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THE FOES OF RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT.

The issue of responsible versus irresponsible government was daily joined at Ottawa a few days ago.

Discussing the purchase of supplies for public services and public works, Mr. Foster moved:

"That all supplies purchased for the use of the various departments of the Government should be procured on the basis of public tender and contract, under the direction of a competent purchasing commission, and with regard primarily to quality and price."

In amendment Mr. Fielding moved: "That all supplies purchased for the use of the various departments of the Government should be procured on the basis of public tender and contract so far as practicable, especially where large quantities of goods are required, with regard primarily to quality and price, and that all purchases should be made under the authority and direction of Ministers responsible to Parliament."

Between these resolutions the essential question is whether public money shall be expended by men who owe no responsibility to the people and whom the people could not readily dismiss or by men who owe their positions to the people and who can maintain those positions only so long as they expend the public funds in accord with the approval of the people. But this difference marks all the difference between responsible and irresponsible government.

The foundation of British liberty and every other liberty worthy the name is the power of the public to control the expenditure of the public funds. Their right to do so the British people asserted against successive sovereigns for generations.

It was the root reason why one British monarch was beheaded and another dethroned. To apply this principle to actual expenditure of the funds was taken out of the hands of the monarch and placed in charge of a minister who can hold office only so long as their conduct meets with the approval of a majority in Parliament.

Before this principle was adopted as a rule of administrative conduct England had indeed occasionally good government, but from the will of the sovereign and did not abide in any power of the English people to compel the sovereign to give them good government. Since this principle has been accepted as the keystone of the government system it has never been within the power of king or monarch to systematically and continuously misrule the people.

In every self-governing colony of the Empire, and in every democratic country in the world, the control of the public funds by the representatives of the people has come to be the acknowledged bulwark of the public against incompetence, robbery, and extravagance. For this is the British Parliament known as the "Mother of Parliaments" because there was first clearly established and effectively applied the principle that the people's money must be expended by the people's representatives and by nobody else.

The proposal to place the expenditure of public money in the hands of a commission appointed for life and dismissible only by the unanimous or practically unanimous vote of Parliament, is merely an attempt to resuscitate under another form the policy of preventing the people from governing themselves, and of enabling someone else to govern them as that someone may happen to consider it desirable that the people should be governed. The men who hold the keys to the treasury really govern the country, for they hold it in their power to frustrate or prosper the will of the people's representatives. The move to put these men beyond the reach of the people can be given no other name than an attempt to wrest from the people the means which alone have been found effective in preventing the plunder of the public purse, and in securing the execution of the public will.

That the proposal was to place this power in the hands of a commission instead of in the hands of a sovereign only means that we are living in the twentieth century instead of the seventeenth. But tyranny is not altered by altering its name, and an irresponsible commission would hold the power to work public harm and to prevent public good quite as effectively as an irresponsible sovereign. And the commission would consist of several sovereigns instead of one, the likelihood of working harm would be proportionately increased.

Against the abuses of such body the people would have no effective recourse. Assuming a board of incorruptible commissioners all would be well, but in the present stage of social evolution an incorruptible commission could not be counted on with certainty, and from a corrupt commission the people would have no practicable means of relief.

So long as the commissioners remained on friendly terms with the Government the Opposition could not displace them. So long as they maintained friendship with the Opposition, the Government could not remove them. And so long as they shared the spoils with vulnerable members on both sides of the House neither the Government nor the Opposition nor both combined could dismiss them. Under such circumstances honest administration of the funds could only be expected if there could not be found on either side of the House members susceptible to bribery or members swayed by partisanship; unless we could calculate on always having commissioners stupid enough to quarrel with both sides at once.

It was fitting that the proposal to take this vital power from the people and hand it over to a body of irresponsible men should come from the reactionary clique who dominate the Opposition in Parliament. That it represents the wishes of the body of the Conservative party is not to be charged. That they would consent to the measure is scarcely possible. But the rank and file of the Conservative party do not determine the policy of the Parliamentary Opposition in the inner council of the Opposition members. It is promulgated by the nominal leader as the party policy, despite the protests of the party that they were not consulted in its formation and in face of the open refusal of large and influential sections of the party to accept various phases of the distasteful attitude of the nominal leader and his lieutenants is freely reflected in the resolution moved by Mr. Foster. That attitude Mr. Borden has steadfastly taken toward his followers. Over them he would be king, absolute and unrestrained. Under what more fitting auspices could the proposal be made to abolish the power and responsibility of the popular representatives to control the expenditure of the public funds?

