The St. John Standard

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ST. JOHN, N. B., THURSDAY, DECEMBER 15, 1921.

THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY.

There are quite a number of supporters of the Meighen Government, many of them prominent in its counsels, who, while naturally regretting the defeat of that party at the polls, feel that if that defeat results in the thorough reorganization of the Conservative party, it may prove more of a benefit than otherwise. While Unionism had its advantages for the time being, as a permanent arrangement it has as many opponents as it has adherents. To the former the very name National Liberal and Conservative Party is a cause of offence; they want no hybrid organization of any kind. They feel that if the Conservative party is not virile enough to steer its own bark through the stormy waters of Canadian politics, without assistance from adherents of any other party, it may as well retire from the struggle.

The London Free Press puts the matter very bluntly when it says:—"If the Conservative party is to remain as a vital force in Canadian politics, there should be immediate arrangements for a Dominion-wide organization. The fortunes of the party were never at so low an ebb as at the present time. Not only is there no provincial government held by the Conservatives, but they are now the third group in the Dominion Parliament.

"There may be many causes for this, but one of the chief is the fact that the Conservative party is a war casualty as much as any veteran. Union Government was necessary for patriotic reasons. The winning of the war at the time was more important than the future of any party, but undoubtedly the formation of Union Government ruined temporarily the Conservative party. It broke up political organization and smashed party loyalty. For four years the Cabinet ministers, engaged in war efforts, forgot party politics and let the ridings shift for themselves. The result could only be what has happened, despite the herculean and courageous efforts of Mr. Meighen.'

The principles for which the Conservative party has stood in the past are still of vital necessity to the Dominion. If these principles are to be maintained then the party leaders should at once take steps to bring about a complete reorganization, and possibly to hold a Dominion convention. Although the party was beaten, yet not since 1911 has there been so much unified fighting spirit in every province as Mr. Meighen has roused. Now is the time to crystalize this sentiment. If steps are not taken then the party is in danger of disappearing from the political map of Canada.

THE FOUR-POWER AGREEMENT.

The London Morning Post's opinion that the conclusion of an agreement between the four Great Powers, Britain, the United States, France and Japan, with a view to the perpetuation of a general peace, will be of more benefit than anything that has been done or can be done by the League of Nations, will, we imagine, be pretty generally concurred in throughout the civilized world. The proposed arrangement, it is true, applies only to problems arising in the Pacific but it strikes a chord that the nations have been waiting for for a long time. This agreement if adopted, which there appears to be every chance of, together with the other agreement for reduction of naval armaments, are achievements which more than justify the calling of the Conference.

The conclusion of an agreement such as is proposed should be of unusual interest to Canadians, for it absolutely endorses the stand taken by Premier Meighen at the London Conference last summer. He realized from the beginning that however satisfactory the Anglo-Japanese Alliance might be from the British point of view, it could never be satisfactory to Canada, because of the danger that would always exist of the giving cause if offence to the United States. It is more to Canada's advantage to remain on friendly terms with her neighbor to the South, than it is to be allied to Japan—although Canada will never wish to be on anything but friendly terms with that Empire—and there was always the danger that as long as Britain and Japan were bound in close there would be a serious obstacle to the continuance of the friendly terms in case of any differences arising between the United States and Japan. Mr. Meighen, of course, realized that however friendly Canada's relations with her neighbor might be, it was not desirable to fall out with Japan, but rather to conclude a new arrangement that should embrace both the United States and Japan. This is precisely what has been done, with the addition that France is included as well.

The proposal for mutually consultative intercourse in the event of any of the signatories being threatened by the aggressive action of any other nation, is a most important one, and it is most earnestly to be hoped that nothing will arise to prevent its becoming an accomplished fact. There is always this to remember too, that it was the idea of Canada's Prime Minister who, even if he had never had anything else to his credit, will always have this one achievement to stand as a memorial to his wisdom and statesmanship.

THE GAELIC LANGUAGE.

Latterly there has been a movement on foot to revive the ancient language of the Irish people, and this fact has prompted the Ottawa Journal to ask if it is possible that the object of reviving the language is to furnish a means of vigorous expression when the debates of the Irish Parliament become so animated that invective is necessary. Says the Journal:—"It is claimed for Gaelic that it furnishes a veritable arsenal of lingual hand-grenades, bombs and asphyxiating gas. When the contending orators find English too tame for vivid expression, they can glide into Irish and carry on their wordy combat at close quarters without impairing the dignity of the assemblage in the eyes of the English-speaking world."

