

The Standard

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ST. JOHN, N. B., TUESDAY, MARCH 12, 1912.

FROM BEHIND THE SPEAKER'S CHAIR.

"Willing to Wound and Yet Afraid to Strike."

When members of a great political party are missing from their places in the House of Commons at the time a question of far-reaching significance is put to the vote, when members leave the chamber hurriedly just before the time arrives for taking the vote—when these things happen even in committee, it is pertinent to enquire to what party they belong and why this diffidence to face an issue at a critical moment.

The House was in Committee of the Whole on the Manitoba Boundaries' Bill, the question of school rights in the territory of Keewatin to be added to Manitoba had been raised in an amendment moved by Mr. Mondou, a French-Canadian on the Government side, when this significant incident happened.

The amendment to be added to the Bill was as follows: "Nothing in this Act shall effect prejudicially in any way the school rights of the minority, either Protestant or Catholic, as they may now exist, in such part of the territories now annexed to Manitoba." Mr. Mondou in the course of his speech expressed the opinion that Parliament might legally adopt such a provision.

Mr. Aikins, Conservative member for Brandon, followed, speaking along the same lines as taken by the Prime Minister and the French-Canadian members of the Government, on the second reading, that Parliament could not vary the constitution of Manitoba with a provision which that Province would not accept and that the amendment would deprive Manitoba of her constitutional right to legislate with respect to education.

Then there came a pause. The Government's side of the case had already been stated. What of the Liberal Opposition? Not a man rose to speak, there was not one with sufficient courage to take a stand on the question. But there was something else—a precipitate movement among the Liberals, in which members from Ontario were prominent, to the exits from the chamber.

The chairman put the question on the amendment, Mr. Mondou and two or three other voices voted "aye." The chairman declared the amendment lost. Hon. Frank Oliver was on his feet in an instant and was moving some other amendment to the Bill respecting financial terms before Mr. Mondou could call for a standing vote. He was then too late. A standing vote could not be taken.

The situation grows interesting. The Bill will probably come up for third reading on Tuesday. If Mr. Mondou renews his amendment there will be a division. What will the Liberals, especially the Liberals from Ontario, do about it? Sir Wilfrid and his followers may find it necessary against their will to vacate "the lines of Torres Vedras."

The Member for Westmorland.

Emmerson is up. "The Press Gallery sleeps—sleeps that is with one eye open for eventualities. No disrespect to Mr. Emmerson, but the member for Westmorland, N. B., is inclined these days to be a trifle long-winded and verbose, to deal in platitudes, to resurrect some topic of pre-Confederation days and chase it through all the moods and tenses down to date. This is a habit with some speakers and is severely discouraged by the members of the Press Gallery.

To an editorial writer the speeches of Henry R. Emmerson enshrined in Hansard are a priceless possession; to a lynx-eyed night editor, with depraved instincts, awaiting something "hot" over the wires from Ottawa, a thousand miles away, they are, in extensive, a delusion and a snare. So when Mr. Emmerson rises and gets well into his stride the Press Gallery retires in good order to inhale, perchance, the noxious cigarette, otherwise disport itself, or may be to do some work. A studious pencil-pusher remains on guard—for one never knows—statements of national importance might be sprung at a moment's notice. The Press Gallery never sleeps in toto.

But to return to Mr. Emmerson. He is a fluent and earnest speaker, at times almost carried away by the force of his emotions. Take Reciprocity. He will appeal to "hon. gentlemen opposite" with a directness and eloquence which but for the misguided nature of his arguments would surely carry conviction. Give him the I. C. R., a subject dear to his heart, and he will lose himself in the ramifications of the Government road for an hour or more. Mention the loss of representation in the Maritime Provinces and Mr. Emmerson is ready to instruct the House on all the legislative enactments from Confederation to the present day. On this last mentioned subject, by the way, he takes the safe and sane view which every member from the Maritime Provinces holds—something must be done to prevent further loss in the coming redistribution.

The House appreciates Mr. Emmerson and gives him a kindly and attentive hearing. There was one reminiscent note in a speech he made last week, unintentional, perhaps, but none the less poignant to those who heard it. He was arguing in favor of a readjustment of the subsidies. "I wish," he said earnestly, "my hon. friends would carry the idea in mind. I know that I cannot carry it without their help. And I have been pleading, I have been agonizing with them—"

"You had fifteen years to do it in," was the mild reproach offered by an hon. friend opposite. "Oh, but my hon. friends opposite," returned Mr. Emmerson, "have come to judgment, and they are to remedy all the ills that have existed." Then he added: "I am not here to deal with the past—let the dead past bury its dead. But we are dealing with the living present and with the future."