THE DELINQUENT CHILD.

The torture idea in punishment is a thing of the past, but there still remains a strong taint of the vindictive in dealing with wrongdoers. Even the children come in for a small share of this, but society is waking up to the realization that the broader the base the more general working out of the problem of the "juvenile delinquent."

There are two reasons for depriving some children of liberty—the protection of society and the best interests of the children themselves. Society may deal with a child for his own safety, but there is an obligation also to show around that child conditions and opportunities which will develop the sinews of good citizenship and evolve from the delinquent a youth who can meet on the basis of fair competition with the average individual of the community.

Our police courts are busy and our judges can give only limited time to determine the facts of guilt, the deed of imprisonment and the length of sentence. Perhaps when society grasps a little better the idea of fair dealing with the juvenile, the length of sentence will be left to the judgment of those in charge of the corrective institutions; as in the case of the insane asylum or hospital. Children are received at such institutions in all stages of physical, mental and moral ailment. They cannot be intelligently treated en masse, but must have individual attention, suited to the special form of disorder or malady with which they are afflicted.

It is a mistake to suppose that every homeless or delinquent child can be provided for in a private home. Some children are abnormal, because of birth or surroundings. Such children need expert care and guidance, such as the modern reformatories is expected to give. The private homes of the land can provide for all normal children in need of homes, and in so doing will do a more effective work than any institution can do among such children.

We are learning slowly and by the process of painful mistakes, that the best and safest way to deal with the delinquent child is to treat him, not as a criminal with a sentence to be diagnosed and treated. Sometimes the cure is effected by a change of environment, sometimes by a long and intricate system of rehabilitating the whole fabric of the mental and moral make-up; but it is never effected unless the basic principle of the treatment is love.

HAS TAXATION BEEN INCREASED?

Mr. Foster was troubled during the budget debate with the amount of the revenue received by the Government from the tariff. This he represented quite correctly as a tax paid by the people of the country. But he also represented quite incorrectly that the increase in the income from the tax meant that the Government had increased the taxation.

Mr. Foster's question to the Finance Minister of Canada in 1926, after eighteen years of consecutive Conservative rule, leaving behind him a tariff which collected \$18.25 on every hundred dollars' worth of goods that came into the country. By 1926, ten years later, that tariff had been decreased until only \$15.75 were collected on each hundred dollars' worth of goods. If the taxation levied on the consumer by the present Government has been too high, what of the tax levied on him by Mr. Foster? Whether the present tax rate is high or low or too high or too low, it is \$2.50 less on each hundred dollars worth of imported goods than Mr. Foster charged, a decrease of fourteen per cent. Is this increasing taxation?

Supporting Mr. Foster's tariff had not been reduced, and the Canadian people purchased abroad during the present year the amount they are expected to purchase, they would have paid in tariff taxes \$84,000,000 instead of the \$73,000,000 which so troubles the honorable gentleman, making the entire period from 1896 to the end of 1926 would pay altogether \$70,000,000 more taxes than they will be required to pay. In other words, the tariff which the honorable gentleman considers so excessive collects eleven millions less per year than the tariff framed by himself would collect from exactly the same volume of imports.

The reply is obvious of course that we would not have imported so much under Mr. Foster's tariff, for the excellent reason that we could not have afforded to do so. People import goods to save money, not to produce revenue. The proof that we have saved very much money is that we have imported so largely that the revenue has been largely increased. Mr. Foster's tariff would have prevented importation. We should, therefore, have been forced to do without the goods or to purchase them from Canadian manufacturers at the prices they were enabled to charge because they were shielded from competition.

Mr. Foster's projected tariff, according to the figures which we have, does not increase prices in the least. Therefore if we bought the goods from Canadian manufacturers under his prohibitive tariff we would have paid more for the goods than we have paid—that is more than the purchase price plus the tariff. That means that we should have paid more—but the taxes would have gone into the pockets of the manufacturers and not into the coffers of the country.

If the present taxation is too heavy why have not Mr. Foster and his associates moved to reduce it? Have they ever done so in the two years they have sat opposite the Government and grovelled because the revenue was justifying? Never. On the contrary they have repeatedly demanded that the taxation be increased. One of them, the party whip, declared not long since that he would make the rate of taxation 100 per cent, if necessary to compel the Canadian people to buy only goods made in Canada. Even during the present session Mr. Foster himself attacked the French treaty because it reduced the burden of taxation and may produce a loss of four hundred thousand dollars revenue. A few weeks ago, Mr. Cuckshatt, of Bramford, filled a couple of hundred dollars worth of Hansa soap, and demanded that the taxation be increased to the point that the people could not afford to pay, to the end that they would thereby be driven to buy only goods from Canadian manufacturers. Mr. Borden stamped Ontario last fall explaining that "adequate taxation" meant an increase of the tax on bringing in goods from abroad, bringing in goods from abroad. How else can the difference between the preaching and practicing of these gentlemen be explained than that they preach for the voter and practise for the manufacturer?

