

The Weekly Ontario

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MR. JOHNSON AND THE MINISTERS.

Mr. J. W. Johnson M.P.P., has come out in a plain-spoken, straight-forward manner as the champion of the bar-room. In one of the most remarkable speeches ever delivered in the Ontario legislature, Mr. Johnson is reported by The Toronto News as having said:—"It would be a mistake to do away with licenses, because if they did the province would have no control over the liquor industry."

So far as we are aware this is the first time in twenty years that any public man in Ontario, who was not the paid agent of the traffic, has had the fortitude to stand up before an audience and openly defend the institution of the bar.

We cannot but admire Mr. Johnson's courage, even though we may not agree with any of his arguments or conclusions.

The Ontario repeatedly requested Mr. Johnson to come out in public last June, when the subject was an issue before the electors, and define his position in regard to the open bar, but he consistently avoided doing so. Had he then stated where he stood, as clearly and decidedly as he has now done, perhaps results might have been somewhat different.

Mr. Johnson then went on to state in his speech that "he took a drink himself when he wanted it."

It does not appear just what idea Mr. Johnson meant to convey by this latter statement. Does he wish to place his own example before the people as the proper ideal?

We have known many who have started out with some creed of being "able to take it or let it alone." But very often in later years they became so busy demonstrating that they could take it, that they had no time left in which to prove to us that they could let it alone. Mr. Johnson by superior strength of will preserves an even course of moderation. Scores of others in his own constituency have long ago passed the stage where they can let it alone. The power of the will is broken down and an acquired appetite results.

If it required moral courage on the part of Mr. Johnson to take his stand in behalf of the barroom, it required none to arise in the shelter of the legislature and make a violent attack upon one of the most sincere, scholarly, and conscientious ministers of the Methodist church.

If Mr. Johnson is correctly reported by The Telegram, The News and our own special parliamentary correspondent, he could scarcely have given a more inaccurate and unfair impression of what actually was said by his pastor in Bridge Street church on that Sunday morning in June. Had Mr. Johnson told his fellow members as nearly as he could recall what the Rev. Mr. Osborne really did say it is certain that the most extreme partisan among them could not have found fault. It is a well known fact that one of Mr. Johnson's most ardent and outspoken supporters warmly congratulated Mr. Osborne after the sermon upon the fairness and reasonableness of his position.

Mr. Johnson also endeavors to convey the impression that there has been a big slump in church attendance on the part of "leading citizens" since last June. As far as Bridge Street church is concerned the stay-aways could all be counted on the fingers of one hand and there would still be a finger or two to spare. We have not heard of any secession whatever from other churches.

It might be of further interest to note that the pastor of Bridge Street church has been unanimously invited by his board, composed of both Conservatives and Liberals, to return and be their pastor for a fourth year.

As to the general question of the participation of the clergy in the contest to secure the abolition of the bar it is not necessary at this late date to make any comment. We entered upon a full discussion of that subject at the time of the election. We will merely ask Mr. Johnson three of four questions and will afford him all the space he requires in which to make reply.

In view of the fact that the Conference of the Methodist church, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian church and the Baptist Convention had all passed strongly worded and unanimous resolutions demanding of the legislature the abolition of the bar, and urging upon the ministry of the churches the duty and necessity of using every legitimate means in their power to secure that end—in view of all this,

how could the ministers hold up their heads in self-respect, if, when the leader of one of the great political parties took the churches at their word and offered if elected to give them what they had been so long demanding, the aforementioned ministers maintained a cowardly silence?

Will Mr. Johnson tell us if it was the proper thing for clergymen to take part in the election of 1905 to help defeat the Ross government why it was wrong to try to promote a great moral issue in the election of 1914?

Will he also inform us in a general way what he considers to be the chief social or other benefits conferred by the barroom that he so strongly desires to retain?

Would he advise the churches and schools generally to enter upon a course of teaching in favor of moderate drinking?

