

barge will be able to carry only 30,000 bushels, or one-third what a boat may carry over the Canadian canal route. Therefore, they argue, a new Welland is unnecessary even to compete with a new Erie.

One of these expresses the argument thus: "Under present conditions we control the route to the seaboard. Make it an object to connect Lake Ontario with New York by extending the new Erie Canal to Oswego, and we will have to fight for our control of the trade."

The answer is this. A new Welland Canal with seven locks and a depth of twenty-two feet of water on the sill would lower the cost of carrying grain from Fort William to Montreal by three cents a bushel. At present it costs $6\frac{1}{2}$ to 7 cents a bushel to ship grain, by the Great Lakes route. With a new Welland Canal the cost would be:

Fort William to Port Colborne ..	1.5 cents
Port Colborne to Kingston5 "
Kingston to Montreal	1.5 "
Total	3.5 "
Present rate	6.5 "
Gain	3.0 "

Those who believe that the present Welland Canal is sufficient for all purposes, reply to this set of figures by pointing out that $6\frac{1}{2}$ cents is a maximum rate and that grain was carried in 1909 from Port Arthur, Fort William and Duluth to Montreal for as low as three cents. They also claim that the average rate for the season of 1909 did not exceed $4\frac{1}{2}$ cents.

The shippers who favour the new Welland also advance the argument that besides this great profit gained for the western wheat-grower, there would be an equal gain for the Ontario consumer of coal. This commodity could be carried from the ports on the south shore of Lake Erie to the ports on the

north shore of Lake Ontario, via a deepened Welland Canal at about 30 cents a ton.

Welland vs. Georgian Bay.

TWENTY years ago, it was thought that a ship which could carry 35,000 bushels of grain down the Great Lakes from Fort William, Duluth or Chicago was about the limit. To-day, there are vessels which carry 300,000 bushels, and some cargoes have gone even higher. However, this progress in shipping capacity has applied only to the Upper Lakes. The two-hundred and three-hundred-bushel vessel may go into some of the Canadian ports on Georgian Bay, Lake Huron and Lake Erie, but it cannot go farther than Port Colborne at the entrance to the Welland. Through that canal, 90,000 bushels is the limit. Even with a new Welland, the big vessel could go only as far as Kingston, Prescott or Oswego. It could not go on to Montreal as the St. Lawrence canals are now at the limit of their possible depth. Therefore it is argued that while the progress in the past twenty-five years has added three or four cents a bushel to the value of western wheat, and while the new Welland might add a cent or two more, the ultimate goal is still untouched. The final result will not be obtained until ocean vessels find their way through the St. Lawrence and on to the head of Lake Superior.

Is it possible to find a route by which ocean vessels may safely and profitably go to the head of lake navigation? This is a problem which has disturbed the minds and imaginations of many men. This is the problem which has led to the paper project known as the Georgian Bay Canal. Curiously enough, the man who did most to promote this idea in its early stages was considered to be an idle dreamer, a mental degenerate, a harmless lunatic. Finally the late Hon. J. Israel Tarte took it up, and at once it came into the realm of practical politics.

Then the Government decided upon surveys, and to-day you may get volumes of statistics and volumes upon volumes of maps showing the character and possibilities of the undertaking. Several eminent engineers have devoted years, at a moderate salary of course, to working out a set of plans. The dream of twenty years ago is already a reality—on paper. It is shown almost conclusively, if not convincingly, that it is possible to develop a water route up the Ottawa, across to Lake Nipissing, down the French River to Georgian Bay, with a minimum depth of twenty-two feet.

Here, then, is an all-water route, away from the frontier, wholly within Canadian territory, carrying grain to no possible rival port, on which the largest vessels now on the Great Lakes may travel in comfort, and over which the smaller ocean vessels may find their way to the head of lake navigation. Here is a route which will make Montreal even greater than it is now, because it will give it control of the grain and flour trade of Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota and the Dakotas in addition to the control of the grain and flour trade of Western Canada, the new granary of the world. Here is a route which should do more to open the heart of the North American continent to the trade of the world than half a dozen transcontinental railways. Why should it not be built?

Will it cost too much? We should be willing to pay a good price in borrowed money for the privilege of having a ship load in Liverpool and discharge in Fort William or Port Arthur and vice versa. We should be willing to pay a fair amount of money to ensure that railway and ocean freight rates for all time to come shall be as low as such competition can bring them. Would \$150,000,000 be too high a price?

This question is a large one and it will be considered in a second article.

CONCLUDED NEXT WEEK.

The Union of Labour and Liberalism

A Critical Study of the Relations between Lords, Commons and People.

By H. LINTON ECCLES

LONDON CORRESPONDENT OF CANADIAN COURIER

MOST people are asking, What is to become of that awe-inspiring body of hereditary legislators, the House of Lords? There has been a big development of the political situation in Britain since I last wrote, and now the dominant question is not one affecting the fate of the Budget, but the character, if not the very existence, of the House of Lords itself. When these next few weeks of sharp and fierce platform campaigning are over, the verdict of the electors will be pronounced upon issues more vital perhaps than we have known in our generation.

