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THE COLLIERY PROBLEM.

AS was to have been expected, the submissions being presented to the Royal Commission on colliery wages are achieving a comprehensive scope. The Dominion Steel and Coal Corporation has not only placed its operating cost studies on record, side by side with comparative tables showing the corresponding expenses of competitors, but it has also outlined to the Commission its so-called "re-allocation plan" involving the abandonment of four of its mines and more intensive operation of the remaining collieries. The policy contemplated in this regard, it is explained, will reduce the Company's mining force by 2,250 men, and will at the same time make possible an output sufficient for all visible market requirements, at a considerably decreased cost per ton. Through this efficiency programme steadier employment is contemplated for a colliery working force reduced from 14,000 to less than 12,000 men, as well as a fair margin of profit for the Company, under normal market conditions.

Broadly speaking, the Union's point of view is that the Nova Scotia colliery industry should be so operated as to provide a maximum of benefit to the miners and their dependents. In his very able submission on Monday, President D. W. Morrison pointed out that for the past two years the wages disbursed were entirely inadequate for the maintenance of the colliery population, and argued that a reduction from the existing scale would create an even less satisfactory condition. He met the Company's calculation that it had lost \$1,800,000 on last year's operations with the statement that the aggregate wage loss to the miners had been three times as great. His contention is that executive inefficiency, and especially lax and unprogressive sales methods, are largely responsible for the existing plight of the industry. And he has expressed the confident belief that a live-wire sales organization, operating under the right kind of a national fuel policy, would quickly place the industry on a profitable basis and render a wage reduction unnecessary. Another point the District Union President made was that 1930 and 1931 were not typical years, and that it was fallacious to base operating costs and wage scales on data relating to a period of general business contraction.

Needless to say it is not the purpose of this review to prejudge any aspect of the case, or to discuss the merits of either submission. Two things however are obvious. One is that the formulation of a national fuel policy falls entirely within the purview of the Government and Parliament of Canada. The other is that the re-allocation of colliery operations is the obvious right of the owners of the mines, who may be assumed to be desirous of making the industry successful and their investment profitable. Having said so much, it is necessary to point out that the main issue between the mine-owners and mine-workers turns, not on hypothetical conditions, but on the present actual state of facts and on the practical possibilities of the situation.

It is quite true that the fuel legislation enacted at the last session of Parliament did not assure the Canadian coal market to Canadian collieries. But it gave the largest subventions and the most generous tariff protection to the Canadian colliery industry that conditions warranted, and was the most advanced measure of assistance the Canadian coal trade ever received. Its aim was to increase the sales of Canadian coal in the central parts of the Dominion, and to this end additional tariff taxation amounting to over \$2,000,000 per year was imposed on the fuel used in the province of Ontario alone. It is to be added that the increased tariff on foreign coal has entailed an additional fuel cost on the railways running into hundreds of thousands of dollars per annum, and that the transportation subventions

accorded the Canadian colliery industry amount to almost \$2,000,000 per year.

In all fairness it should be recognized that Parliament cannot reasonably be expected to go much farther in the development of a national fuel policy, till the Canadian operators are in a position to meet the fuel requirements of the Canadian market. Such a policy must proceed by practicable stages, broadening out from time to time as colliery operations become enlarged. The recent legislation should give the Nova Scotia mines such an augmented market in Central Canada as will absorb 1,000,000 tons, above the peak of the past, as soon as normal business conditions are restored. With this increased production, costs should be lowered, and the field of competition pushed still further into the Province of Ontario. In due time Parliament may reasonably be required to adopt additional protective measures, designed to carry Nova Scotia coal still further into the heart of the Dominion. But it must be manifest to all thinking persons, that in this progressive development of a national fuel policy, the responsibility rests on the operators to do their part, by increased productive efficiency and by keeping step with the enlarging market opportunities which the growth of general business is certain to create. The time is admittedly not ripe to exclude all foreign coal by a prohibitive tariff. Such a stroke of policy, even if Parliament should assent to it, would not only be national folly, but it would react with tremendous force against the Canadian colliery industry, for it would inevitably be followed by an irresistible, nation-wide demand for free coal. Parliament treated the colliery industry handsomely at the last session. The next move is up to the operators and mine-workers themselves, whose interests are identical at almost every point, even including that of wage rates.

REAL PERSONS IN FICTION.

How far may a writer of fiction go in drawing his character from living models? asks the Boston Globe. After noting that a New York woman recently sued the author of "The Flesh" for \$50,000 on the ground that he "portrayed her in a character named Shirley," it says:

Shakespeare is believed to have got back at some of his boyhood enemies in his delineation of Falstaff and Master Shallow. Fielding's Squire Western would probably fit scores of hard-drinking, fox-hunting gentlemen of his day. Tolstol is said to have a living model for Anna Karenina. Thackeray's Amelia Sedley, according to himself at least, was a composite portrait of several of his womenfolk and others. Becky Sharp on the other hand has been identified with several ladies of her stamp; but the most ridiculous story is that which makes Charlotte Bronte the original Becky, and Thackeray, in revenge, the original of Rochester in "Jane Eyre." Pen-dennis is popularly identified with Thackeray himself as David Copperfield is with Dickens.

