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ST. JOHN, N.B., SATURDAY, OCTOBER 23, 1920.

THE STRIKE IN BRITAIN.

It is earnestly to be hoped that the possibility that is said to exist of some arrangement being come to between the British Government and the striking miners will materialize, and thus avoid a situation that, to say the least, would result in tremendous pecuniary loss and inconvenience all round. The strike of the miners is bad enough of itself at this season of the year when large supplies of coal are needed more than ever, but, if added to this, there is to be a walkout of railway and transport workers, the situation would be deplorable. One satisfactory feature appears to be that a large section of railway men are opposed to any participation in a strike.

Fortunately for Great Britain, Premier Lloyd George possesses the whiphand on the striking miners, and the other large unions which threaten a sympathetic strike. He can dissolve Parliament, appeal to the nation for support in behalf of constitutional Government, as against a Soviet policy of domination by Labor extremists, and be assured of overwhelming victory. The responsible Labor leaders know this, and would fain prevent a national repudiation of the Trades Unions which are getting out of hand. But the miners wanted to strike, and extremists in the Railwaymen's and Transport Workers' Unions want to join them, and turn the tumult into civil war.

On the Labor leaders admits that the miners who caused the strike were chiefly young men whose first experience of Unionism was gained during the war, when every demand was granted. These have not been educated in the fate of most extra-legal, whether they be pacifists or would-be dictators. The chief danger comes from a reaction by even the responsible Labor men that a straight defeat in this issue—even if it is wanted and unobtainable—created by the miners—would react severely on the whole Labor movement. But what is even more sure is that if British Labor has ambitions to gain control at Westminster, and govern Britain constitutionally, it is being bombed by its own friends. The women of Britain have votes. The middle class is the great political power. If it voted solidly for the Government, against the Labor extremists, the Labor political movement would be set back twenty-five years. The present trouble is the great political crisis that overshadows the Motherland for the latter part of the war, and even threatened her ability to pull through in a condition befitting victory.

The assault on the Downing Street headquarters of the Premier by a mob of unemployed emphasizes the sorry state into which Britain is falling. On every hand mills are closing, and unemployment will be general within a week. To prevent this reaction, the whole Labor and capital resources of the nation should be pulling harmoniously together. But instead of this, the extremists among the miners, and possibly other large unions, seize upon the opportunity to drive to heaven over the weakening structure.

PRICES.

Further inquiry among the city merchants only results in making it quite clear that the feeling that no very great drop in prices need be looked for in the immediate future is pretty generally evident. Nobody, of course, who is at all conversant with business conditions as they exist today, is looking for any very great drop at once. Moreover it would not be in the interests of trade that any sudden and sustained drop should take place, for it would dislocate business to a deplorable degree. In the natural course of events prices will no doubt gradually fall, but not to pre-war levels, because wages, which are a considerable factor in fixing the price of commodities, will never again drop to that level, or anything like it. It is true that prices are dropping fairly fast in some parts of the United States, but it seems that Canadian trade is becoming less and less influenced by the state of the American markets than it was, and is becoming more linked up with those of Britain and the Empire generally. This is as it should be; and patriotic Canadians will be less inclined to grumble if prices do not come down as quickly as they would perhaps like, when they know that the conditions of Empire trade will not permit any great reduction at present. Business must be kept going; and no doubt where conditions justify a loosening up in prices, the public will get the benefit of it.

MR. KING AND THE RAILWAY QUESTION.

The criticism of the Government's policy of public ownership of railways by Hon. Macdonald King is about what might be expected from the leader of

a party which conveniently forgot to mention the whole subject of public ownership in its platform, and the treasury of whose followers in the House of Commons have time and again expressed themselves as antagonistic to the principle.

The Liberal party in the House opposed the acquisition of the Canadian Northern Railway and the consolidation with it of the Grand Trunk System. Their only alternative was a continuance of a policy of subsidies.

As the London Free Press says, Mr. King is asking business, democratic nonsense when he blames "an autocratic, monopolistic Government" appointed railway executive for the increased cost of transportation and freight rates.

The Canadian Northern and Grand Trunk Pacific had huge annual deficits before the Government took them over. The mere fact that the Government owns these lines cannot convert overnight deficits into net earnings. The American freight and passenger rates have been increased even more than the rates in Canada. Does Mr. King blame the Meighen Government for the increased American rates? Operating expenses have jumped by leaps and bounds largely through wage increases. Canadian roads have raised their rates to meet the American scale. Does Mr. King blame the Government for this?

