

THE CONVERSION of CARVELL

A Study in Political Psychology

AND Frank Carvell has been elected to the House of Commons by acclamation; another mile-stone passed. But I am too far ahead in my story.

It was a little more than six years ago that it seemed to Carvell the bottom had dropped out of life. To have commanded recognition as one of the country's ablest platform speakers, to have been selected for committee leadership by a powerful government, to have been within grasp of a portfolio, and then to have lost all in a single day's polling; to have been elected by a majority of one to support a hopeless minority—the reward of twenty years' political effort. Is it strange that Carvell should have asked himself that favorite question of politicians in middle age: What's the use

Two or three years later came the war, and in its train new problems and new aspects of life. The Honorable Frank Carvell found himself in this atmosphere. He had been a politician, not a statesman; he had sought for party advantage, struggled for it, devoted every fibre of his ability towards securing it—and had been elected by a majority of one to support a helpless minority. With a realization of the seriousness of the war, came a new sense of public responsibility. Carvell is a Methodist, and went manfully to the dusty, unworn, political penitent-bench, confessed the errors of the past, and made a silent, sincere vow for the future.

And the vow was for honesty. Mistake me not: Carvell had never been dishonest in mere matters of money; the vow was for thorough-going intellectual honesty, a quality possessed only by those despised of men, the lonely idealists.

The secret could not be kept, and was soon passed around in select circles at Ottawa. Those politicians who knew not Carvell, illy-concealed their laughter; and those politicians who knew him well, prepared to write his political epitaph. For intellectual honesty is generally believed to be incompatible with political success—and it is only Carvell's subsequent career that convinces one that the belief may not be well-founded. If you believe this an exaggeration, speculate upon the fate of a conscientious protectionist in Saskatchewan, or the fate of an honest opponent of government-ownership in Toronto. The ordinary—and extraordinary—members of parliament have to trim their political whiskers to suit the fancy of their constituency. Their one business is to find majorities, and, as we all know, majorities are not always right, and of course not always in accord with the convictions of the men who seek to represent them.

Carvell's new programme contained no provision for trimming. He had decided to think for himself, to settle all public questions according to the standard of his own reason and conscience, stand by his convictions and let the consequences take care of themselves. When the Allison enquiry came along, it is no secret that prominent Liberals—by no means all of them—were opposed to its prosecution. And it



By MARK KETTS

Carvell has been represented as pugnacious; but that is the accident of nomenclature. People say there is nothing in a name. But politicians whose mothers called them Frank, are inevitably destined to fighting appellations. We have a "Fighting Frank" Cochrane, "Fighting Frank" Oliver, and, of course, a "Fighting Frank" Carvell. If more proof along this direction is required, I may cite the case of Frank Lalor, an old member of the House of Commons, who is not called "Fighting Frank." Surely this clinches the argument by the exception necessary to prove every well-regulated rule.

It is an out-of-the-way place, Woodstock, Carleton County, New Brunswick, the home-town of the man who has been experimenting with a straight talk based on conviction as an asset in politics. Woodstock is somewhere back of Fredericton, and Fredericton is the least visited of provincial capitals. But this out-of-the-way place, famous for potatoes and politics, will some day be the home of—a distinguished Canadian statesman.

was in the Allison enquiry that the first test came. "It will be a boomerang," said one of them to Carvell.

"What makes you think so?" asked the M. P. from Carleton, N.B.

"Well, some of our fellows are in munitions," was the reply.

"The enquiry won't hurt them, if they are honest," was the answer, "and if they are dishonest, then may someone else have mercy upon them, for I won't," continued Carvell, turning on his heel."

The Allison enquiry was the first mile-stone in the new career of Carvell. Since then the miles travelled by Carvell, have been recorded on the political speedometer with bewildering frequency. Suggested by the Western Liberals as leader of the new Union Party, suggested by Eastern Liberals as the successor of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, chosen by Sir Robert Borden as Minister of Public Works, and now one of only two Ministers of the Crown that can call seats in the House of Commons their very own!

THE suggestion of Union Government came easily to Carvell. "Is it an honest attempt to do the right thing?" he asked. That was the only question, and upon its answer Carvell made his decision. His former colleagues say Carvell's judgment went wrong. Be that as it may, it was Carvell's conviction, not his sense of political expediency, that led him into Unionism. That's the point.

There was no silly sentimentality about the conversion of Carvell. Politics had been unsuccessful, and Carvell, concluding they were out of joint with the times, tried something else. That is the simple secret of Carvell's conversion. Some day we will see if the old adage that honesty is the best policy, holds true of the intellect in politics. We shall see, for Carvell is bent upon giving it an out-and-out trial—and will leave Unionism as quickly as he went into it—if in Carvell's judgment there is a better way of administering the country's affairs.

PERSPECTIVE ON PEACE

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ed the same game. Some day the headlines on both sides must face the facts, must out with the facts, place all the cards on the table and decide what is to be done.

Will one of the facts be an overthrown Hohenzollern dynasty? Perhaps not. Whatever they may be, England knows better than we in Canada. At this distance we must leave the disposition of those facts to England. We went to war because England did. We shall help to declare peace because and when England wants to.

But whatever peace we may declare, whenever it may be, we must reckon that the present war will not be the end of war, unless the forces of free man-

kind the world over decide to abolish war by refusing to fight. The Prussia which in 1860 was twice and a half the population of Canada and in 1914 played for the domination of the world, will not be obliterated. The world must organize to control that part of Europe dominated by Prussia. That control will not be completed in 1918. It will not be completed by the war. A clear definition of our war aims, coupled with an absolute determination to control Prussia, even if it takes a hundred years to do it, will immensely clarify our minds and stimulate our courage. The day of swagger is over on both sides. What is left is a contract which we must hand on to posterity—to make the world safe, not necessarily for what is called democracy, but safe for the nations who do not propose either to live or to perish by the sword.

We do not need to agree with Lansdowne that the world is near exhaustion. It takes a lot of war to

tucker out a world. We should profoundly disagree with him if he said that there is in England or any of the other allied nations any less earnestness than there is in Germany. We believe that the resources of the Allies are vastly greater than those of the Central Powers, and that the Central Powers have the great advantage of concentration in area and unity of programme. We believe that in proving the relative failure of the submarine and the Zeppelin, the relative superiority of Allied artillery and the undaunted sea-control of the British navy, we have made infinitely more headway since 1914 than Germany has done. This being so, we are just beginning to organize the world force which shall prove to Germany that a Thug Nation has neither right nor power to rule the world. Force may be with the wrong. Power must ultimately come to the right—until the world comes to be ruled by the Devil.