Leigh Hunt was the original of Harold Skimpole in "Bleak House," but Dickens has been condemned for depicting Skimpole with acts of meanness which Hunt was incapable of. Was he justified in using his mother as the original of Mrs. Nickleby and his father as that of Mr. Micawber?

THE DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE.

ONLY by accepting Carlyle's formula and making our denominator of expectations zero, can we guard against disappointment over the Disarmament Conference, now in session at Geneva, which is seeking a formula for lightening the enormous financial burden the civilized nations are carrying in peace times, in preparation for wars that should never take place. During the two years of a world wide business depression, unemployment, want and general financial stress, armaments have cost nations which have been unable to balance their civil budgets billions of dollars annually. If these largely needless and always dangerous expenditures were reduced by international convention to reasonable peace-time requirements, an even greater blessing would be conferred on the world than by a general prohibition of inter-governmental war debts.

But it would be unwise to minimize the difficulties which require to be overcome in order to reach such a convention. That complete disarmament is out of the question has been emphasized in a way that should carry conviction to the most uncompromising pacifist by recent developments in the Orient. To use no other illustration, while China, with its 400,000,000 people, remains in its present disorganized and under-developed condition, military and naval forces are essential for the protection of life and property, and for the conservation of civilization itself, as an efficient police service is for the maintenance of law, order and good government, in countries having no thought of war.

It is also important to bear in mind that Britain, the most powerful and peaceful of the great nations has

the responsibility of administering the affairs of hundreds of millions of under-developed peoples, scattered through all parts of the world. Her need of large naval and military forces is therefore a fact which no disarmament conference can overlook, either in fairness or in safety. It would be an evil day for the world that should see Britain's sea-power reduced below the irreducible standard necessary to enable her to preserve the peace, and enforce respect for life and property rights in her world-encircling Empire. The task of the Conference will undoubtedly be a difficult one, and the scope within which it can function will have very definite limitations. At best it can only hope to arrest the international rivalry in armaments which is prompted by distrust, fear, national pride, and hopes of territorial or commercial aggression. But within this limited field there is room for a great restriction of the outlay on engines of destruction and naval and military organizations.

PRESS BRIEFS

CRESCENDO.

The rumor that the Rt. Hon. Arthur Meighen is to accept a seat in the Senate grows stronger.—Moncton Transcript.

A CHINESE PUZZLE.

If the present situation in Manchuria does not, in a diplomatic sense, constitute a "state of war," China is puzzled to know what to do.—Vancouver Province.

A WOMAN GOVERNOR.

Premier Bennett has been asked to select a woman to represent His Majesty the King at Ontario's government house. The suggestion seems fair enough.—Winnipeg Tribune.

A BLAZING EXAMPLE.

The burning alive of scores of Hindus by Moslems in Keshmir is a sample of what might be expected generally should the British authority be withdrawn from India.—Toronto Mail and Empire.

THE REASON FOR LIES.

A symposium was held in the public schools on the question, "Why do children lie?" The most revealing and most deeply scientific answer was: "In order to get along with adults."—Christian Register.

THE POLAR FEVER.

H. G. Watkins, the young leader of last year's Greenland exploration party, contemplates leading an expedition into the Antarctic next fall. Mr. Watkins seems to have caught the polar fever, which usually lasts as long as life.—Montreal Gazette.

COST OF ARMAMENTS.

Lord Robert Cecil, a great worker for international peace, says that the nations of Europe are spending some \$500,000,000 annually on armaments. This burden of itself is justification for an international attempt to limit armaments, or at least to arrest their expansion.—Montreal Herald.

CHECKED IMMIGRATION.

Immigration to the United States in November, 1931, amounted to only 3,748 individuals, the lowest number of people to enter the republic since November 1831, exactly 100 years ago. Thus it appears the United States is back where it was when it had a population of only 15,000,000.—Moncton Times.

THE RAILWAY INQUIRY.

The only sittings of the railway investigation commission so far held in camera, have been discussions with different provincial governments and with the heads of the two railways. Obviously these could not be open to the public, if a free expression of opinion were to be solicited.—Calgary Herald.

A DIVIDED CABINET.

The situation that has arisen in the ranks of the National Government of Great Britain has created a great stir among constitutional authorities. Certainly it is unparalleled that a divided Cabinet should remain in office and should submit its policy to the decision of Parliament. To do so is to break all records in Parliamentary procedure, one of the main bases of which has been the solidarity of the Cabinet.—Regina Star.

