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ST. JOHN, N. B., SATURDAY, JUNE 17, 1922.

THE HAGUE CONFERENCE.

Judging from the extracts from the opinions of London newspapers which have been cabled to this country, the Hague Conference which opened on Thursday is not regarded with any very great degree of confidence or respect. Its inception was a product of the unsatisfactory compromise between the British and French policies with regard to Russia. M. Poincaré had been on the look-out for a pretext to withdraw from Genoa, and he gladly seized upon the Russian note with its arrogant tone and absurd arguments, to serve his purpose. This note was no more to the liking of Lloyd George, but he was not slow to adopt the suggestion that it contained for the appointment of a mixed commission to investigate the matter of debts owing by Russia, as affording some hope of keeping the Conference together and ultimately rescuing Europe from the chaotic condition she is now in.

Indications are that the Hague possesses little more attraction for Poincaré than Genoa had; and the absence of those elements of enthusiastic co-operation and determination, without which the successful accomplishment of one of the most difficult tasks that ever confronted diplomacy is almost impossible, partly explains the noticeable lack of public interest in the doings of the Hague Conference. Additional factors are the absence of a proper French delegation, the presence on the British side of subordinate politicians and experts incapable of taking any decision (this is in accordance with the Genoa understanding) and the disinclination of the smaller States and neutrals to treat the Assembly seriously.

THE OLD COURT HOUSE.

Most people, we imagine, will be disposed to agree with His Worship the Mayor, that the present is no time to spend a million to a million and a half on the erection of new Municipal buildings, in view of the fact that the old Court House can probably be remodelled and rendered fit for occupation again for about fifty thousand dollars. The city is already committed to a hydro scheme which will involve an outlay from a million to a million and a half dollars, and one "bolshy" scheme at a time is enough. Apart from the question of cost, there are sentimental reasons why the old building should be restored. It is one of the oldest buildings in the city, and many eventful incidents have taken place within its walls. The city has grown, of course, since it was erected, but at the same time, the uses to which the building is to be put are no more extensive than ever was the case. Besides now that the yard at the back has been to a large extent cleared out, space is available to make considerable additions to the accommodation previously afforded. It is a pity to disturb the pigeons and rob them of a very convenient nesting place of course, but this phase of the situation can probably be got over some way or other. Any way, for appearance sake, if nothing else, it is time something was done to remove the eyesore that the present condition of the building presents.

A WHEAT BOARD.

Canada is to have another Wheat Board which shall control the selling price of wheat in the bill that the Government proposes to bring in as a result of the adoption by the House of the report of the Agricultural Committee advocating the creation of such a Board. The question of the legality of such a Board has been discussed upon several occasions, and the law officers have expressed the opinion that a Board with compulsory powers is not within the law. However, the Board to be formed is to be clothed with such powers as it is within the jurisdiction of Parliament to confer. It is quite possible that a Board so constituted may not prove satisfactory, but according to the law officers it is about the only kind of a wheat marketing agency which it is possible under the Constitution to create. There are those who doubt whether it will function or not. But on the other hand the consensus of opinion among the representatives of the Prairie where the demand for a Wheat Board is insistent, is that a voluntary marketing agency is worse than useless. During the last election campaign, it will be remembered, Mr. Meighen advocated the formation of a voluntary market agency, but he made no votes in the West by his advocacy. And he had no support outside of his own party, when he reiterated his views in the House. Mr. Chamberlain admitted that it was impossible for the Administration to create a Board with the powers en-

joyed by the old Wheat Board; the real compulsory features were, after all, in the hands of the provinces and he maintained that the voluntary scheme as proposed by Mr. Meighen was not feasible.

A question that will occur to many is why should wheat be singled out as the only commodity to have such preferential treatment. Wheat, like financial loans, is a question of economics based upon the law of supply and demand, and it will be difficult for the average man to understand just why the western grain growers should be protected at his expense. This is a matter upon which he will want more information before he is satisfied with the course proposed to be taken.

THE DIVORCE EVIL.

Copies of bills introduced in the Senate and the Commons are usually sent to the newspaper offices, and the number of these bills that have reached this office which seek to dissolve marriages is nothing short of appalling. It was said at one time that the war was responsible for the wreck of many homes, but the war has been over nearly four years now, and it is conceivable that most of the cases arising out of war conditions have now been dealt with. Owing to the fact that there is no divorce court in Ontario, most of the cases with which the Senate has to deal come from that province. The prosecution of a special Act of Parliament is rather costly, and weighs heavily upon all who are not overburdened with this world's goods. It is true that the Senate has discretionary power and occasionally remits the customary fees, but this can only be done when an affidavit is taken that the party to the contract is entitled to relief in without means. This does not dispose of the legal charges, which sometimes are extremely high. There are doubtless many couples who continue nominal husband and wife for the simple reason that they have not sufficient money for having the chains that unite them struck off.