As far as the member for Westmorland is concerned, quite apart from political differences, the House of 1911-12 unanimously says "Amen" to that.

THE MAN OF LABRADOR.

The many St. John friends of Dr. Grenfell, the Labrador missionary, will heartily agree with the Vancouver News-Advertiser in its estimate of him and his work. The News-Advertiser speaking editorially of Dr. Grenfell has this to say:

"Dr. Grenfell has found the secret of human greatness and that of human happiness at the same time. One who spoke with authority advised the greatest of His disciples to minister to others. The simple hearted and capable man who in a few years has made a beneficent revolution of the coast of Labrador and Newfoundland, has certain natural gifts and aptitudes. But the lesson of his life and speech is that the kind of work he is so

complishing is needed more or less everywhere and that there is nothing in the world better worth while. There is a wholesome sermon in Dr. Grenfell's refusal to regard himself as a martyr or to speak of his career as a life of sacrifice. He claims to have had his full share of pleasure and can look back on more successful undertakings than most men of affairs. He is a modest man, who does not despise even the richest of his fellows and does not compare his own solid achievements with the things accomplished by many of those whom the world calls successful men. But there must be many whose worldly hopes have been fully realized who knowing what this man has done on the North Atlantic Coast, feel how little value their own lives have been in comparison. It is part of Dr. Grenfell's teaching that such work as his is in the power of all who care to undertake it. He tries to make it appear that there is nothing strange in such a career, but that it is perfectly natural, suitable to the social order, giving a normal satisfaction and offering in this life genuine rewards in health and happiness. It would be an offence to a man like Dr. Grenfell to call him one of the great men of his time. He prefers to persuade people that he is simply following a course such as any man of goodwill might take. Many others like Dr. Grenfell have had a vision of service to their fellow men. There are a few like him who "to themselves are true, and what they dare to dream of dare to do."

Current Comment

(Vancouver News-Advertiser.)

The appointment of Mr. Foster as the representative of Canada on the Imperial Trade Commission is a proper recognition of his exact and comprehensive knowledge of the subjects to be considered, his ability to classify and present the facts, and the influence he is likely to exert in any body of statesmen dealing in a large way with Imperial commerce. It is not clear what Sir Wilfrid hoped to accomplish by the resolution under which the conference will be summoned. He proposed a commission of inquiry only into the existing state of affairs. The valuable part of the proposition was added by Mr. Harcourt, under whose amendment the commissioners will consider methods by which trade within the Empire may be improved. In this inquiry account must be taken of the "existing policy of each part" of the Empire. Since this proviso was accepted the policy of one "part" has been determined by the rejection of Reciprocity, and the representative of that part on the commission will be a quite different person from the one whom Sir Wilfrid had in mind.

(Vancouver News-Advertiser.)

Mr. Borden's answer to a Quebec questioner will satisfy some curiosity as the course which the Government proposes to take on the navy question. In the first place there will be consultation with the Imperial authorities. This will be followed by a repeal of the existing navy legislation and the announcement of the Government's programme. This programme will be submitted to the people that they may pronounce upon it. This announcement should not occasion much surprise. Mr. Hazen had already stated that the navy scheme of the late Government would not be carried out, and that no action of any kind would be taken without consultation with the admiralty authorities of the Mother Country. Mr. Borden had supported a motion in the last parliament setting forth that the people should be consulted on a question of this importance.

(Mail and Empire.)

When Premier Borden proposed the reference to the Supreme Court of the question of the Dominion Parliament's competence to enact marriage laws, Opposition critics declared that it was a move to shelve the difficulty. They were sure that the questions could not be framed and presented for the next session of the Supreme Court, and that it would take two or three years to bring the matter to an issue. But, as usual, the Laurier prophets have been rash. The Supreme Court will open the case on Monday, and then the argument will be set for such a time as the court directs. The Borden Government has acted with praiseworthy promptness.

(Kingston Standard.)

Miss Sadie American says she has a hatred for silk stockings and that willow plumes make her sick, because the wearing of these articles of apparel by wealthy persons induces shop girls and others to try to get similar head and foot gear. But why pick on willow plumes and silk stockings? There are other things far more expensive, that women wear. All extravagance in dress is harmful.

(London Free Press.)

Some of the cable despatches respecting the miners' strike in Great Britain refer in complaining tone to the fact that the strikers are spending their time "holiday-making, footballing, dog and pony racing, pigeon flying, gardening, etc." But surely this is better than to have the strikers in sullen mood rioting and destroying property as has been the condition accompanying many strikes in the last few years.

(Montreal Star.)