Does the fact that one or two or a dozen members of a congregation leave a church because of something the minister has said or done prove that what the minister has said or done is wrong?

Would he advise a minister to take a wrong or craven position, because of the fact that doing the right thing might offend some "leading citizen"?

In short, will Mr. Johnson describe to us what he considers to be the ideal clergyman and tell us just what a Methodist, a Presbyterian or a Baptist clergyman should have done in 1905 and again in 1914?

A GENERAL ELECTION

There is a good deal of bombastic talk in our Conservative contemporaries just now about the Liberals being opposed to bringing on a general election because they are afraid to face it. The said contemporaries therefore reason that it is a proper punishment for Grit cowardice to dissolve parliament and force a contest upon their trembling and disconcerted opponents. If the government of Sir Robert Laidlaw Borden is possessed of any such idea the best thing they can do is to try it out. We admit that the Flag Flappers have some reason for their belief in the guilelessness and gullibility of the Canadian people. The campaign of 1911 was the most remarkable in the history of Canada for the dual misrepresentation doing service in Nationalist Quebec and in Orange Ontario, and for the unholy prostitution of the British emblem by pocket-book patriots. But the campaign of 1911 was mightily successful. After such a success it is very easy for a man like Bob Rogers to figure out that it is a cinch to fool all the people all the time. He would in some way make out that the Liberals were pro-Germans, and anti-British and by the abundant display of red, white, blue, and khaki he would sweep back triumphantly for another five years at the money chest.

The ultra-conservative Montreal Star protests that, "Any election in war-time would be bad enough; but an election in war-time with the mud-spattered heroes of the antion disfranchised, would be a howling farce and a cowardly crime against our brothers who are facing German bullets on our behalf."

Robert Rogers apparently believes that the great majority of those who have gone to the front are Liberals. That is why he is so anxious to force an election while seventy-five thousand or more of his opponents will be disfranchised because of being on active duty in Europe. But, so far from crediting the Rogers-Cochrane theory of an intimidated, craven, disheartened, non-confident Liberal party, we know that the Opposition never was more united, more determined, and more certain of the triumph of the policies it represents than right now.

Besides they know full well that any party responsible for the "cowardly crime" of an unnecessary election in the midst of this great war would be swept out of power by almost the unanimous voice of patriotic Canadians.

If the Liberal party were dominated by political buccaners and adventurers they would ask for no better luck than a chance to receive the verdict of the Canadian people on such an issue. But being animated by the one great desire to see this disastrous war forced to a successful issue as speedily as possible they will fight with every resource at their command any attempt to divide our people into hostile factions while the enemy is battering at the very gates of our Empire, and our martyred soldier boys are giving their life-blood in the trenches of France.

It seems almost inconceivable that any group of politicians in Canada could be so brazenly and brutally disloyal to the British cause as to choose the time of supreme crisis as the opportune moment to attempt to gain a cowardly partisan advantage.

BUY A POUND OF CHEESE.

We have often advised the eating of more cheese and less meat, so we are pleased to find so eminent an authority as Prof. H. H. Dean of Ontario Agricultural College who says: "That while Canadians consumed about twenty-five pounds of meat per head annually, they only consumed about three pounds of cheese. It is quite evident that the increase of the consump-

tion of cheese and the reduction of the consumption of meat would help to reduce the cost of living. At the same time it would be worth while for the cheese-makers of Canada to give greater attention to the curing of cheese, so that the popular taste is catered to. Much of the cheese offered for sale is of a tasteless kind and lacks the "bite" that many demand who refuse to eat cheese that lacks it.—Bowmanville Statesman.

