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THE NAVAL QUESTION AT OTTAWA.

The Conservative candidate in Ottawa, City Treasurer Ellis, will make the naval question an issue in the coming by-election. He is not in favor of a money contribution to Great Britain, but holds that Canada should furnish a fleet unit, consisting of a Dreadnought and its auxiliaries.

Assuming that Mr. Ellis, like his leader, wants these ships built in Canadian yards, the only difference between his position and that of the Government is in the degree of expenditure. Mr. Ellis' fleet would cost \$15,500,000 to build and arm, according to British estimates. The cost might be greater in Canada. In addition there must be dockyard and ship-building plants, which could not be erected without grants of public money. The annual cost of officers and men for the fleet unit would be \$3,000,000, but the admiralty points out that there would be other charges, such as the pay of persons employed in the auxiliary service, and those undergoing training, sick in reserve, etc.

Mr. Ellis is also under the impression that the admiralty asked for a Dreadnought, whereas the admiralty merely suggested that if a fleet unit were constructed it should begin with a Dreadnought.

The Canadian Government asked the Admiralty to formulate a plan which would involve an expenditure of \$2,000,000 a year. The Admiralty accordingly submitted a scheme, which, instead of a Dreadnought, but, instead, a fleet of three cruisers, of the Bristol class and four destroyers. The initial cost of these would be \$7,300,000.

Mr. Ellis' demand for a fleet unit is at least intelligible, which is more than can be said of the attitude of some of his party associates. He would plunge into a programme costing \$20,000,000. The Government prefers a less extravagant beginning. There is no present crisis; the naval supremacy of the British Empire cannot by any possibility be challenged for many years, even though the British naval programme came to a standstill. Canada's policy is to lay the foundation of an effective naval service during a time of security, and then develop it according to circumstances. A few years hence the rivalry of naval armaments in Europe may have yielded to wiser counsels. Canada will be governed by conditions; and conditions five years hence may be very different from today.

THE ELDEST SONS.

Our local contemporary is trying to make a noise like a duke. It accuses this great home journal of "Socialistic hysteria" because of some comments in these columns upon its dear friends and college chums, the hereditary peers. The word "Socialistic" has nobody; it is becoming a bouquet since it is being hurled at every British statesman who dares to attack the land monopoly and stand up for the people.

Our local contemporary is in an unenviable position, and a lonesome one to boot. Even those copper-bottomed Conservative papers, the Toronto Mail and the Toronto News, which imagine they have a special mission to proclaim the virtues of the House of Lords, confess that that august chamber needs to be purged of the hereditary principle. When this great home journal ventured to express a similar opinion, the London Free Press flew to the defence of its titled favorites, in the spirit of a loyal retainer. It argued that the men who sit in the House of Lords because they are eldest sons, compare in personal distinction and weight of influence with the men who have been appointed lords because of their individual eminence or public service. We denied the assertion flatly and challenged the Free Press to prove it. It is no defence of the hereditary principle to cite half a dozen distinguished names among 450. The fact remains that it was the undistinguished rabble of eldest sons that turned the scale against the budget.

Will the Free Press answer a simple question? Does it believe that the accident of birth should alone qualify any man to be a member of a legislative chamber? If it does not, there is no room for dispute. No responsible public man or newspaper is clamoring for the destruction of the House of Lords. Its candid friends are calling on it to reform itself. That a Canadian paper should take the opposite view shows a degree of flunkeyism both amazing and amusing.

THE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION.

The Dominion civil service act has been in operation since Sept. 1 last year. The first report of the commissioners indicates that they have their work well in hand. They have met with some difficulties and some friction has been noticeable, but there is much in the report that gives promise of good—the raising of the standard of the public service.

An important feature of the new law is that it gives applicants who at the civil service examinations show great capacity a reasonable certainty of appointment. Once appointed and having passed the probationary period of six months, meanwhile meeting the approval of their official superiors, they will have permanent employment at reasonable remuneration with the prospect of promotion when merited.

