, would be anything but a good thing for the country.

CONDITIONS IN IRELAND.

It is difficult to believe that Irish patriots are responsible for the reign of terror that has been established in many parts of Ireland. Sinn Feiners are the hands that strike down Irish policemen and British soldiers, but a contemporary expresses the view that the brain that directs the attack is probably a German one. Sinn Feiners were the tools of Germany through the war, and no evidence has been supplied to indicate that the Irish organization has severed its intimate relationship with those German forces that continue to work for the destruction of the British Empire. We see the relationship maintained in the United States with German-Americans and Irish-Americans vying with each other to force the Irish question to the front in the Presidential election. We see American candidates pandering to Irish-American and German-American sentiment. If ever there was a divorce granted to this ill-assorted hyphenated union there has been no public announcement of the fact. We have De Valera's expressed regret that Great Britain was not destroyed in the war the statement being made to an American audience which forgot, apparently, that if Britain had been destroyed the United State could not have survived.

France believes that Germany is already laying her plans for another war in which France shall play the role of victim. Even with Germany partly disarmed as she is, it would be possible for her to raise another huge army with which once more to invade France. That dream will remain a dream so long as France can depend upon the assistance of Great Britain. But if Germany should be able to embroil the United States and Great Britain over Ireland, Britain's hands would be tied, and France would have to fight without her help. Germany's strategy obviously is to estrange Britain and the United States. The simplest and most immediate way to do it is through the Irish question. Does not this supply Germany with a strong object for helping the Sinn Feiners, for supplying them with money through American channels and perhaps with desperate Irish-American gunmen and other thugs. Sir Edward Carson said not long ago that a conspiracy to murder him had been formed in the United States. Irish Sinn Feiners are bad enough, but they are not so desperate as American Sinn Feiners, and behind them all lurks the plotting Teuton.

THE BOARD OF COMMERCE.

The fact that the Supreme Court of Canada has divided equally on the question as to whether the Board of Commerce has jurisdiction to fix the amount of profits that manufacturers and merchants may make upon the goods they produce, leaves the matter just where it was at the outset. An appeal to the Privy Council is the only resource now left to those who are desirous of testing the Board's powers. In the meanwhile it must be presumed that the powers of the Board conferred upon it on its creation still remain effective.

Because the Board has had but few friends to champion it, it does not follow that its work has been negligible. The public has not seen positive benefits from the operations of the Board, in the shape of lowered costs of living, and has not seen enough of the Board to love it for the enemies it has made. But the Board of Commerce has had a valuable place in Canadian reconstruction, and ought not to be permitted to lose effectiveness for want of adequate support. Though perhaps the business interests adversely affected by Board decisions do not realize it, the existence of this body—created for the protection of the public against profiteering in necessaries of life—is a force on the side of political stability. Everyone recognizes by this time that high prices are inevitable, on account of economic conditions, but the very existence of the Board has been reassuring and calming to unrestful feelings. The people have been trusting to the Board.

It does not seem as if Canada will be long now in getting to the commercial stage where prices must come down. The usefulness of the Board of Commerce, as a check on profiteering, will not be so much in evidence when prices do begin to come down in earnest and profits have to be made more by economies than by price hoisting. The Board should be maintained and supported in its effort to check excessive profit-taking.

The Telegraph, referring to a bundle of money which reposed overnight in Mr. Baxter's safe, says "it was thrust in there presumably because the gentleman immediately in charge of it did not wish to carry it about with him, and so sought a friendly nook in which to leave it until it could be passed along to its destination." Could our contemporary suggest any safer or wiser course to adopt? A man who will saunter around this town, or any other, with $20,000 loose in his pocket should be sent to board with Dr. Anglin for a time.

WHAT OTHERS SAY

The Test.

Try our remedy by any test. The test of justice, the test of expediency. Try it by any dictum of political economy; by any maxim of good morals—by any maxim of good government. What I ask you to do is not to take what I or any other man may say, but to think for yourself.—Henry George.

The Art of Pleasing.

The desire of pleasing makes a man agreeable or unwelcome to those with who he converses, according to the motive from which that inclination appears to flow. If your concern for pleasing others arises from an inmate benevolence, it never fails of success; if from a vanity to excel, its disappointment is no less certain. What we call an agreeable man, is he who is endowed with that natural bent to do acceptable things from a delight he takes in them merely as such; and the affectation of that character is what constitutes a fop.—Richard Steele.

Tax On Idleness.
(Taxation, New York.)

When the town is overrun with dogs, what do we do? Tax them. When saloons were too numerous what did we do? Taxed them. When state bank notes, or shinplasters," became a nuisance in the middle of last century, what was done? They were taxed out of existence. Congress, instead of prohibiting them—which might have been unconstitutional—merely taxed them ten per cent., and they have never seen since. Experience has been made plain a simple rule for those seeking the good of society: Tax what we don't want; untax what we do want. Vacant lots and unused lands employ no labor; they produce neither food nor shetler. The country is in need of both. What in the light of experience should lawmakers do? Should they not untax houses and food, and tax vacant lots and unused lands?

The Value of a Smile.