If the Canadian people have paid more taxes through the tariff during the past two years than during the preceding twenty years, why did they not jump in one year from their seats saving money. But if they could pay the Government an increased revenue and still save money, how mercifully must they have been swindled when they were prevented buying abroad and forced to take their goods and to pay higher prices the Canadian makers saw fit to demand? And if the present rate of taxation is a robbery and an outrage, what is to be done?

HARDSHIP TO SETTLERS.

The Moose Jaw Times depreciates the reported intention of the C.P.R. to postpone the completion of the Moose Jaw-Edmonton line, pointing out that delay would work hardship to settlers along the route in expectation of the early construction of the line. As the matter is one of great concern to Central Alberta the Boards of Trade of Edmonton, Strathcona, and the towns along the line, which are interested, might join the Moose Jaw Board in urging on the company the importance of completing the line as early as possible.

The C.P.R. are doing a great injustice to this city and to the new settlers in the district north and west by the postponement of the completion of the Moose Jaw-Edmonton branch line. Not to build this line in time for the next harvest would be a breach of good faith on the part of the C. P. R. with the people of these districts, many of whom have cleared the land for the past three years by reason of the little progress made in construction work.

AS TO INCREASED EXPENDITURE

Mr. Foster proffered consternation in the budget debate that the expenditure of the country had increased largely under the present Government. That the expenditure should have increased as it has, he did not attempt to demonstrate, nor did he attempt to demonstrate the necessary public requirements of this or any other rapidly settling and developing country could be accommodated without largely increasing the amount annually expended for them. But he professes the utmost astonishment at the increase of the expenditure, and he points out that the increase had been altogether out of proportion to the requirements.

Well, if this is the case why have not Mr. Foster and his friends moved to reduce the expenditure, or to increase it less rapidly? The expenditure did not jump in one year from where they left it to the proportion it has now attained. It has grown annually as greater needs became apparent. During half the time the Government has been in power Mr. Foster has been a member of the House, and during all the time some of the honorable gentlemen who echo his criticisms have been members. If the expenditure has grown it has grown with their consent, for not a dollar of expenditure can be made unless it is sanctioned by the committee of the whole House, at which every member of Parliament is, or ought to be present. If the tendency has not been to increase too rapidly why have not these gentlemen exercised their undoubted right to demand a slackening of the pace? During the whole twelve years these gentlemen have not moved to strike out one item from the appropriation bills save a vote of \$30,000 made some years ago, which some of them now bring they moved to omit. Aside from that they do not profess to have tried to exert any reactionary force on the tendency they now claim to oppose. Even now, they do not take the responsibility of singling out a Department and moving for a reduction of its estimates; nor even of moving to strike a single item from the list. If, therefore, they disapprove of the volume of present expenditure they disapprove of what they have never tried to prevent, and do not now try to remedy.

"HOW 'T WAS DONE."

A correspondent formerly resident in England writes the Bulletin in protest against the exaggerated importance attached by certain Canadian journals to the recent Peckham by-election, which resulted in the return of an Opposition member to the British House of Commons. This result is being persistently trumpeted in Canada as indicating the beginning of the end of the Asquith Government. As a matter of fact, the constituency was continuously Conservative for nearly twenty years, and was won by the Liberal candidate at a general election rather because of his philanthropic work and personal popularity than by any change in public questions. The return of the Opposition member means at most therefore simply that the constituency has reverted to the traditional faith from which there is no very good evidence that it ever really departed. But to those familiar with the methods employed in recapturing the constituency it means something far less creditable and far less comforting to the British Opposition than this. Peckham has been characterized a "brewer's paradise." Whether the characterization is ordinarily apt or not there is every reason to believe the locality during the recent campaign was made a place of abounding pleasure to the patrons of these gentlemen. The bone of contention was the new licensing bill, and the brewers appear to have devoted not only their time and their eloquence, but the contents of their purses and the products of their vats to enlighten the voters on at least one side of the measure—the damage it would do to the "vested interests" of the brewers. That with the assistance of such allies the Opposition recaptured a traditionally Conservative constituency will hardly excite public wonder. Nor will the means by which they recaptured it be made a subject of public boasting save by those who are prepared to accept the verdict of bacchanalian revelry as the sober judgment of the British people.