Our contemporary has touched upon a very important point. Here we are at Belleville in the midst of the greatest cheese-producing district in Canada, and yet the amount of cheese that is sold and consumed locally is insignificant. The trouble is that our factories and cheese-makers have been catering exclusively to the foreign trade and have been neglecting the home field. The most of the cheese that is found in the local provision stores is a hard cheddar, excellent for export but altogether unsuited for home use. Like the Ben Davis apple, it requires the tonic of an ocean voyage to give it flavor and class. Kept at home it is dry, hard and tasteless. The Americans have shown greater wisdom and adaptability in manufacturing a soft, moist cheese for the local market, and a harder cheese when they have any for export. Less than ten pounds of milk will make one pound of high quality soft cheese, while it requires nearly twelve pounds of milk to produce the firm cheddars that suit the Englishmen. Therefore profits to the factorymen are very much greater when the softer grade is manufactured. We often hear it said that Canadians do not eat cheese. But the trouble is that our dairymen have been trying to force upon them a kind of goods they don't want. Give Canadians cheese to suit Canadian taste and Canadian local conditions and the demand will speedily grow. United States makers have in this way worked up an enormous home consumption, and the Republic from being an exporter of cheese now usually finds that it cannot as a rule provide enough for domestic needs.

Bayside Cheese factory has built up a profitable subsidiary business by making a certain quantity of the softer cheese for local demands which is sold to grocers in Trenton and Belleville. But generally speaking, the cheesemen of Ontario have been so intent on the British market that they have entirely overlooked the chance for developing an extremely profitable market at their doors.

TIME FOR ACTION

An interesting review of the situation in the Western theatre after six months of war is given in the London Daily Chronicle. When the war began there was a widespread belief that economic exhaustion, if nothing else, would end it before the first half year had been turned. But events have taught us, as our London contemporary points out, that the modern nations have more staying power than was supposed, and just as we all had to unlearn in an instant, any idea that war would be prevented by a business collapse, so it would appear that such causes have but a remote chance of ending it.

However that may be the battle drama itself has quite altered its rate of progress. In the first six weeks of the war, when once the German armies had effected their concentration, it moved with breathless rapidity. From day to day one scarcely knew whether twenty-four hours might not bring forth the downfall of a power. France, Austria-Hungary, Russia, even Germany herself in the first East Prussian invasion, had each their bad moments. Now all that is changed, behind every frontier and every battle-line stretch trenches and prepared positions innumerable. No one expects them to be forced by any but a gradual and prolonged offensive. The disconcerting discovery, that fortresses are very easy to take with modern weapons, has been followed by the no less important demonstration that field-works are very difficult.

The Chronicle says: "The power of the defence has been re-asserted against the attack. We all admired the stand made last August by the Belgians. It was heroic, but finally unsuccessful. Yet if the Belgian military authorities had known four years ago what they and we all know today about forts and field-works respectively, its heroism might have had another issue. Very possibly the German armies could never have established themselves beyond the line of the Sambre and the Meuse."

However, the significance of the standstill during the past three months may easily be exaggerated. The season and the weather count for much in it. A winter with so much rain and so little frost has made all going slow. And the reversion to "siege" methods of warfare entailed a virtual reversion to the pre-Napoleonic plan of going into winter quarters. "When you can no longer reckon, as Napoleon could," says the Chronicle, "on winning your battle within twenty-four hours it becomes necessary to have as small a proportion of your men as possible in the firing-line as a rule, in order that by liberal provision for rest and recuperation you may preserve your army against the assaults of the weather." The commander who does not baffle these, while the winter lasts, will not have men left to baffle the enemy, when spring comes. With the return of longer days

and warmer nights, we may look once more for rapid movements, heavily supported offensives, and decisive battles. One would not be surprised, and need not be sorry, to see the Germans again move first. They can hardly do so with the hope of solid success; but they may do so for prestige's sake, to save their nation's political and military pride, by courting a splendid failure rather than waiting for a slow grinding defeat."

If this failure is thorough, the Chronicle adds, as we must hope it may be, "the Allies' eventual advance may be quickened. It was the often expressed opinion of the Germans before the war that the offensive was essential to their army—it could not play a losing game." There are a good many signs that the time for the German offensive is almost, if not wholly, past, and that presently the Allies with their great new armies, which are being sent from Britain, and are being brought up in France, will be ready to make their long-planned and carefully arranged advance.