This sort of thing reminds us of the story told of the Cambridge professor, who, getting into a wordy dispute with a navvy once, had such a torrent of oaths and blasphemous imprecations hurled at his head as to leave him almost speechless. Not desiring to retort in kind, he fell back on his familiarity with mathematics, and poured out a string of mathematical terms, which so scared his opponent, that he departed and declared afterwards that he had never heard a man swear in such an awful manner in his life before.

The idea may be of use to some others. It may not mean anything very bad, but to be called a "besotted equilateral parallelopipedon" sounds wierd enough to scare even a drunk.

The improvement in exchange on European countries last week was so marked as to carry the conviction that its only basis was developments in international relations of a political nature. Nothing in foreign trade returns accounts for the rise in sterling exchange to $4.18. British reports show that in November there was practically no improvement in exports or imports. American exports have lately tended to decline, especially grain and cotton. The German mark quotation ran up to .55 of a cent, which is an encouraging development. The political or diplomatic events probably accounting for the rise in exchange are the Irish "peace treaty," the signs of a further adjustment of German reparations by agreement of Britain and France, and the growing assurances of results from the Washington Conference.

The suggestion that comes from Fredericton that the Hon. C. W. Robinson will probably be the New Brunswick member of the Dominion Government is interesting of course. That the Hon. Clifford would be an ornament to any gathering no one who knows him will question for a moment; and while his ability is unquestioned, his easy-going proclivities, and general disinclination to take things seriously, do not commend themselves to the public as qualities that make a successful head of a department. The appointment of Mr. Copp to the bench is of course an easy matter. Anyone can become a J. P. by applying to the Foster Government and paying $5 to the provincial exchequer.

Montreal Gazette:—In St. John, N. B., during the election campaign a main cry of opposition journals was that the Government had neglected the city and the province in the matter of expenditures of public money and had done less for the soldiers than the circumstances required. Then the voters turned out and elected two Government supporters to represent the city in the House of Commons. The people were broader minded than their critics.

The office of Sheriff must be a very lucrative one in the County of Madawaska to prompt Mr. Daigle to resign a seat in the Legislature with the $1100 a year it carries, in order to accept the Sheriffalty. Perhaps he feels that if he had a hand in picking the jury there would be less fear of any repetition of the kind of verdict given in the Minnie Stevens case.

Robert Louis Stevenson had his troubles with German officials in Samoa, but he would have been surprised to know that his admiralty letter of the South sea would one day be cited by Senator Lodge in presenting a treaty for the maintenance of peace in the Pacific.

WHAT OTHERS SAY

Montreal Big Interests and the Election.

(Ottawa Journal.)

No more foolish cry was raised in the general election against the Meighen Government than that it was representative of the "big interests." The biggest business interests of Canada centre in Montreal; and the "big interests" of Montreal were almost all antagonistic to Mr. Meighen, and in favor of Mr. Mackenzie King, alias Sir Lomer Gouin. The frame of mind among the business men of Montreal, big and little, was that the Protective tariff was in no danger, inasmuch as Sir Lomer Gouin is a Protectionist and controls the biggest half of the Liberal party; that the real issue of the election was the railway question, and that Sir Lomer Gouin would dispose of that by handing the National Railway System over to the C. P. R. The business world of Montreal is fanatically opposed to national ownership of railways, and doesn't care much what else happens so long as public ownership is kicked out of doors.

The "big business" frame of mind was illustrated by the course of the two chief English newspapers of Montreal, the Gazette and the Star. Both stabbed Meighen in the back. They did him infinitely more harm than any professed opposition press could do, for the very reason that they had been avowed supporters of his administration. It is a question which did him most evil. The Star was the more treacherous and discreditable of the two, but the less ungrateful, and probably the less mischievous.

That the Montreal Gazette has been the recipient of more profitable business from Conservative Governments than any other dozen newspapers in the Dominion combined would not necessarily bind that newspaper to party chariot wheels; for the Gazette has probably given good business value for all the Government advertising and job printing it ever got. But at least, the business was an evidence of good will which should have counted for something. Then, the utmost good will has been shown to the proprietors of the Gazette personally by Conservative Governments ever since Confederation—members of the family have been Cabinet Ministers, Senators, high Civil Service officials. Finally an avowed party newspaper is supposed to have principles which call upon it to exercise sometimes political advocacy, but always honorable restraint. But gratuitously, at a time when the course taken must do the greatest possible harm to the Conservative and Union party and Mr. Meighen and his cause, the Gazette came out with a loud culogy of Sir Lomer Gouin, the Quebec leader of the Liberals, which completely spiked the guns of the Conservatives and Unionists in Quebec Province, and damaged them everywhere. No shadow of excuse existed for this at such a juncture except the railway question, and the temper of Montreal "big business"; and that was no decent pretext because the chief leader of the Liberal party, Mr. King, was known to be in favor of public ownership; the chief party organ, the Toronto Globe, was ranting for it; and there could be no common sense, let alone common decency, in the Gazette acclaiming Mr. Gouin on this basis in a way to damn Mr. Meighen when Mr. Gouin's leader, Mr. King, was holding precisely the same position as Mr. Meighen.