TWO POINTS TO CONSIDER.

The City Council are taking the prudent course of considering beforehand what terms and conditions should be demanded from any company seeking to acquire the street railway system. Naturally the agreement made with the former purchasers is the starting point from which they are working. This will doubtless be amended and re-adjusted to better conserve the city's interests in several respects. Generally speaking, the council can hardly do better than devote attention most closely to the points which the former bargain indicates to be crucial.

First it must be stipulated in the clearest and strongest fashion language will permit that any agreement given is a concession to build and operate a street railway system—not a license to hawk and peddle a street railway franchise. If we make a bargain with a Company at all, it will be simply to secure a street railway system earlier than the city is able or willing to complete the enterprise, and if the bargain did not result in the early completion and operation of the system, it would fall of its own purpose. For this reason the Bulletin is of opinion that the franchise should be kept in the hands of the city and the Company given merely a working concession under the franchise—a concession amply empowering them to complete and operate the street railway system, and giving them all reasonable guarantee of protection of their legitimate interests; but a concession absolutely debarring them from transferring any supposed power or privilege to any other party or parties, and placing them under a fitting penalty to exercise the concession within a reasonable time. The franchise or concession or whatever the privilege extended to the Company might be called should be absolutely non-transferable and should involve the forfeiture of a very substantial fine in case the Company failed to fulfil their part of the bargain.

Another point about which there should be no doubt—when the concession reverted to the city it should bring back to the city everything it gave to the Company. The position of the Company should be that of a lessee—not that of a purchaser. They should be granted certain explicit powers for a certain period of time, conditional upon the performance of certain duties within that time. When that period has elapsed they should be left without vestige of legal claim to any power or privilege conveyed to them temporarily by the agreement. This should be true whether the Company faithfully fulfilled their bargain or not. If they forfeited the concession for non-fulfillment of duty they should forfeit it in toto. And if the agreement terminated merely by the lapse of time they should hand back to the city every power and privilege transferred to them. This is an essentially important point because at some time the city intends to take over and operate the system. To part with the enterprise finally the citizens have no notion—at most they will consent only to its temporary transference to a Company. When the concession has expired we should be able to take over and operate the system without bonusing, bribing, or otherwise operating the system. To part with the enterprise finally the citizens have no notion—at most they will consent only to its temporary transference to a Company. When the concession has expired we should be able to take over and operate the system without bonusing, bribing, or otherwise operating the system.

The importance of these two points is sufficiently emphasized by our former experiences. The "purchasers" of the franchise at that time made no attempt to build the railway, and the Council extended the time granted them for beginning the work—thereby paving the way for a fine legal argument as to whether or not they were exonerated from trying to fulfill the remaining conditions. Whether or not the extension of time was desirable then, no extension of time should be contemplated in any future agreement, for the only purpose in making an agreement would be to secure the immediate completion of the system. More, when the former bargain was declared null by the city, the Company claimed and still claim to own the radial franchise, though admitting that they surrendered their powers within the city itself. Fortunately we were able to checkmate the claim by securing a Provincial radial charter over the same territory. But we may expect no such avenue of escape in future. There are now three radial charters covering the country for many miles around the Twin Cities. The Legislature would be scarcely justified in granting another. Our policy should therefore be that "What we have we hold," alike against financial adventurers and legal entanglements. To this end, if we give an agreement to

ON THE SIDE.

Eastern spring weather is a decidedly unpopular immigrant in the West.

Winter should understand that there is an essential difference between "lingering" in the lap of spring and settling down for a thirty day run.

Now where can the Vancouver Sunset have got the notion that Confederation has never had "spontaneous popularity" in British Columbia? The outside view would be that the Dominion holds an immense and continuous popularity in those parts—a target for provincial pop-guns.

Someone has discovered that United States women are naturally aristocratic and some one else that the Republic is fast drifting toward a monarchy. Which is another way of saying that a United States mamma would rather her daughter married an "American" than an Italian, provided they were both cents, and that an obliging country is not averse to gratifying her preference by founding a national title dispensary.

INTOLERANCE.

