

MAY BE HARI-KARI FOR LIBERALS

THERE are rumours in the air that the Liberal party proposes to commit "hari kari" next year. It seems almost incredible to

an old stager like myself that any group of public men should deliberately march to political death down a road which they have twice trod to that undesirable consummation within my own memory. But persistent rumour insists that this is precisely what they are bent on doing; and all the surface signs of the situation point to the same stark insanity. This astonishing rumour is that the Liberal party proposes to refuse its support this next session of Parliament to a further extension of the life of that body, and so precipitate a general election in Canada during the most critical period of a great war—a war in which the very existence of the British Empire and the independence of Canada are at stake.

THAT will mean, of course, an Old Flag election.

If the Liberal party takes the responsibility of forcing a dissolution of Parliament in war-time, they cannot possibly escape the responsibility of splitting this nation wide-open on party lines in the midst of a life-and-death struggle in which Liberals and Conservatives are dying daily, side by side, in the same uniform and under the same flag. The boys on the Somme do not know whether they are Liberal or Conservative—they only know that they are Canadian soldiers fighting for the greatest cause in history—viz., human liberty—against the most insolent challenge ever delivered to it by a nation of blood-drunk bullies. But an election in Canada, thrusting ballots into their hands to be marked, would remind them of their petty differences back home and invite them to divide when the basic need of the Allied armies is unity. It would not be effective, you say; and I agree with you. But the invitation would be there; and the responsibility would be with those who compelled an election.

STILL, without arguing the question—except to point to the fact that there is to-day a party truce in Britain, in France, in Italy, in Russia, even in Germany—I think it will be admitted that the election will be fought on an issue of patriotism—on an Old Flag issue—and that it will be the party which

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By THE MONOCLE MAN

forces an election which will be accused of unpatriotic conduct. That is, the Old Flag will be energetically flapped in its face. Now, I should think that the Liberals would have a wholesome respect for the Old Flag as an election property, and would be exceedingly careful about presenting it to their opponents as a party weapon. No sincere Liberal will regard it as a good reply to this statement to plead that the Old Flag would, in such a case, be improperly used. Every sincere Liberal would at once plead that the Old Flag had been improperly used against his party on the two historic occasions when it worked the defeat of that party—that is, during the two reciprocity campaigns of 1891 and 1911. I have my own opinion on that subject, and it does not agree with that of any sincere Liberal I ever met. But the fact remains that the Liberal party in those two campaigns held that the Old Flag was dishonestly and improperly imported into the fray. And the succeeding fact remains as well that, properly used or not, the Old Flag beat the Liberals on those two occasions.

THOSE two elections were held in time of peace.

They were held on trade issues. That is, popular feeling for the Old Flag was not particularly inflamed at the time; and a trade question gave the Liberals good talking points quite apart from the patriotic issue. Yet the patriotic issue soon swallowed up all the others, and became the deciding issue by polling day. The Liberals now propose—if the rumour be true—to challenge a combat with the Old Flag wavers in war-time, when Old Flag feeling is at fever height; and they propose to challenge it without any other issue in their hands to help them divert attention from the flapping of the flag. Simply on the cold-blooded basis of political judgment, what do you think of that? There are the Liberals, credited with the intention of deliberately taking the wrong end of a patriotic issue when patriotism is

the one great force in the community—when there is hardly a home from Prince Edward Island to British Columbia, which does not dread the moment when the shadow of a telegraph messenger will fall athwart the threshold, with a tragic message from "somewhere in France."

AH, but—it is suggested—the Liberals will have the true patriotic issue. They will criticize the conduct of the war. Does any sensible person really imagine that they can get by with that? We are all criticizing the conduct of the war—we all know things that could have been done better—but is there any God-given military genius among the Liberals to whom the people will turn in the midst of war to save us from mistakes? A Kitchener might carry a mid-war election on such grounds against a Pacifist Government; but certainly not one civilian Government against another. It is also suggested that they will attack "war graft." Again, we are all attacking "war graft." The present Government would have to discredit the work of its own Commissions to deny that there has been "war graft." But will the Liberal front bench come into court with such clean records that the people will believe that their sole purpose in precipitating an election in war time is to put an end to "graft"? Go to.