UNITED STATES MAY BECOME INVOLVED.

The possibility of the United States becoming involved in war with Germany is regarded as by no means remote, and in fact, is receiving grave consideration among the larger financial interests in New York.

The head of one of the largest financial groups, with German associations, when questioned on this point at first answered evasively: "I am trying very earnestly to keep the war out of my mind." "But," was urged, "suppose a German submarine torpedoed an American steamer?"

"Well," was the quick reply, "it would be all up."

"You mean there would be war with this country?"

"Yes."

This is said to be significant of sentiment generally in financial circles. In some important circles the belief, expressed by Lord Charles Beresford in the interview which we published recently, seems to prevail that Germany would not be altogether disappointed if the United States should become a participant in the war on the side of the Allies, as it would afford not only an acceptable aid to dignity in acknowledging defeat, since then it would be possible for Germany to claim defeat by the whole world, but also it would include the secondary advantage, hardly less important, namely, the fact that the United States would be a party to the peace negotiations. The German idea being that having no territorial interests in Europe, the United States would be unlikely to insist upon humiliating terms of peace. However that may be, it is probably true that it only requires a spark to set the American nation aflame.

The government professes, through some of its supporters, to have a great regard for the soldiers' welfare. For evidence of this one has only to point to the boot, remount, and blanket scandals.

The Spectator, of Macleod, Alberta, reports that up to date approximately two hundred men from that town have enlisted for service abroad, or nearly two per cent. of the population. This is indeed a splendid showing which will be hard to beat in Canada. The record for the Empire, the Toronto Globe points out, is probably that of the island of Lewis, in the Hebrides. There are 30,000 persons of all ages and both sexes resident on the island, and 8,000 of them are on active service.

A CALL FOR RECRUITS.

Britain's sons who yet remain
Deaf to her appealing call,
Heed ye not your comrades slain?
Care ye not how fast they fall?
Foremost, fearless, glad to die,
Silent in their graves they lie:
Touch not these your hearts, who give
All they have, if she may live?
See the lengthening scroll of fame
Day by day fresh names records,
Can you, dare you, face the shame,
Face reproach too deep for words?
Then to arms! while yet in time
Make the sacrifice sublime:
Join your comrades over sea,
Fight to keep old England free!

Mothers, widows, rich and poor,
Mourn their dead, and steel their heart:
Do your dear ones love you more,
Though with tears from you they part?
Sadly, fondly, each desires
You should go, as went your sires,
Well befits this thought the brave—
"Those at home we go to save."

So resolve, when comes the morn,
Arms to bear against the foe:
Off with day fresh hope is born,
Though to-night her name burns low.
On, then! in her hour of need
Fill her ranks, nor dangers heed!
Britain's sons, come weal, come woe,
Rouse yourselves! to victory go!
—F. B. H. in Lloyd's (London) News.

Other Editors' Opinions

THEY THAT ARE WHOLES

Sturdy muscular youths who do not need physical or training are always most eager and assiduous in college athletics, while those of weak muscles and poorly developed physique, who are most in need of physical culture, feel their defects and neglect the required remedies. It is a maladjustment closely paralleled by the case of Mr. J. W. Johnson, Conservative member of the Legislature for West Hastings, who declared he had not attended church since the recent election, contrasted with the case of Mr. McDonald of North Bruce, who declared that he attended twice every Sunday. Mr. Johnson was opposed by every minister in his riding with one exception, while Mr. McDonald had the support of every minister without a single exception. On the other hand Mr. Johnson had the support of the liquor interests, while Mr. McDonald had the unopposed opposition of that element.