Montreal Witnams: The protectionist spirit is intolerant even in England. It is now seeking to obtain absolute mastery over the Conservative and Unionist political aggregation, and to exclude from public life all members of that party who adhere to the liberalism of Chamberlainism. Lord Hugh Cecil, as sturdy a free trader as he is consistently a Unionist, finds on seeking to return to Parliament that he is the only one left who can save him is to surrender himself to a protectionist candidate against him should be the chosen candidate of a majority of protectionist voters. Another thing they say that the only thing which can save him is to surrender himself to a protectionist candidate against him should be the chosen candidate of a majority of protectionist voters.

SEVENTH HOMESHEEKERS' EXCURSION.

Toronto, April 14.—This after the seventh homesheekers' excursion of the season left the Union station for the west, carrying five hundred Ontario families, and about a dred arrivals from the old country. The excursion started the first of March, and have averaged hundred per trip. It is estimated that \$3,500 have left on this excursion, exclusive of about one thousand went on the regular trains. Combined with last year the number is not really larger than was anticipated, owing to the discouragingly circulated last fall. Two more excursions are to be run this year which will bring the total up to 5,500.

NEW OFFICIAL FOR G.T.P.

Montreal, April 14.—A circular was issued today by Charles M. Hayes, president of G.T.P. railway, appointing M. Reynolds 2nd vice-president of the railway. In addition to the new position of fifth vice-president of the G.T.P. railway, to which he was appointed Saturday, Reynolds will occupy a position on the G.T.P., somewhat similar to that of I. G. Ogden on the C.P.E. circular stating that he will have supervision of financial matters on the G.T.P. in which the Grand Trunk Pacific has a pecuniary interest. Reynolds is regarded as an old hand of the Grand Trunk family. He was many years connected with the G.T.P. He left that line in 1912 to join the Mexican National Railway in New York and then in Mexico in charge of the financial work.

CRITICIZE AID TO THE NEWCOMER

Governments Efforts to Assist Settlers by Supplying Seed is Questioned.

Ottawa, April 13.—In the House Commons this afternoon, Hon. Lemnox (Conservative, South Saskatchewan) questioned the authority of the Minister of the Interior in providing seed grain distribution to settlers in Alberta and Saskatchewan, who are so scarce in the ground last year.

Mr. Lemnox explained that the matter was under discussion though it was not deemed appropriate at the time, he received just what he should do so should circumstances arise. He then outlined the situation in the province of Saskatchewan as justification. It was necessary to change the status there was no increase in the amount of seed available.

Joseph Gilean, Hon. Member of Commons this afternoon, had formed the minister of the Interior was investigating some department matters for his own satisfaction, of course, not under oath. Geo. W. Fowler (Conservative, King's and Albert), said Dr. Hays, medical inspector of immigration at Halifax, was a majority of them there, and he charged that at other officials, some of them employees, were taking part in municipal election in the night of their duties. Dr. Sproule (Conservative, East York), thought there to be a ministerial explanation.

Hon. Mr. Graham, minister of ways, said there was no question of partnership about the affair. He was not reasons why government employees should not take part in municipal elections or be candidates.

Hon. Mr. Fielding said the point at issue was whether they had been in attendance at a national title dispensary. Loss of Life on Transatlantic. Richard Blain (Conservative), called attention to a report in Winnipeg Telegram which stated that a year ending March 31, fifty men had been killed through carelessness in ignorance in the growing dynamite industry of the transcontinental railway between the Manitoba boundary and Lake, a distance of about one hundred miles, in addition to which were injured. The coroner's jury had drawn attention to the loss of life the statement had been made. It was costing in the province of Manitoba.

Hon. Mr. Graham said the investigation of the government, had interviewed the chairman of the transcontinental commission. He was sufficient to make a statement that would be the air.

Two Treaties Signed. Dr. Sproule, who was leader of Opposition in the absence of Mr. Borden and Geo. E. Foster, asked whether he was in a position to firm a despatch to the United States, effect that two treaties between Canada and the United States, had signed. One of the treaties was to mark off the portions of boundary line still in dispute, the other for a commission to the east boundary in Canada, and the rivers touching the boundary and contiguous streams. Sir W. said he had just received a despatch to the effect that the treaties had been signed. One was simply to provide for the re-marking of the east boundary, in Canada, to about uniform regulation in close seasons for fish in Canadian and American waters, contiguous to the boundary. The other, in present there is a close season in American waters, there would be an arrangement to the commission, he added, would rest with the American side.

To E. D. Monk, Sir Wilfrid said that as soon as the treaties had ratified by the parliaments of the countries the correspondence relative to them should be discontinued. The correspondence in respect to matters was still under negotiation, however, and could not be produced.

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