We of today are becoming brutal and stupid because we have war too much on the brain. We are becoming crazy and hard. No poetry is being penned, no music composed, no great books written. For seven years the universities have done little and the intelleceual level of mankind is falling. To me that is sad. Let us forget about war and write poetry and sing sweet music. The trouble with the world today is it has forgotten how to smile. When two men stand always face to face, each believing the other intends to murder him, they will end it by fighting. If they go on about their business when they meet and one smiles, the other will smile, in reply. We need smiles in the world today. It is my dream to see the nations of the earth smiling once again. In a smiling peace lies our only hope of salvation.—Premier Nitti at San Remo.

Effective Voting.
(David Blyth in Western Labor News, Winnipeg.)

There are a great many things about proportional representation I do not understand, but there are two things about the system that I do most thoroughly appreciate. One of these is that the vote of the individual citizen counts as it never did before. His choice influences the result, not merely as between the standard bearers of particular groups, but as between each individual candidate nominated within the larger groups. For example, if we were to find two Labor candidates themselves elected, giving away votes to other Labor candidates, these two men would obviously stand in an entirely different position to the Labor party as a whole from the candidates to whom they gave votes, even though the later were elected as well as themselves. Consequently the individual voter counts as he never did before. He is not registering for a party which must win or to poll a vote for a party that must lose, he is registering to vote in a fight upon whose result his individual choice will have exactly the same effect as every other individual choice, and which will bear his individual choice printed on the face of the result.

THE LAUGH LINE

Ladies' Hats in the Ring.

"Are you in favor of women taking active part in politics?"

"I'm not sure," replied Mr. Meekton. "If Henrietta takes to throwing her hat into the ring, it's going to cost something."—Washington Star.

She Took Them.

"I don't know whether I like these pictures or not," said the young woman. "They seem rather indistinct."

"But you must remember, madam," said the wily photographer, "that your face is not at all plain."—Boston Transcript.

As Usual.

Passenger—Is it raining, porter?

Porter (with a grouch)—No; it's rainin' water.—The Tatler, London.

Both Desirable.

Bix—A man rises in his own estimation when he settles down.

Dix—Yes, and he rises in his creditors' estimation when he settles up.—Boston Transcript.

Breaking the News.

They had found things a tight fit on his salary, and at last she determined to take the bull by the horns and get a job.

She was a skillful typist, and soon found a berth where she would receive two pounds a week. Then she went home home to break the news to her husband.

She could almost imagine the scene. She would tell him, and then he would exclaim:—

"Mercenary girl, you must not go to work. It is my duty and pleasure to provide for you and shield you from work and worry. This little home is your realm! I will not hear of you doing this!"

While she mentally rehearsed her reply, she suddenly heard his latchkey in the lock.

Now was her time.

"George," she cried, facing him dramatically in the little hall, "I have got a job at two pounds a week!"

"Is it permanent?" asked George eagerly.—London Ideas.

Sensitive Soul.

Every seat in the trolley was occupied, when a woman got in. Going through the car to collect the fares, the conductor noticed a man asleep. Seizing him by the shoulder, he proceeded to shake him back into a state of consciousness.

"Wake up!" shouted the conductor.

"I wasn't asleep," said the passenger.

"Not asleep!" snapped the conductor. "Then what did you have your eyes closed for?"

"It was because of the crowded condition of the car," explained the passenger. "I just hate to see women standing."—New York Evening Post.

Benny's Note Book

BY LEE PAPE

Last week my sister Gladdis bawt a Weejy board, and every time Mr. Parkins comes to see her they set on the sofer in the parler and ask the Weejy board questions, and last nite I got the hammer out of pops tool chest and went in the parler and crawled under the sofer with it, and pritty soon Mr. Parkins came and him and Gladdis sat on the sofer without eny ideer who was underneeth it and started to ask the Weejy board questions, Mr. Parkins saying, Sippose we try to get in communication with a spirrit tonite, Miss Potts.

O Mr. Parkins, Im afraid, sed Gladdis, and Mr. Parkins sed, Im not. Weejy, is there eny spirrit that wunts to communicate with us?

O look, look, its pointing to Yes, sed Gladdis, and Mr. Parkins sed Who is it, Weejy, wats the spirrits name?

O, its spelling sumthing, Smith, it spelled Smith, sed Gladdis.

Are you there, Smith? sed Mr. Parkins. Wich jest then I hit the floor with the hammer 3 times.

O, wat was that, O my goodniss, Im frightened, sed Gladdis.

Did you heer it too, hervins, that was queer, wasent it? sed Mr. Parkins, and Gladdis sed, Lets stop, I dont like spirrits, O deer.

Wich jest then I nocked 3 more times and made my voice mysterious as enything, saying, Let me in, I wunt to come in.

O, yelled Gladdis loud as enything.

That voice, sed Mr. Parkins, meening he reckonized it, and he looked under the sofer and then started to reetch under and I quick crawled out and ran out of the room and Gladdis got mad at Mr. Parkins on account of thinking he told me to do it, and she wouldent bleeve him wen he sed he dident, and she still wasent bleeving him wen I got tired lissening and went out to see if there was enything doing.

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