

THE EVENING TIMES AND STAR, ST. JOHN, N. B., SATURDAY, JUNE 7, 1919

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THE RETURNING SOLDIERS.

It was highly gratifying yesterday afternoon to note the hearty welcome extended to the men of the 44th Battalion. The civic half-holiday enabled the people to get out and line the route of march. The display of flags was good to see, and the returning men must have been warmed by the scene and the reception. Indeed the facts showed along knowing that they were to be at once released from military discipline and free to rest after their arduous duties overseas. Possibly this is the last large unit to come to St. John, although there are still many New Brunswick men to arrive before the summer is over. More than a welcome must be provided. The question of getting satisfactory employment for all of them grows more urgent as their numbers increase, and the federal, provincial and municipal authorities, as well as employers generally must give this matter serious consideration. We must not forget the dark days when so much depended on getting more men into the fighting ranks at the front, and when everybody realized how much depended on the valor of the troops sent from Canada. They have done their duty and the obligation to see to it that none of them are forced to go idle rests upon all who stayed at home.

A REMEDY SUGGESTED

The Toronto Globe observes that it has taken the government and many members of parliament a long time to discover that the high cost of living is one of the prime causes of industrial unrest and strife. "It is an old truth to the masses of the people, who long ago came to the conclusion that government and parliament alike were floundering along in a maze of political ventures regardless of the increasing bitterness in the public heart over the multitudinous examples of governmental ineptitude and parliamentary slothfulness." The Globe does not take too seriously the announcement that members of the commons are taking the bit between their teeth in the determination that parliament shall "forthwith address itself to the biggest problem of the present, viz., the industrial unrest and the high cost of living." Commenting on the announcement of government aid in the erection of municipally-owned cold-storage warehouses by the guarantee of thirty per cent. of the cost of construction the Globe tartly observes:—"A lot of good that will do to the man who at this moment is having his rent raised beyond the point at which he can pay it and also buy the essential stocks of food necessary to keep life within himself and the members of the family. If the cost of living committee cannot get all the information it wants as to prices from the department of labor, what is the use of the elaborate system the latter has built up to get these very figures which are published from time to time under its auspices?" But the Globe has a remedy, as follows:—"What is needed more than anything else just now is the appointment of a man with courage, above all party influences and persuasions, clothed with the power to enter into any establishment for the manufacture, sale or storage of food products and to conduct an inquiry on the spot into the profits they are making and the amount of foodstuffs they are carrying. Under penalty of imprisonment such companies should be compelled to give him all the assistance he requires and full access to all books. Wherever it is shown that such an institution is gouging big profits out of life's necessities, then it should be regulated with the same disregard for the food profiteer's feelings that he has shown for those of the people. The public is exasperated to the boiling point by the multiplication of committees and commissions that have power to do nothing but inquire. With an official and powers of the nature outlined a government that really wanted to could make an investigation and take action in short order."

Hon. F. B. Carvell announces that he will support the budget but reserves full liberty to express his views regarding the fiscal policy to be adopted after demobilization. He will support union government until the task for which it was formed is completed. Ottawa despatches appear to indicate that the same course will probably be pursued by most union Liberals, and that the break will come later, when the period of demobilization is ended.

Those who say nothing should be done in regard to vocational training in St. John until a huge expenditure can be made are simply attempting to deny working boys and girls, as well as those of high school age, and many adults an opportunity to fit themselves better to earn a livelihood.

Attention is once more directed to Ottawa, and to the budget debate, which promises to be of the greatest interest as an indication of how the political cat will jump. An old-fashioned tariff dispute has the centre of the stage.

Replying to a question as to the relative cost of production and the cost to the consumer, Hon. A. K. MacLean said the other day that the labor department had the cost of living constantly under observation. To this the Montreal Herald replies: "To say that the labor department has the cost of living constantly under observation means nothing as far as the public is concerned. Any individual or department which did not have it constantly under observation must be blind. The trouble with the labor department and with the government is that this constant observation is not being followed by energetic action. Profiteers are being allowed to run wild without the slightest restraining influence from these constant observers of the labor department. The minister of labor has admitted that some startling instances of boosted prices have been discovered. Yet nothing is being done. Not even a warning to the profiteers is being issued. Why?"

Are the citizens of the south, east and west ends getting behind their Improvement Leagues to have the playgrounds ready for the fullest use by the time the summer holidays begin? How many of them have offered a little personal assistance? How many have even visited the playgrounds? How many of them care a hang whether there are any playgrounds for the boys and girls? These questions and their answers might form one profitable theme for Sabbath reflections.

The question at issue is not whether the employers or the workmen shall win a victory, but whether the cities shall be governed by a few extremists on each side or by the moderate people who compose an overwhelming majority of the community. Unless the moderates assert themselves the extremists will have their way, and the people will suffer.

The federal government has been given power to deport agitators of Bolshevik tendencies, no matter from what country they came to Canada. It looks as if there might soon be a considerable exodus from some Canadian cities, beginning with Winnipeg.

The week-end cables concerning the European situation are not altogether cheerful in tone, but that is not a new development.

Next week should see the plans for vocational training in St. John advanced a stage.

A revival of craftsmanship in St. John would be a fine thing for our young men.

Today's despatches suggest that the end of the Winnipeg strike may be near.

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ANNUAL CHURCH MEETINGS BEING HELD IN HAMILTON

Hamilton, Ont., June 6.—The opening session of the Presbyterian General Assembly was held here today. Most of the morning session was occupied with reports and overtures from various committees, synods and presbyteries. Reporting for the publication board John Lowdon announced that the net assets were \$71,000, an increase of over \$12,000 as compared with the previous year. Receipts totalled \$211,404.

with a balance of \$20,270, Rev. R. D. Fraser, announced.

On motion of Rev. J. A. Mustard, of Toronto, seconded by W. D. Reid, Montreal, it was decided that hereafter the names and salaries of all officials employed by the church should be published.

The Congregational Union of Canada also met in session today.

The following were appointed to office: General secretary, Rev. Dr. T. W. Gunn; recording secretary, Rev. R. Wilson Carr; treasurer, Frank G. Ellis; statistical secretary, Rev. Albert Margitt; director of forward movement, Rev. D. Davy; department of Sunday schools, Rev. D. A. Armstrong; Leroy Rice, educational secretary for home missions.

Rev. A. F. Pollock, educational secretary; Raynor, secretary-treasurer, Rev. F. for foreign missions, Rev. T. de Courcy Sanders.

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