ABUSING THE PRESIDENT.

The unanimous opinion of all decent Americans is expressed by Governor Franklin Roosevelt in the statement that "Democracy can never tolerate abuse of the person of the President of the United States." In the same speech the Governor rebuked "those men and women, members of both parties, who forget their sense of fair play and at the same time the fact that their victim at the moment is the President." Hearst, the chief offender, can not be expected to heed such admonitions. He has little respect for Governor Roosevelt, anyway.—Seattle Times

THE ROUND TABLE

"A Mirror of This Mighty World."

"QUEEN OF THE HOME."

(Ottawa Citizen)

The women of Quebec have again been denied the right to vote in provincial elections, although they vote in federal contests. Arthur Belanger, Liberal member for Levis, led the attack upon the bill. This is M. Belanger's summing up of the issue: "Queen of the Home" is the proper title for the women of this province. Above all, I say, the role of Quebec women is maternity. Of course, it is not merely perversity, not even stupidity, that makes politicians in Quebec discharge such shafts of Socratic sagacity. The cause goes much deeper. It has its roots in the social system of the province. The women themselves, or a majority of them, believe what Mr. Belanger says. The truth is, of course, that in such matters which vitally affect the home and male domination, the Province of Quebec is still part of New France.

SHANGHAI BATTLES.

(Toronto Globe.)

The occupation of Shanghai by the Japanese, accompanied by fierce fighting, is just another reminder that a major war in the Far East is not at all impossible. China's helplessness is one factor which has hitherto prevented such an occurrence. The immediate danger in Shanghai is an unpremeditated incident embroiling Japan with some other foreign Power. With thousands of well-armed soldiers within rifle-shot distance of each other—soldiers of four or five different nationalities—disastrous accidents are not impossible. It is noteworthy that the more irresponsible writers in the more irresponsible journals of Japan and the United States are talking about "the next war."

The greatest service that friendly neutrals can render the cause of peace in the Far East is to urge a settlement in Manchuria on a basis of common-sense realism. Japan has rights there; so has China—rights greater on paper. But the exercise of these rights causes inevitable conflict. Either the Chinese or the Japanese flag will have to disappear from Manchuria before there is permanent peace. The change might follow forceful annexation. Or it might follow a treaty indemnifying China for any loss of sovereignty. If the agreement is not made before a war, it will be made afterward. There is food for thought in that fact.

UNPROFITABLE PRIDE.

(Winnipeg Tribune.)

The unreasonableness of the unrest in one section of India is reflected in the stubborn reactions to the opening of the great Sukkora dam.

The dam was originally conceived by Lord Lloyd, when he was governor of Bombay a decade ago. It is the greatest irrigation project in the world, conserving the waters of the Indus in North-West India. At a cost of \$75,000,000, the provision of canals and spillways 6,000 miles long. It will water vast tracts of soil, hitherto irregularly productive of crops, but productive of famine among the natives at recurrent intervals.

Gandhi's boycott of "all things English," now interposes a barrier to expected occupation of lands, converted to fertility, by thousands upon thousands of Indians. Their former eagerness has been converted into uncertainty. They have stood aloof from a great opportunity to their hurt, while the moderates have profited.

It is such stupidities as the Sukkora dam affords, joined to Earl Willingdon's firm measures against Nationalist wrecking programs, that bring support by ruling princes and native chiefs to the viceroys' plans. Firmness is coupled with restraint in dealing with a situation now showing improvement.

No one will regret more than Earl Willingdon that Nationalist pride failed to see in the fruitfulness of the waters of the Indus oblivion for grievances largely arising out of the Mahatma's obsessions.

BUSY THEORISTS.

(Regina Star.)

The convention of the United Farmers of Alberta has come to an end after approving some resolutions of a decidedly red complexion. The idealists had a prolific innings. Extravagant theories were put forth and greedily accepted, though it is probable that few present had the slightest idea of what was involved in them.

Mr. Robert Gardiner talked eloquently of the need for a "co-operative commonwealth." All that can be learned for his scheme is that the Government would seize everything at hand, land, credit, water power, radio and so on and work it for "service, not profit." Then the delegates wanted public ownership of land, complete revision of the monetary and credit system, no private monopoly of radio, the seizing of the water powers and a few other things of a like nature by which they evidently hope to bring in the Millennium. It is evident that they would like to turn the world upside down; whereas most people want to see it turned right side up.

It might be asked if the U. F. A. would not have been doing a more useful work by paying greater heed to its own affairs. The financial report showed that it was unable to "balance its budget." The membership had fallen off greatly and subscriptions had heavily decreased. Here was something far more important than useless debate on impossible topics. The delegates would have been just as well occupied in trying to square the circles in debate on subjects outside the pale of practical politics. But that seems to be what more on from year to year without possibility of achievement.