Mr. King's attempt to stir up political strife on this subject comes with bad grace from the leader of a party which is largely responsible for the railway muddle in Canada and a party which has shown by its record in the House in recent years as being antagonistic to public ownership.

The Globe persists in its contention that there is some doubt as to the validity of the sheriff's return in the case of St. John County, by which Mr. Baxter was declared elected. What ground has The Globe for this attitude, and for what reason does it continue to insist that Mr. Baxter should virtually admit that he was not properly elected? Why does The Globe vilify Mr. Baxter because he stands upon his rights? The Globe is merely playing the Government's game, which is to leave no stone unturned to beat Mr. Baxter. With him out of the way, the Opposition would be leaderless in the House, and the Government could do what it liked.

When a man goes to law and wins his case, he naturally opposes any attempt on the part of his unsuccessful opponent to obtain a reversal of the judgment. No one ever accuses him by so doing of trying to keep something he has improperly obtained. This is Mr. Baxter's position. The sheriff awarded him the seat as the recipient of the greater number of votes; and no one but a bitter partisan will accuse him of bad faith when he does what he can to keep it. If there were any legitimate doubt as to the validity of the sheriff's return, Mr. Baxter would be the last man to want to avail himself of it.

The Globe describes Mr. Baxter's protest against the recount as based on a technicality. Is not the whole election law full of technicalities? What can be more technical, in fact, than the contention that a cross put after a candidate's name invalidates the ballot? What can be more technical than the requirement that if a voter wishes to vote for two members of each ticket he must not put in two ballots with two names crossed off each, but must cross off two names from one ballot, and write on it the names of the two members of the other ticket? Common sense would dictate that as long as only four names remained on the ballots, those should stand.

If the attempt to obtain the recount in St. John County is not a political trick to try to do Mr. Baxter out of the seat, what is it? What ground exists for the contention that he was not properly elected? And what is there to support the view that Mr. Bentley has any just claim to the seat?

The Ontario Government makes about a million dollars a year out of its liquor dispensaries. Here is a "tip" for Premier Foster. He will be wanting cash pretty badly, if reports are true, to meet his expenditures this year, and he might make money this way.

The British Parliament is now gathered in a critical session, sessions of this description being quite normal today.

One day last week there were 115 suicides in the United States. Our neighbors are determined to hold all world's records.

WHAT OTHERS SAY

War Loses.
 (Kitchener Record.)
 In calculating the losses resulting from the war, the positive facts are had enough without enlarging them by drawing upon the imagination. The Society for Studying Consequences of the War places the death list at 35,000,000, made up as follows: Killed, 10,000,000; died from epidemics, results of blockades, etc., 5,000,000; fell in birthrate because 16 millions of men were mobilized for war, 20,000,000. You cannot very well lose what you never had. The loss of the twenty millions who might have been born is about as real as that of a man who might have bought a certain stock at 50, but did not, and then calculated the amount of money he lost when the stock went to 125.

Mr. King's Position.

(Sydney Post.)
 But "free trade" in Canadian political discussions can mean only one thing, for the total abolition of the tariff is obviously out of the question, and none but a madman would advocate it. A Canadian free trader is one who would have a revenue tariff, under which customs duties would be collected on such commodities as are not, and cannot be produced in this country, while there would be no duties levied on industrial products that are manufactured both in Canadian and in foreign factories.

Mr. King surely knows that there is such a thing as a "free trade tariff." Such a tariff is that which is described above. Such a tariff was maintained in England for two generations before the war. No one questions that England was a free trade country from 1846 till 1914, and everyone knows that during that period England collected many billions of pounds in customs duties.

Mr. King therefore talks incoherent nonsense when he says he is not a "free trader" because he is not advocating the total abolition of the tariff. What the public have a right to know, and what he shall be obliged to disclose, is whether he favors a free trade or a protectionist tariff.

A BIT OF VERSE

WHEN FALL BEGINS.

All Summer long
 My world was wrapped away
 In leafy folds of living green,
 Which way you looked no house was seen,
 No glimpse of curving gray
 Where winds the road.

All Summer long
 The valley seemed a well
 Of soothing green and gold unrolled,
 Where sunbeams sunk their shaft of gold;
 And not a bird would tell
 What lay below!