The New York police authorities have decided to dump the arms they take from criminals into the sea. This is an exceedingly good use for them. It does not look like common sense to disarm one criminal for the purpose of arming another. Weapons which can be used so handily for criminal objects should be sold under the same regulations as poisons.

(Montreal Gazette.)

M. Bosler, a distinguished European scientist, in a lecture before the Paris Astronomical Society, estimated that the earth was 1,000,000,000 years old. Perhaps it is, but it is hard to believe when one considers the actions of some of the inhabitants at this late day. But, of course, wisdom does not always keep pace with the advancing years.

(Kingston Standard.)

There is at last hope for the bald man. A living wig has been discovered. Hairs are planted in bald patches and stay there fastened by means of almost invisible gold wires. The old time toupees will have to be relegated to the scrap heap, once the new process becomes fashionable.

(Montreal Herald.)

Hamilton now wants a university, and is trying to annex McMaster from Toronto. There is about as much need for a university in Hamilton as there is for McMaster University anywhere, so the deal would be a perfectly fair one. Ontario, we fancy, has got beyond that sort of localism anyhow.

(Calgary Herald.)

The attitude of the British Government towards the coal strike, and its energy in tackling the situation, are in striking contrast with the inactivity and indifference shown by the Liberal Government at Ottawa last summer when Alberta was suffering from the same cause.

(Montreal Herald.)

There is more courtesy and dignity about the South Pole discovery than that of the North Pole. The first authentic news of Scott's having won the race comes from Amundsen, his rival.

THE BUSY MAN

By Bertin Drake

The noblest man in the race of men is not the preacher with tongue or pen, Nor the kindly person who "means the best." But never will let his neighbors rest; It's the busy man of sense and will, Who has a business—and tends to it.

There's plenty of chaps who have a trade, But dream through the hours for which they're paid, And there are others whose special line Is butting in your affairs—and mine. They haven't the sense or nerve or grit To have a business—and tend to it.

If you've got any business of your own, Other folks' business you'll leave alone, And you won't have time to be butting in, Stirring up trouble with friends or kin. To make a permanent, certain hit Get a business—and tend to it!

Most Anything

Jacob Rills has the 'I's in his name, while his friend Teddy must be satisfied to have them in his speeches.

A St. Paul man found a cheese and advertised it. Most cheese advertises itself.

Philadelphia Judge rules that friend wife has a right to go through husband's pockets. And

The same law probably gives her the right to neglect to sew on buttons.

Good morning; and how are your Lenten vows getting along this morning?

Spring Means:

Real oats to the ball player.

Constant annoyance to the angle-worm.

Straw votes to the newspapers.

Appetite for garden seeds to the neighbor's hens.

Mind puddles to the little boy.

Sending Delegation.

A special meeting of the trades and labor council was held last evening to complete arrangements for interviewing the government in reference to the demand of the unions for the creation of a provincial labor department, and amendments to the factory act and workmen's compensation act. It is expected that the delegation will go to Fredericton this week.

Parcel Found.

A small parcel was found on Main street yesterday afternoon. The owner can have the same by applying at the North End police station.

N. H. S. Lecture.

Mrs. J. R. McIntosh will lecture before the members of the Natural History Society on Thursday of noon, at 4 o'clock. Mrs. McIntosh will take for her subject a Morning Ramble in Edinburgh. The public are cordially invited to attend.

The Useful Church.

A Christian motorist whose name was Thorpe said to his gentle wife:

"It is too fine a Sunday morning to stay indoors. Suppose we take the car out for a spin?"

"I should like to," she answered. "A breath of country air would taste good after all winter in the house. But it is too cold to take baby along, and as I have let Katy go to her aunt's in East Newburg for the day, there's no one to stay with him."

A happy thought struck Mr. Thorpe.

"Why not leave him at the church and let the cradle roll nursery ladies take care of him? We can then ride for an hour and pick him up when the church services are over."

No sooner said than done, as it was half-past 10 o'clock and the church bells were ringing.

Yet people say the church is declining in usefulness.

DREAMSTICKS

BERNICE HAD JUST ASCENDED TWO FLIGHTS OF STAIRS TO THE ATTIC TO LOOK FOR SOMETHING WHEN THE TELEPHONE RANG ON THE FIRST FLOOR. DOWN SHE HURRIED ONLY TO HAVE SOME ONE ASK, "IF ANNA HELD A PAIR OF QUEENS AND JOHN DREW THREE OF A KIND, HOW COULD MAY IRWIN, OR OTIS SKINNER?"

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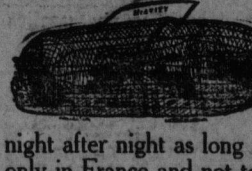
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