The commissioners appear inclined to regard the rates of pay as hardly adequate. Clerks of the third division who pass a very ordinary examination receive from \$500 to \$800, or from \$900 to \$1,200, according to their subdivision, while second division clerks are paid from \$850 to \$1,600, or \$1,600 to \$2,100, in like manner, and first division clerks from \$2,100 to \$2,800, or from \$2,800 to \$4,000. As a rule, the responsibility of second and third division men is of a moderate character, their positions being neither administrative nor executive. It is the secretaries and heads of branches, whose pay increases with their responsibilities, who draw the big salaries.

Up to date of the report—Aug. 31 last—over one hundred appointments and promotions had been made, of which 57 were appointments to the third division. In addition to this there have been a number of assignments for temporary employment in the same division, but the temporary employment does not constitute a claim to permanent appointment.

One year is hardly sufficient time to fully test the efficiency of the act, but the report suggests that the day is not far distant when the Government will feel justified in extending the new system to the outside service.

Lieutenant Peary ought to enjoy his Christmas dinner.

Some of the civic veterans are lagging superfluous on the stage.

Citizens who bought their Christmas turkeys at 22 and 24 cents a pound, are now skeptical about the advantages of shopping early.

Lord Curzon is out for the reform of the House of Lords, and says he would not even object to the introduction of the elective idea. The first thing he knows he will be struck off the calling list of the London Free Press.

It is to be hoped Messrs. McMahon, Pocke and Wyatt will not drop out if Mr. Beech declines to head the ticket. They ought to be prepared to make some sacrifice. There cannot be too many good candidates in the field at the present time.

The Ontario Government has purchased 500 acres in Wellington County to be worked by the inmates of the Central Prison. This scheme will solve the problem of prison labor, and the work will be morally and physically helpful to the prisoners. It is an excellent idea.

Sir Robert Perks, noted as the Non-conformist multi-millionaire, was one of the strongest opponents of the Ballfour educational bill, and an aggressive supporter of the present Government until the budget touched his pocket-nerve. The budget was made for the millions and not the millionaire, so Sir Robert renounced his Liberal allegiance. His protest against the manifesto of the Free Church Council is merely an indication that he thinks more of his pocket than of his principles.

It is pretty hard for British tariff reformers to answer the following series of questions facing them on the billboards, in city, town and country:

THE FOREIGNER PAYS THE TAX.
Why is the proposed corn tax only two shillings per quarter?
Why is a rebate always allowed on goods re-exported?
Why did Mr. Chamberlain promise to equalize matters by taking taxes off other articles?
Why did Mr. Chamberlain exempt maize and bacon?
Why do all tariff reformers propose to exempt raw material?
Why does the foreigner pay the present tobacco duty?
Why did Mr. Balfour say "the object and effect of tariff reform is to broaden the basis of taxation?"

A TITLED DANCER.
Lady Constance Stewart-Richardson, the granddaughter of a duchess, the daughter of an earl, the sister of a countess, and the wife of a baronet, has been engaged to appear for one month at the Palace Theatre in a series of classic dances. I have often heard of classic actors, amateur and otherwise, but this is the first time that a lady so closely connected with the peerage has contracted to perform as a music-hall dancer. Lady Constance is well known for her travels in the Himalayas, in America and in South America with her husband. She has often dressed in men's garments, and has made a name for herself as a player of the bagpipes, and a dead shot, a plucky rider (always astride), and a daring sportsman—especially at polo. She has invested a large part of the money left him in jewelry and carried it around with him.

He was staying in Sarnia, but was arrested while on a visit one evening.

WHAT CAUSES THE BLUES.

London, Eng., Dec. 22.—Doctors have discovered that the "blues" or "mental depression and irritability" is really a disease caused by defective circulation in the cells of the brain.

The British Medical Review says: "By improving the circulation, there is an immediate improvement in the mental outlook."