In England the expense of divorce led to a situation that was far worse than any of the evils that attend even the famous Reno divorce factory. Men and women who could not afford a divorce simply separated and in thousands of cases set up establishments with other partners. Hat divorce being cheap and easy these partnerships would have at least been legalized and the resulting children legitimate. Canada is not wholly free from similar conditions, and they may become worse unless some improvement is made in the machinery by which marriages are dissolved. It seems likely that a well-chosen judge would, as he gained experience, prove a much better arbiter in cases of domestic troubles than the Senate of Canada. He would become a specialist, and might even persuade those coming before him to adjust their differences, which is something we have not heard of the Senate being able to do. Many such instances stand to the credit of scores of American judges who are called upon to try divorce cases. Those who hold that marriage duty solemnized is indissoluble, because it is a sacrament, and not an ordinary contract, are entitled to their pinion. Those who hold otherwise are logical in demanding that if divorce is justified the processes by which it may be effected ought to be made as cheap and convenient as possible.

DOUGLAS AVENUE.

A few days ago an appreciative reference was made in The Globe to the present condition of Douglas Avenue and the tasteful appearance of the residences and gardens along it. An old resident of the Avenue, however, calls attention to certain matters that are calculated to deter many people from making improvements to their properties. He complains of the gangs of men and boys who make a practice of destroying the ornamental trees and flowering shrubs that are growing there, many gardens having been completely stripped of apple and lilac and other blossoms within the last week or two. He further says that there were a dozen seats provided for the use of visitors to the Park there, all but three of these have been taken away or destroyed. He declares that a policeman is never to be seen on the Avenue, and the hobos know it and therefore think that they are free from all chances of detection. In view of the fact that the Sadie Macdonald tragedy took place in the Park, one would have thought that such an occurrence would have suggested a frequent patrol of the neighborhood, but our informant declares that the Avenue is practically without police protection at all, if

the facts actually are as he states, it certainly is not much encouragement for residents to take steps to improve their properties, by keeping their gardens and lawns well attended to.

The disturbances which took place during the polling in Southern Ireland yesterday do not furnish friends of Ireland with ground for very much hope that a better day was dawning for that country. It has been claimed that given the opportunity, the Irish could and would govern themselves properly and that it was nothing else than that the country was under British authority that caused the uprisings and discontent that has existed for so long. With each day it becomes more apparent that such a claim has nothing to justify it.

WHAT OTHERS SAY

Within the Empire.
(London Daily Express.)
The Premier himself admits that the Russian market cannot be normal in this generation. We can assure him that Great Britain can get on quite well without the German market, which, considering the financial condition of that country, is very lucky for us. Ireland, the Dominions, India, South America, China—these are the countries in which our export trade can be expanded with security and far greater prospects than all Europe together can offer.

The President as Leader.
(Springfield Republican.)
If the President can force such a contentious measure as the Ship Subsidy Bill through Congress in his first year, he will doubt the power of his leadership. Yet if his real purpose is to help the country's foreign trade, as is said, he may profitably let ship subsidies wait another year and show his leadership by persuading his party friends in Congress to modify the tariff bill, which in its present form is plainly designed to hamper foreign trade rather than encourage it.

No Time for Apathy.
(Auckland New Zealand Times.)
It is certain that the British Government will not place any pressure on Dominions that are not interested in the policy of retaining migrating British people within the Empire, and there is a grave risk that by its silence the New Zealand Government will create an impression that it does not want either financial assistance or help in its lands or British immigrants to cultivate them. Its true position is that it urgently requires both cheap money and good settlers, and the Government should lose no time in representing its needs to the Imperial authorities and demonstrating its readiness to co-operate fully in carrying out the plans that are now being made.

The Call for Pioneers.
(London Daily Telegraph.)
Humanity may be at the end of one age, but we, who are united in one community of peoples, speaking one language, and holding common ideals, are assuredly at the beginning of a new age. What it may portend to us is the signal to a great advance. The progress may be slow, and wisely so, if we so will, the issue can be assured.

Scorns the Conference.
(London Daily News.)
What was the primary object of the Genoa Conference? "To see the establishment of a complete peace through out the whole of Europe with a view to dealing with the serious problems of trade and unemployment which are confronting us," the words are Mr. Lloyd George's of last month. What has actually been effected at Genoa toward that end? Nothing at all except this seven months' truce which, if it is to be of any use, must be broken out in Europe? We can find none whatever; and if the "armistice" of which we are constantly warned is really lasting, the seven months' truce will not delay them a day.

Even in Afghanistan.
(The Economist.)
When the Anglo-Afghan treaty had been definitely signed, the cloud of war which had been hanging over Afghanistan was dispelled. That country has probably been relieved of some of its fears of the Bolsheviks now and the British have no desire beyond that of living on terms of the closest friendship with a ruler who is so important a potentate in Islam. So it has come about that the Amir has leisure and opportunity to proceed with constructive work in Afghanistan itself. And the lines he is following are precisely those that were laid down by the great man who was his grandfather, that is to say, the intention that it should finally take its place in the comity of Western nations.

