

THE LIBERAL WEEKLY

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THE COMMON PEOPLE.

To the Editor,

The 'Liberal Monthly'.

Dear Sir:—

When the 'Old Chief' was in Toronto a remark made by a friend has given me much food for thought. He said, with a disparaging air, that he had noticed not a single man of prominence had called upon Sir Wilfrid while here—that his visitors were only the 'common people.'

I have been thinking what a great compliment it was to the head of the Liberal party that there were no barons or baronets; no knights or bankers; no heads of railways, seeking millions; no heads of packing houses, seeking protection—that in truth his callers were none but the 'common people' who came to show their respect their confidence and their affection.

It brought to my mind Abraham Lincoln's saying—

"I know that God must have loved the common people, he made so many of them."

And then the analagous position held by the great Sir Robert Peel in his time, and that of Sir Wilfrid to-day, occurred to me. Peel was successful in removing the duties on foodstuffs so that food should be within the reach of the 'common people.' Laurier endeavoured to do the same but the Interests prevented him—and we have the result with us to-day in the high cost of living.

After Sir Robert Peel's annulment of the Corn Laws, the revengeful Interests defeated him, and, in his speech in the House of Commons after his downfall he said—

"I shall leave a name execrated by every monopolist who maintains protection for his own individual benefit, but it may be that I shall leave a name sometimes remembered with expressions of goodwill in those places that are the abode of men whose lot it is to labour and who earn their bread by the sweat of their brow."

It was said of Peel that he had lost a party, but won a nation.

Is not Sir Wilfrid in the same position?

One of the 'Common People'.

CANADA'S JUNKERS IN POWER.

In these strenuous times, when the world is convulsed with the struggle for a free democracy and the right of the people to rule themselves, and when the press and leaders of all nations point to Germany as the terrible example of an autocracy where the bureaucracy control the very life springs of the people, it is interesting to see ourselves as others see us. It may surprise many Canadians to

learn that in other countries Canada is now regarded as on a plane with Germany in a political sense. And the humiliating part of this conception is that the press and people of these countries do not express either astonishment or regret at Canada's loss of responsible government; they take it as a matter of course, just as though Canada were not fit for any other form of government than the one we now possess in the so-called union administration.

Perhaps the best illustration of this lamentable reputation which the Dominion has unfortunately acquired is given in a recent editorial in the New York Evening Post in connection with the manifesto of Sir Wilfrid Laurier. Says the Post:

The announcement that the Canadian elections will be held on December 17 brings to a head the campaign across the border. It has at once called out a pronouncement from Sir Wilfrid Laurier. Upon this we shall defer extended comment until the entire statement is in our hands. It is plain, however, that by proposing a referendum upon the issue of conscription, Sir Wilfrid places this question at the forefront of the campaign. He promises that the Canadian troops abroad shall be upheld in men, money, and materials, and it will be difficult, therefore, for Sir Robert Borden to accuse the Opposition of disloyalty to the troops in the field. While Sir Wilfrid touches upon other issues, and returns to questions of tariff, this conscription issue will remain the dominant one. It should be a most interesting and exciting political battle, with the odds favoring those now holding office, who have revised the franchise to suit themselves, giving the vote to those women only whose support they count upon, and have scored a political success by forming a Coalition Cabinet. But, despite his years, Sir Wilfrid is not an adversary to be despised.

What have Canadians—real Canadians—to say to the conception, which is strictly correct, that "the odds favor those who now hold office, WHO HAVE REVISED THE FRANCHISE TO SUIT THEMSELVES GIVING THE VOTE TO THOSE WOMEN ONLY WHOSE SUPPORT THEY COUNT UPON?"

Is it not humiliating to have the impression go through the United States that Canada is helpless politically, that the party in power can manipulate the franchise, as the Prussians do, to keep themselves in power? How hollow and insincere must all our vaporings for democracy and the rights of free people sound in the ears of nations and people who know that we in Canada are no better off than those we affect to despise, who are ruled by the Prussian Junkers in just such fashion as the political junkers constituting the alleged union administration are determined to rule this country.

NOT 100,000, BUT THE "VERY LIMIT."

Gen. Mewburn, the new Minister of Militia, in a speech at Hamilton, said he was opposed to the limitation of the call under the conscription law to 100,000 men. "We are in this war, or should be," he said, "not with one, two, or three hundred thousand, but to the very limit of our resources."

If the war goes on, and the present Government is returned, there is no doubt that the first call will not be the last. Repeated calls will be made until practically every man physically fit is called to the colors, and the work in field and factory left to women, boys and cripples.

—From Toronto Weekly Sun.