Now thinning boughs
 Reveal a hidden wall—
 A peering chimney-top—a roof;
 No longer can I live and roam;
 My neighbor's nearness calls,
 And I must heed.

Through thinning boughs
 The chill white mists arise,
 And soon from every chimney-throat
 The smoke from evening hearths will
 And I will turn my eyes
 To watch the road.
 —Marie L. Eglington.

THE LAUGH LINE

Some folks would repent at leisure,
 After having wed in haste;
 But to live they have to hustle
 So they have no time to waste.

No Quagmire Required.
 "A farmer does not need to study navigation to get the bearings of his fruit trees," remarks a funny paper. No, and his neighbors' boys don't either.—Boston Transcript.

Join the S. P. C. P. Neighbor.
 A biologist says that plants sleep until 9 a. m. We hope our next-door neighbor reads this paragraph and lays off on his maternal lawn-mowing.—Boston Transcript.

Expensive Letters.
 First Father—"My daughter's letters always send me to the dictionary."
 Second Father—"That's nothing. My daughter's always send me to the bank."
 —Cricket.

One or the Other.
 "What is the most aggravating thing in married life?" asked Dorothy. "Sometimes," said the bachelor friend, "it's the husband, and sometimes it's the wife."

Such a Lovely Character!
 Make up your mind to pay the full increased railway fares cheerfully, Pollyanna would.—Boston Globe.
 From what we know of Pollyanna someone would be sure to give her a ride.—Lewiston Journal.

A Man of Resource.
 When the tailor's stock of irons ran low,
 He decided to order a few.
 But whether to write it "gooses" or "gosses,"
 He knew not—so what did he do?
 He wrote, "Please send me one tailor's goose."
 P. S.—You can make that two.

Nearest He Could Come To It.
 "There must be some mistake in my examination marking. I don't think I deserve an absolute zero," complained the student.
 "Neither do I, agreed the professor; 'but this is the lowest mark I'm allowed to give."

Puzzled the Patient.
 "Um, yes?" remarked the medico, in his best bedside manner, as they stood in the consulting room. "I'll give you the following prescriptions." And he handed him three small packages.
 The patient opened them and read the directions.
 "A powder for my headache," he said about; "a pellet for my liver," he continued, "and a caplet for my gouty foot." They he stopped and pondered deeply for a moment. "I say doctor," he queried, "how'll the little beggar know the right place to go when they get inside?"

Benny's Note Book

BY LEE PAPE

Me and pop was taking a walk after supper, me asking a lot of questions and him answering a few, and I started to see if I could walk without hardly taking my foot off the ground, and after a while pop sed, Stop dragging your feet for the love of Peet, haven't you got strength enuff to raise them?

G, pop, I sed, you made a rime then, stop dragging your feet for the love of Peet, that was a rime, pop.

Was it? sed pop, I thawt it was an order and you will kindly consider it as such.

Meaning for me not to drag them any more, Wich I didnt for a while, and then I started to wonder if pop would notice it if I dragged them jest once more.

Wich I did, dragging them for about a pavement and a half, without pop saying anything, and gritty soon I thawt, Jest once more, and if he dont notice it this time thats the last time.

And I started to drag them agen, and I hadent hardly started wen pop sed, Confound it, are your shoes full of lead, did you heer wat I sed?

Holey smokes, G, pop, you made another rime, are your shoes full of lead, did you heer wat I sed, thats another rime, pop, I sed.

Well you jest start that monkey business agen and ill rime you a crack over the eer, sed pop.

And we walked a while longer, me thinking, Jest once more time, and this will be the last weather he notices it or not.

Wich I started to drag them agen, and pop quick looked down at me and I quick started to lit them up high as anything, being the opposite of dragging them, and pop sed, Waw, rite and keep on wawking rite.

Wich I did.

Named to Suit.

ship "LNMMD arm pA-de shrdiu diuin Visitor" sed small girl hugging a large Teddy bear, whose boot-button eyes convey the impression of a pronounced squint—"Well, little girl, and what do you call your nice new bear?"

Small Girl (gravely)—"His name is 'Gladly,' same as the one in the hymn."

Visitor (sympathetic)—"What on earth are you talking about, child? Which hymn?"

Small Girl—"You know. 'That one that says, Gladly my cross-eyed bear.'"
 —Tit-Bits.

Carmel Myers' New Play.

Production has been started at Universal City on Carmel Myers' third feature, "The Orchid," under the direction of Marcel de Sano.

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