If this is the case, we Canadians do not have to wait for the foreign scientists to pursue their investigations any further. We have the cure for the "blues" in those wonderful fruit liver tablets called "Fruit-a-tives."

They go straight to the root of the trouble, stimulating the torpid liver and kidney and regulating the bowels. Thus they cleanse the whole system and renew vitality, mental as well as physical.

50c a box, 6 for \$2.50, or trial size 25c. At dealers, or from Fruit-a-tives Limited, Ottawa, Ont.

In Port Huron, The testimony showed he was attempting to sell a ring for less money than it cost, and was arrested on the charge of smuggling.

The Justice of the Peace court here found him not guilty.

THE HOUSE OF LORDS

A "HOUSE OF FEARS"

No More Alleged War Scares Says Premier Asquith and Mr. Lloyd-George.

London, Dec. 22.—Mr. Lloyd-George at enthusiastic meetings at Cardiff and Swansea again chastised the Lords.

We are sick of this guttering Liberal bill. I am very glad the Premier has said, "never again, respecting a bill of this kind, will I be asked to support it." It was not the House of Peers, but the House of Fears.

"They are not there to protect honest industry against confiscation; they are there to protect the monopoly which plunders industry. They are not there as guardians of liberty; they are there as the garrison of privileges. We strip them out, and Britain will be the richer for it."

Lord Curzon was enthusiastically received at Buxton, where he replied to Winston Churchill.

SOME POINTS.

The Duke of Norfolk—When the electors record their votes, let them remember that it was the Lords who gave their opportunity.

Lord Desborough—The House of Commons is the real power and more under the rule of a small committee of the cabinet.

Lord Dunsborough—They could not say they were going to rob the house without first taking the keys.

Mr. Wyndham—The Government have tried to revive a bill, which is dead, in order to kill tariff reform, which is alive.

Mr. Buxton—Any Government, whatever it may be, will continue to pay old-age pensions.

May Change the Date.
The date of dissolution has not yet been officially announced. It is not certain that it will be the 8th of January, the day originally selected, the Government being urged to defer dissolution until the 15th of January.

Lord Curzon is of the opinion that if the first elections took place on Saturday, Jan. 10, it would be of great benefit to their cause.

Koir Hardie says that the Labor party expected the decision of the House of Lords that trade union leaders would be expelled from the party.

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ADmiral SCHLEY

CHAMPIONS COOK

Insists That Peary Submit His Papers to Copenhagen University.

Washington, Dec. 22.—Declaring that it was but justice to Dr. Cook, in whom he affirms his utmost confidence, Rear Admiral W. S. Schley today demanded that Commander Peary submit his scientific papers to the National Geographical Society.

The admiral believes that the same body which repudiated Cook's data should be permitted to pass upon the data submitted by Peary to the Geographical Society.

"The Danes are the best posted body of men in the world on Arctic matters," he said. "The consistency of the University of Copenhagen should be given the opportunity to examine the given proofs for in that way they would be submitted to the same test that was applied to those of Cook."

Admiral Schley believes that submission of the proofs to Copenhagen should be insisted upon by Peary, despite whatever the National Geographical Society's attitude may be. It was suggested to the officer that the 80th anniversary of the age officially declared its intention to let scientific bodies examine the Peary proofs when they had been passed upon by the society.

"But the organization has not done this," he retorted. "So far there has been shown no disposition to carry out his avowed intentions, has there?"

Admiral Schley declined to say on what grounds he took exception to the findings of the University of Copenhagen. He merely reaffirmed his belief in the explorer, adding that he believed that Peary, too, had gained the top of the earth.

The admiral has had wide experience in the far north. In 1884 he was in command of the Thetis expedition, which resulted in the rescue of Lieutenant Greely and six men who had been cast away at Cape Sabine.

Members of the National Geographical Society declined to discuss Admiral Schley's suggestions.