This year's Finance Bill of the Liberal Government is dead—killed by the solid assent of nearly two-thirds of the unelect; those who sit in judgment upon the acts of the Lower House of Representatives by right of birth or because they have been made the recipients of titles which relieve them from the responsibility of submitting themselves to the suffrages of the voters at the polling booths. There is a striking similarity between the majority for the Budget in the House of Commons and the majority against it in the House of Lords. These two votes, the one for and the other against—the one signifying the unmistakeable approval of the Commons and the other the equally unmistakeable disapproval of the Lords—serve the more sharply to accentuate the wide differences in constitution, environment and temper of the two English Houses of Parliament.

For years the composition of the elected Chamber has been changing and becoming more democratic. It would be incorrect to say that the Peers have altered, since they were never more conservative than they are to-day. But whilst the House of Lords has been unquestionably standing still, the people's House has undergone a remarkable transformation. The Commons of the time of the great Reform Bill would be unrecognisable, not to say impossible, now. Even Mr. Gladstone would be astonished at the present character of the House he knew so well, though the changes were revealing themselves in his day.

Probably Lord Randolph Churchill and Mr. Joseph Chamberlain had as much to do with this upheaval as any one, at any rate when they were young and at their best. The then Duke of Marlborough's younger son was a democratic aristocrat; the right-hand man who left Mr. Gladstone to ally himself with the Conservatives became an aristo-

cratic democrat. Both men, without question, had a good deal of the true democrat about them, and many people believed then and more believe now, that if these two ambitious, skilful and able parliamentarians had joined careers, the Tory party would have been all the better for their regenerating influence and more closely and sympathetically in touch with the people of the country.

However, the independent positions taken up by these nominal allies of the Conservative party bore fruit, though not so much on their own as on the Liberal side of the House. Backed by his faithful followers, Mr. Gladstone waged a great fight against the hereditary legislators. Everybody admits that it was a brilliant failure, but history has proved that the time was not ripe for it then. The line of demarcation between Conservatives and Liberals, in spite of the Home Rule split, was not distinct enough. There was not so much difference between them, and most Liberals were prepared more or less to tolerate the existence of the Upper Chamber which possessed and used the privilege of vetoing and amending legislation proposed by the Commons.

But times and men and circumstances were changing, not always perceptibly even to the close observer, though none the less steadily. The man in the street first began to take serious note of the altered conditions when the trade unions sprang into life and aggressive activity. Not content with backing their members in disputes with the employers, the unions formed definite political ambitions, and at the 1906 general election entered the parliamentary arena with an actual and substantial party of fifty, all elected on the Labour ticket. They were very particular about their independence, which they have kept fairly intact right up to now. But in spite of their isolation, the Labour party has felt obliged to lend general support to the Liberals, because the ideas of the two parties, especially on social reform and workmen's legislation, have as a rule run in the same direction.

This constant contact with Labour interests allied to the very considerable spread of radicalism within their ranks, has led to a marked democratising of the Liberals as a body. The influence of Mr. Lloyd-George, Mr. Winston Churchill and Mr. John Burns, in common with that of other members of the Government, has been thrown into the democratic scale, and has had its effect, of course, upon the rank and file

of the party. When the forces were massed for resisting what were looked upon as encroachments by the Lords, these men formed the advance guard and they were readily backed up by the rest of the Liberal party. More significant still, the Labour men renounced their independent role so far as this fight was concerned, and came out as strong and unflinching adherents of the Budget proposal and opponents of the House of Lords. When the Budget was thrown out, this tacit but officially unsolemnised union between Liberalism and Labour was brought closer than ever.

Will it be "end" or "mend" with the House of Lords? Some folks who profess to know say that it depends upon the size of the Liberal majority at the election; and, be it noted, the tendency is to prophesy that Mr. Asquith will certainly come back again to power. He has the finest fighting programme that the Liberal party has had within recent times. He can say that while the Conservatives have promised old age pensions for years, it was left for a Liberal Government to pass them into law. That is to mention only one item which will go a long way in securing the approval of the electors.

Those who are in favour of the total abolition of the House of Lords probably number one-half of Mr. Asquith's followers. This is in addition to the Labour party, who are the Peers' fiercest opponents, and does not take count of the Irish party, the majority of whom are absolutely "against the Lords." Whether this assumed half of the Liberals would vote for the total abolition is not certain. Probably they would not go so far as that—yet.

The party will, no doubt, be satisfied with the taking away of the Lords' veto—the Lords' right to say the last word whether or not any particular bill shall pass, including money as well as other bills. Indeed, that is the main plank in Mr. Asquith's platform; and Mr. Asquith is a clever, astute man, asking neither too much nor too little, but capable of being satisfied for the time being with what he can get.

It is a tremendously interesting play, and is being acted with the limelight full on. The whole of the players and chorus are on the stage, orators as well as members and candidates; and we, the audience, are being suitably rushed off our feet by the raging, tearing comedy of this 1910 general election.