The treachery of the Montreal Star was calculated. A despatch ostensibly from Ottawa, undoubtedly inspired from the Star office if not actually manufactured there, was published under flaring headlines on Thursday last, just in the best nick of time to do the utmost possible damage to the Meighen cause, charging that the Government contemplated drastic changes in the management of the National Railways, and implying that the headquarters might be taken away from Montreal. There was no truth in this. Premier Meighen wired the Star that the story was made out of whole cloth, and asked for its source of information—but in vain. And with the general election coming on at once, contradiction was too late to take proper effect. Now, the simplest sense of common morality would have prompted the proprietor of the Star, if the report had been genuinely communicated to him, to wire Mr. Meighen before publishing it, either to secure a denial or correction, or to publish charge and answer at the same time. The Premier could not have denied the story if it were true. If he could not have denied it, the Star would have been justified in doing its own way about the matter. But Lord Atholstan preferred the rotten business of publishing a dangerous and damaging rumor without asking the subject of it what the truth was—and this although the subject of it was not only the Prime Minister of the country but the leader of a party to which the Montreal Star had been professedly friendly.

As we have said, the course of these two newspapers was illustrative of the present temper of "big business" in Montreal. It has been properly offended by high taxation and by the incredible incompetence of the democracy of Canada in daring to think that women intelligence exists outside of Montreal to run railways. We will give "big business" there, and the Montreal Gazette and the Montreal Star a big share ownership of railways has come to stay. The Canadian people are not fools enough to put any more money into private pockets, or hand over any more public property free, under the pretence that private railway operation will give full corresponding value. We in this country may have a while elsewhere on our hands in the railway case, but we will manage the least as best we can ourselves rather than turn it over to the friends of "big business" to have it trample on us at their behest.

Returning the Favor.

"Have you ever made a serious attempt to return your favor now?"

"Often," replied Senator Sorghum. "But on one occasion I went too far. I got my community so thoroughly informed that the tides began to study me to see if they couldn't discover some weak point that might permit them to temporarily."—Washington Star.

Benny's Note Book

BY LEE PAPE

This afternoon ma sent me to the egg store for a pound of butter, and 2 ladies was in there and I waited for them to get thro, wich they did as slow as possible, and jest wile I was waiting for the man to ask me wat I wanted some other lady that jest came in sed, Will you wait on me, please?

Certeny, sed the man. Me thinking, Heck, darn it, I was ahed of her.

And the lady asked for a duzzin strickly fresh eggs and the man gave her the first duzzin he could reetch, proving she mite as well of jest asked for a duzzin eggs, and she went out with them, being a thin lady with a fat pockit book, and jest then another lady sed, Kindly wait on me, please.

Certeny, sed the man.

Wich he did. Being a long lady with a short nose, me thinking Gosh, holey smoaks, I aint going to stay heer all my life.

Wich jest then another lady came in, saying, Would you mind waiting on me? Being a middle size lady with pointy feet, and the man sed, Certeny, jest a moment, as soon as I give this lady her cheese. Me thinking, Good nite, wats he thinks I am a benefit?

Wich jest then another lady came in, being a skinnie lady with a expression as if she was going to try to get ahed of me too. Me thinking, No sir, darn if she will. And I quick got rite in frunt of her and she sed, Get away from under my feet, boy, cant you see ware your going, will you wait on me please?

Certeny, sed the man, and I quick sed, Hay, I bin heer a half hour alreddy.

Well wy dident you speek up long ago, wats yours? sed the man, meaning wat did I want. Wich I told him and he gave it to me and I went out with it. Proving if you dont speek up for your rites nobodys libel to know you got any.

A BIT OF VERSE

BEING YOUNG.

(Anon.)

There is no treasure sought of sun,
So sweet as that of being young.
Monarchs look down upon the boy
And envy him his years of joy;
Rich men the bare-foot lad behold
And for his chance would give their fame
Their vanished youth once more to claim.