A VENOMOUS ATTACK.

(The Sentinel.)

A highly provocative editorial appeared in the Sydney (N.S.) Record, on January 11. Deming with conditions in India the writer charges the British Government with a determination to "drive the insurgents into the field where they can be put down by military force."

That is equivalent to saying that the policy of the administration is to incense the native population to the point of desperation and revolt so that there may be excuse for ruthlessly shooting them down in cold blood. A more untrue and mendacious and disloyal statement could not come from the pen of Britain's bitterest enemy. And yet it appeared in a public journal published in the loyal province of Nova Scotia. Surely there will be vigorous protests by the people of Nova Scotia against such a disgraceful slander of the Government of Britain.

The writer cannot be ignorant of the patient efforts of Prime Minister MacDonald and his colleagues to find a satisfactory solution of the problem of India. The Round Table Conference devoted weeks of discussion to find a way to make concessions for self-government that would be acceptable to the different racial elements of that vast population. The practical certainty of bloody civil war between the Moslems and the Hindus, and a state of chaos if British authority were removed, stood in the way of finding a remedy for the discontent of Gandhi and his followers. If Britain withdrew from India and civil war ensued, the world would hold the British Government most responsible. Probably the first to denounce the Mother Country, in such an event, would be the editor of the Sydney Record.

It is so easy for an irresponsible writer to sit in a newspaper office, remote from the scene of the trouble, and give vent to his hatred of responsible statesmen, that perhaps no attention should be paid to his views. But those Canadians who have some comprehension of the difficulties that surround the question of the independence of India must seriously deplore such an unpardonable attack.

The animus of the writer is further revealed in his suggestion, that the Indians should adopt the Irish Republican methods of murder from ambush to force the British Government to withdraw from India. That is what is contained in the following paragraph from the article to which we refer: "The hit and run tactics that won the practical independence of Ireland ten years ago, would be particularly effective in the crowded cities of India which could be made almost untenable for Europeans by

"QUIPS AND CRANKS"

No Preference. Suitor—Although you are a millionaire, my love is so great, sir, that it emboldens a poor man like myself to seek a daughter of yours in marriage. Father—Which of the girls is it, young man? Suitor—Any one of the four, sir.

NOT OF LATE. It was during the empanelling of a jury that the following colloquy occurred: "You are a property holder?" "Yes, your honour." "Married or single?" "I have been married for five years, your honour." "Have you ever formed or expressed an opinion of your own?" "Not for five years, your honour."

WELL BURNED. Mistress—"This pie is burnt to a cinder, Jane; didn't you make it according to the instructions in the cookery book?" Jane—"No, mum, it's me own creation."

THE LAST OF O'MALLEY. "I've come to tell you, Mrs. O'Malley, that your husband met with an accident." "And what is it now?" wailed Mrs. O'Malley. "He was overcome by the heat, ma'am." "What! Overcome by the heat in January?" "Yes, ma'am. He fell into the furnace at the foundry."

HOPELESS. "Would you—er—advise me to—er—marry a beautiful girl or a sensible girl?" "I'm afraid you'll never be able to marry either, old man."

OLD, BLIND, DEAF. A hockey enthusiast having been to see his team play a match which they had lost was returning home downcast, accompanied by his small son.

During the course of the game the lad had asked the usual "why and wherefores" of his "daddy," but things were brought to a climax when he piped: "Daddy, what becomes of a hockey player when he gets old, blind, and deaf?" "They make a referee of him son," was the laconic reply.

SUCCESSFULLY MARRIED. Husband (to wife, reading letter from sister): "Was her wedding a success?" Wife: "Oh, yes! She received fifty-four presents."

resolute gunmen prepared to shoot and disappear in the milling mobs. Will the loyal citizens of Sydney (and of Nova Scotia generally) condone, by their silence, the expression and sentiments such as these? Are we to suppose that Nova Scotians are so ignorant of the facts of the situation, and animated by the same distrust and hatred of Britain, as the writer? That we know is not the case. The editor of the Record should be made to understand that his inflammatory statements are resented by the decent citizens of his province.

THE ANSWER. She: "I notice that you smoke your cigarettes shorter?" He: "Yes. You see, I smoke them longer."

NOT NECESSARY. "Did you visit the art galleries when you were in Dresden?" "We didn't need to. Our daughter paints."

TIME CURED THAT. Hubby: "You didn't have a rag on your back when I married you." Wife: "Anyway, I've plenty of them now."

CAMOUFLAGE. A motor-bandit was observed to be wearing buff spats, probably with the object of distracting attention from his face.—Punch.

MERCURY HOSIERY



Mercury Hosiery looks the part on all formal occasions because of its "quality." It wears remarkably well. Ask to see the latest shades in Mercury Hosiery when buying and don't be put off by the offer of "something just as good." . . . It isn't.