Abuse of the Roads.
(London Times.)
Day by day it is more evident that with the rapid increase of motor vehicles of all descriptions, radical changes in the construction of certain roads (and perhaps of particular roads of vehicles) as well as in the control of all kinds of traffic, must soon become inevitable. One of the chief factors of the problem is the inconvenience and often dangerous narrowness of the roads which have come down to us as a legacy from a less congested age. Although it is not prescribed for the use of visitors to the Park there, all but three of these have been taken away or destroyed. He declares that a policeman is never to be seen on the Avenue, and the hobos know it and therefore think that they are free from all chances of detection. In view of the fact that the Sadie Macdonald tragedy took place in the Park, one would have thought that such an occurrence would have suggested a frequent patrol of the neighborhood, but our informant declares that the Avenue is practically without police protection at all, if

Playing Bridge.
"She must be a good bridge player."
"I can't see it."
"She quotes a lot of rules."
"Yes, and I can quote a lot of Shakespeare. But I can't write blank verse."
—Judea.

Benny's Note Book

BY LEE PAPE

Ma and Puds Binkins was sitting on my front steps waiting for something to happen without anything actually happening, and I sat, O this is getting monotonous sitting here.
That's what I say, I wish something would happen, Puds said, and I said, So do I, gosh, I don't enjoy just sitting in one place like this.
Ma neither, I wish we was doing something, I wouldn't care what, anything would be better than this, Puds said, and I said, Sure, this is tawdry, I wouldn't care what happened as long as it wasn't this.
Which just then Ma came to the front door saying, Benny, I want you to run errands to the store for me.
Me thinking, Aw heck, G. And I said, Aw gosh, Ma, why?
I haven't any time to argue the matter now, I need a dozen eggs right away, hurry up now, the exercise will do you good, I should think you'd be tired of sitting there like an old man, Ma said, and I said, Well O, gosh, Ma, I was just starting to get comfortable.
Heers the money, hurry up, said Ma. And she went in again and I said to Puds, Hey Puds, come with us, will you, Puds? and he said, Aw, no, I'll wait here for you, and I said, Aw, what the matter, didn't you just say you wanted to do something else?
Well I mean, anything except that, said Puds, and I said, All right, then don't, holey smokes, some guys make me tired. Mean, ing him, and I went by myself.
Proving we never appreciate how comfortable we are till it's too late.

THE LAUGH LINE

A Heart Movement.
Returned Doubtless—Yes, the bullet struck me here in the chest and came out of my back.
"Oh, some infernal composer of jazz had plagiarized fearfully from 'O'ry the Waves Waltz.'"

Upsetting.
"Yes, right in the middle of the ball-room floor she became ill on my hands."
"Too bad! But what seemed to be the trouble?"
"Oh, some infernal composer of jazz had plagiarized fearfully from 'O'ry the Waves Waltz.'"

His Mistake.
The editor of a magazine which is published by a New York bus company offers a prize each month for the best story turned in by an employee of the company on any topic pertaining to company affairs. Here is one which won this month:
"One seat on top and one inside," shouted a bus conductor at a stopping place.
"Sure now, and you wouldn't be after separatin' a daughter from her mother," said the elder of two women on the sidewalk.
"Right ye are, I would not," said the conductor, starting the bus. "I did that once an' I've been regrettin' it ever since."

Comrades in Arms.
Guest—"Do you make a reduction to people in the same line of business?"
Manager—"Yes. Are you a restaurateur?"
Guest—"No. I'm a thief by profession."

King Of Norway And Radical Party Are Closely Allied

Communists Are Also Giving Cabinet Good Support—And for An Object.

Christiania, May 23.—(By Mail).—The King of Norway as chief executive; the Cabinet, and the Radical party of Norway are today all closely allied politically and supported by the Communist party, a group generally credited with taking orders from the Third Internationale at Moscow. The Russian organization is pledged to obtaining the dictatorship of the proletariat by revolution against existing forms of government.

It is doubtful if the Communists are supporting the cabinet for nothing. They are believed to have made their terms, and as a result certain elements here expect to see further legislation along Communist lines. Already Norway has adopted a commercial treaty with the Russian Bolsheviks and granted them diplomatic rights. The Bolsheviks have established headquarters in Christiania and the Red flag flies from the top of their building.

The government today is taking an active part in various trades and industries which formerly were privately owned. The tendency is to "socialize" everything. The burden of taxation is becoming heavier and heavier, and the end is not yet. The latest laws tax incomes and deposits of foreigners in Norway, and Norwegians living abroad, to the extent of 75 per cent. A foreigner with investment in Norwegian industry will receive only 25 per cent of profits due him. The government takes the rest. As a result it is expected that foreign capital will withdraw from Norway.

The Communist party—it was until recently known as the Socialist party—is said to have accepted Bolshevik doctrines, and is believed in certain quarters to be working for the overthrow of the present government of Norway and the establishment of a dictatorship on the Russian model. Its leaders have constant and close relations with Moscow.

The Communists last fall secured 30

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