He that hath youth still holds the seeds
Of greatness and its manly deeds;
To him the morning skies are fair
And there is beauty everywhere;
Upon his heart no burden lies—
Fears have not over-drained his eyes;
The glories of the world remain
For him to fight for and to gain.
There's none so great of rich but he
Wishes once more a boy to be;
Life grants to none such treasures rare
As those which youth alone may share—
The glow of health, the radiant smile,
The freedom from the sham of style,
Great deeds not done, and songs unsung,
Belong to him who still is young.

Richer is he than millionaire
Who has not yet come into care;
Monarchs will all that they possess
And all their pomp and regal dress
Have no such bank accounts of joy
As those belonging to a boy;
Like shining pearls the years are strung
For him to count who still is young.

THE LAUGH LINE

Books are a wonderful help to a man—especially a bank book.

Good at Watching Others.

"Somehow or other," said Uncle Rube, "the man that ain't never learned to do no regular work himself allus manages to get ahead up will do nothin but he would make a good boss."—Washington Star.

Wanted Demonstration.

Baby—"Are you the trained nurse mamma said was coming?"

The Nurse—"Yes, dear, I'm the trained nurse."

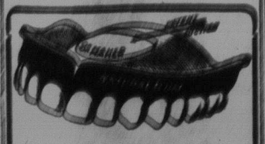
Baby—"Let's see some of your tricks."

Fact.

"I see a man has been fined for eating fruit in a railway carriage."

"That's rather tart, isn't it?"

"Fact, I assure you. He was trying to stave the date off his ticket. You see, it happened to be an old one."



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Two U. S. Cruisers Are Sold For Junk

Minneapolis and Marblehead Helped Make Naval History.

Oakland, Cal., Dec. 14.—Two former proud cruisers, the Minneapolis and the Marblehead, which helped make American naval history during the Spanish war, were sold for junk here recently and are being dismantled at as Oakland shipyard.

Junk dealers purchased the two veteran vessels from the navy department recently for approximately $50,000. When the ships were built about 20 years ago they cost almost $6,000,000. The junk dealers say they hope to take from the vessels material worth about $500,000.

First to go to the junk yard was the Minneapolis, a second-class protected cruiser, built in 1891 of 7,350 tons displacement. Workmen with gas torches immediately started to cut away at her sides, her mahogany furniture was removed, her decks cut out and soon flat cars were carrying away huge pieces of steel. Soon after the workmen started, a fire broke out on the vessel and nearly destroyed it. The Marblehead, a little third-class cruiser, built in 1890, of 2,075 tons displacement, follows the Minneapolis to the graveyard.

The name of the Marblehead was wired around the world when, during the Spanish war, in company with the cruiser Nashville she entered the harbor of Cienfuegos, Cuba, and cut a cable, while under fire. The Minneapolis was one of the ships of the famous "flying squadron" under Commodore Schley.

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ROUMANIANS BACKED FORMER EMPEROR CHAS

King Pledged Support Hapsburg Coup d' Etat, Gratitude for Mediation.

Budapest, Dec. 14.—Sensational revelations that ex-Emperor Charles claimed to have been acting on the strength of a written pledge by the King of Roumania in favor of the Hapsburg restoration in Hungary were made in the Diet during the discussion of a resolution to lift the parliamentary immunity of Count Sigray, former Ambassador Gerard's brother-in-law, Count Andrassy, and two other leaders in the Karlist putsch and to permit their trial for high treason. The Government spokesman declared that Colonel Lehar, a brother of the composer of "The Merry Widow," came to Budapest sometime before the coup d'etat to win over the officers of the Budapest garrison and was provided with a statement from Charles that King Ferdinand had promised in writing that Roumania would show her gratitude for the ex-Emperor's attitude during the peace negotiations of Bucharest when Charles opposed the severe German demands by refraining from interference with the movement.

Czecho-Slovakia and Jugoslavia, it was expected, would object vigorously but Lehar stated all preparations had been made for insurrection in Hungary and Croatia which would paralyze Jugoslavia, leaving only the Czechs to be reckoned with. Charles also stated to believe that the big Entente would content itself with the same attitude as adopted toward King Constantine of Greece, viz.: not a formal protest, but the acceptance of a fait accompli.

The Roumanian attitude bore out Charles' hopes, but the failure of the Jugoslav Fishes and the unexpected vigorous attitude of the Entente ruined his plans.

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