NO; the naked fact will stand out from any refusal by the Liberals to support an extension of the life of the present Parliament—that they have compelled a party fight in Canada in the midst of a world-war in which our sons are dying. Our Government will be driven to forget about the Germans for long weeks while they fight the Liberals. The callous, partizan, selfish unpatriotism of that course will be THE ISSUE of the elections; and there cannot be a moment's doubt as to what the people will do to the party responsible for this crime against the nation, against the Empire, against the Allied cause. The party which deliberately invites the nation to pronounce judgment on its conduct in forcing a war-election will be committing suicide—and there may be a long period before resurrection. No party can afford to be beaten by the Old Flag three times in one generation.

CANADA NEEDS MORE FARMERS

HERE is a pair of sketches that will illustrate at least one thing that is the matter with our cost of living economy in Canada, even after more than a year of P. P. Get this and you will believe the rest.

Two brothers are engaged in the farming industry in Ontario. The eldest occupies the 300-acre estate of his father. The younger brother met with an accident while a mere boy. Finding the lad permanently disabled so far as heavy work was concerned, the father laid by a small sum every month for him. By the time the boy became of age the father had died. The young man found himself unmentioned in his father's will and with only a few dollars to his credit. It behooved him to earn a livelihood as best he could. The elder brother did not care to be hampered with him. So the young man rented a bit of land—only ten acres—adjoining the estate of his father. There was a small house and a barn. The soil was identical with that of the next property, excepting for the growth of weeds.

For the privilege of working his father's estate, the elder brother pays \$700 a year and the taxes, which amount to about another \$150, or a total of approximately \$850. He employs one man at a wage of \$35 per month and board—or say \$50 per month. He counts his own labour equal to that of the hired man. For his wife, who assists with the milking of two cows and does a hundred odd things, he does not consider worthy of a wage. In adding his profits he forgets to take into consideration the wear and tear on his implements, nor does he account for interest on chattel investments. His total cost of running his farm per annum, he says, is \$2,050, the amount paid for rent and wages.

On his three-hundred-acre farm he has raised this

It's the man who farms on a big scale of cost and a low scale of production that forces up the price of other folks being able to live. This is one fundamental guess as to the reason for H. C. of L.

By SYDNEY HOOD

year 850 bushels of oats, 38 tons of hay, 40 tons of corn, 50 bushels of potatoes. The early part of the season being wet, he was late in getting onto the land. The remainder of the time was very dry and hot. To the drought he credits the shortage in oats, corn and potatoes. At the end of the summer he finds himself with a big deficit. His crop only accounts for part of his acreage. The remainder was utilized as pasture or required draining.

How many folk in the towns and cities employed in other vocations does this farmer feed? In other words, how much foodstuff is he throwing onto the market? He is increasing the cost of living by not properly cultivating his farm or letting others till it.

THE farmer looks upon the market merely as a place to convert his wares into cash. He forgets that he is under an obligation to humanity. The ammunition factories are under compulsion to turn out missiles, and surely the demands upon the farmer to supply foodstuffs is equally strong. Not only must the armies be fed by the farmer, but also the vast number of men and women who labour turning out clothing, boots, etc., for the farmer.

During the four years that the crippled brother

has been working the adjoining ten acres he has tiled it and also installed a sprinkler system. The wet weather and then the long drought would have played the same havoc with him had he been carrying on farming in the same manner as his brother. With his tile and sprinkler systems he was not so subject to the whims of nature. He has only one horse, and so does not require the amount of hay and oats that his brother does. He goes in for the better paying crops of vegetables and fruit. This year he has eight acres of potatoes, an acre set aside for poultry, and the remaining acre surrounds the house. Here is to be found a kitchen garden, a flower garden. A good sized lawn leads the way from the highway to the little frame cottage, trimmed with green and the main part white.

WHAT is this man doing in the way of shipping foodstuffs to market? He and his little family cannot eat up eight acres of potatoes, nor can he feed his horse with them. They are shipped to market and supply hundreds of city folk until the crop of 1917 is ready to replenish an equal number of pantries.

On the acre set aside for poultry, this little farmer has three hundred bred-to-day leghorn hens. One hundred and fifty eggs per day is a little below the average number of eggs that these properly housed and well fed hens lay. In the year they have laid 4,380 dozen eggs, that, like the potatoes, find their way to the city market—to feed the people—to supply part of the demand humanity says is up to the farmer to look after. He feeds the people while his brother with thirty times the amount of land feeds his seven horses.

Compare the profits of the two men. The one