The unfortunate thing is that Mr. Johnson's absence is his strength, from that chief source of moral and spiritual strength. He gave the House a laugh by protesting against ministers driving sinners from their churches. It may be paid for by Mr. Johnson to go to church and hear the ways of his party denounced just as the dumb bells, Indian clubs and horizontal bars of the gymnasium are painful to the youth of soft muscular and weak physical development. But the painful treatment exactly what is required in both cases. If the clergymen varied their attitude so as to make their discourses pleasant to Mr. Johnson they would not do him any good. They would leave him just as they found him. He says many other prominent party leaders have also absented themselves from church. This too is most unfortunate. But it is better that they should miss the corrective influence of which they stand sorely in need than the influence itself should be modified and weakened to the detriment of the outside multitude. Politicians may come and go, but the message of the clergy must go on forever.

It is a deeply significant fact that the clergy are almost entirely on one side in the leading issue between the political parties in Ontario. It shows that they are prepared to speak their minds and declare their message even if they lose highly influential members from their congregations. Advice thus courageously given on a great moral issue has a value that the public irrespective of religious and sectarian leanings, are glad to learn to appreciate.—Toronto Globe.

TAXING MOTHERS AND CHILDREN

Referring to the proposed increase in the tax on tea, the London Daily Chronicle says among other things: "The increase in the British per capita consumption of tea is the result of the most unpatriotic kind of discrimination against the goods of the Motherland."

That such a blundering suggestion of placing any kind of barrier in the way of British goods is one that could be made by a government which is fighting the same battles, industrial and military, as the Motherland, is scarcely conceivable.

Tea, cheaper in Canada than any other part of the world, gets off with one cent of taxation. A large amount of money has already been paid by the public because of the anticipation of a tea tax, in sympathy with a proposal to increase it.

Practically every luxury in existence escapes special taxation. Legitimate and moving picture theatres which have yielded a revenue of many millions in the United States since the war began, are not touched by the Finance Minister.

At the present time Great Britain is sending millions of dollars into the country, and helping to keep the country's factories running on full time. Shall Canada place the duty on the purchases that would help to keep "business as usual" the Old Country?

At any other time the British preference might come in for close economic examination. To-day it is a matter of patriotism and affectionate regard for the nation that is fighting the battle of humanity.

Are Canada's soldiers and munitions, and the cost of all, a gift, or are we also determined to have our "profit" in some form or other?

Are we to make a great cry about our service, and then quietly ask for so much more cheer, as far as it is possible to collect?

The last thing Canadians wish to do, and the last thing they will do in the final settlement of the peace on the country for which all Canadians are fighting, a tax that will be the faint of mercenary graspingness that has been called by the world's full, free service to Great Britain and to the world.—Brockville Recorder.

GOING TO THE FRONT.

London is having troubles of a different character from those of New York. One of them has to do with firms which have gone out of existence. Firms have conveniently vanished, leaving for the information of applicants for checks, a notice at the office door, stating, "Gone to the front." The case is reported of a firm that was found to be represented solely by the office boy. A clerk of a brokerage house was sent to collect a check, and the following dialogue took place:
Clerk—"Where are the partners?"
Boy—"Gone away."
Clerk—"When will they be back?"
Boy—"Don't know."
Clerk—"How long have they been away?"
Boy—"Since 29th July."
Clerk—"How are you getting on?"
Boy—"Well, there was £13 in the petty cash and I'm living on that."
—London Financial Times.

Military

Peterborough has a good number in its 39th Battalion.

The detachment of the 67th's contingent in the Peterborough Battalion of Mounted recruited there. Both were for the great part recruited in the city, a contingent, which says the Peterborough largely of Toronto men, but in addition to the Peterborough and scouring the country, latter are still coming the total strength of the Peterborough arm over the 250 mark.

The percentage of Peterborough for the usually large, 35 of the 410. There are a detachment from Peterborough and other hand was for the composed of single born recruits are in the 410, the figures reading Canadians 28, Scotch Welsh 1.

The Peterborough 39th are excited over early orders to move.

Pte. Hillson of the men of the 39th Battalion moved to the isolation ward from an attack measles. There are five Peterborough garrisons.

Lindsay will have a tallon soldiers within some time yet, says a spatul.

Lindsay has nearly for the Third Contingent.

Lindsay has nearly for the Third Contingent.

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