MILWAUKEE IS NOW

SUED FOR DIVORCE

Ohio Pastor's Daughter Alleges Port Huron Man Has an Earlier Wife.

Canton, O., Dec. 23.—Helen Lucille Milwain, daughter of Rev. J. R. Jacob, of Massillon, filed suit in common pleas court today for a divorce from Herbert E. Milwain, of Port Huron, with whom she married at Pittsburg on Oct. 17.

She says that since the marriage she has learned that Milwain had another wife from whom he never was divorced.

She says he gave their names at the local probate court as Stuart Allen Evans and Ellen Grace Morrison.

This is the third case now pending against Milwain. He will be tried for bigamy in Pittsburg and for perjury and divorce here.

WOULD SELL HER BODY

Willing To Be Dissected After Death to Make Children's Christmas Happy.

Baltimore, Dec. 23.—Desperate at the thought that their children would be deprived of Christmas joys to which they had been accustomed, a mother yesterday advertised that for \$10 she would sell her body to be delivered after her death to the purchaser.

Christmas always has been a time of joy for this woman, who is the mother of four children. This year, owing to an accident which has incapacitated her husband, the little family has been eking out an existence on the \$3 a week earned by a little oldest girl, who is 14.

"It's a simple business proposition," said the woman. "I need some money to make the little ones happy, and I don't know of any other way to get it."

"I don't regard this thing in a spirit of lightness or carelessness. The idea is not attractive to me, and I am willing to undertake it only for the sake of my children."

Asked what she would buy with the money, she answered promptly: "First of all, shoes. Three of the children need them badly. Then all of them need stockings, and the little ones mits. Candles there are to be none. The older ones expect nothing, but for the little ones who still believe in Santa Claus there is to be a doll for each."

WEST LONDON

Mrs. Arthur Sanham is very ill at her home on Wyatt street, suffering from an attack of bronchitis.

Mrs. Michael Reedy, Wyatt street, West London, is slowly recovering from the effects of a touch of la grippe.

Mr. Henry Ray, of Cedar Bay, is visiting at the home of his daughter, Mrs. David Gilmore, at 51 Blackfriars street, West London.

A horse owned by a west side grocer became restless yesterday afternoon when the driver was making a delivery at the house of a customer, and started homeward. On the way one of the shafts came in contact with a post and as a result when the driver appeared he found half a shaft lying in the snow beside the post and the other part still attached to the sleigh. Luckily a small boy caught the animal or more damage might have resulted.

Good times are much in evidence in West London if the Christmas purchases are any criterion. Several of the businessmen of that section were spoken to regarding trade conditions, and they all stated that this year's sales would nearly double those of former years. "If the weather remains reasonable," said one merchant, "my receipts will be about \$200 in excess of the same week's business of 1908."

Signs of increasing good times are noticeable throughout the growing suburb.

Last Tuesday night the home of Mrs. Percy Peacock, 52 Wilson avenue, was the scene of a very pleasant party, when Mrs. Peacock entertained her Sunday school class, together with some young friends. During the evening Mrs. Peacock was presented by the class with a handsome gold brooch and an address. The evening was

CHAPMAN'S

OPEN TONIGHT UNTIL 10 O'CLOCK.

COME EARLY TOMORROW AND

DON'T FORGET ANYONE

Dolls! Books! China!

Thousands of gifts chosen daily from these three interesting displays: Dolls! Books! China! and the same thing will be repeated today and tomorrow, with efficient salespeople to give you our best service.

A Big Dressed Doll, 25c

We can still announce full assortment of Dressed and Undressed Dolls. The biggest and best Dressed Doll we ever saw at 25c, and others ranging upwards to \$2.50 that afford a grand selection for all. Everybody tells us we have the best Doll selection in the city. The demand has certainly exceeded our fondest expectations.

Alger Books for boys, 17c and 25c

Henty Books for boys, 15c, 17c and 25c

Gordon Stables' Books