

The St. John Standard

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BRITISH POLITICS.

The result of the by-election in Bromley, Kent, retains the seat for the Coalition, but the fact that the Labor candidate reduced the Unionist majority from 12,500 to 1,148 is interesting, though not surprising after the strength shown almost everywhere by the Labor Party during the recent municipal elections throughout Great Britain. Bromley is essentially a middle class district, and has always voted Conservative. If the new middle class movement in England had definite political aspirations, this would have been a model constituency in which to try their 'prentice hand at running a candidate. It is probable that many Liberals who at the general election may have voted for Coalition have at the by-election transferred their votes to the Labor candidate. At the same time it is evident that Labor is coming to the forefront as a political force in Great Britain. This is probably a good thing, since it tends to focus attention upon the possibilities of political action, and disarms the direct actionists, a not inconsiderable and aggressive faction, who would plunge the country into general strikes and civil turmoil. If Labor at the conferences to be held next month decides to fight out the question of nationalization of the mines and other natural monopolies on the political field, instead of trying a general strike, it is probable that Lloyd George may accept the challenge and call a general election without giving Labor a great amount of time to organize its campaign. In that case the Coalition would doubtless be strengthened by the adhesion of those electors who see no hope of a Liberal revival, and who fear the Labor programme.

SPIRITUALISM.

Some months ago all England was laughing at the revelation that Sir Conan Doyle, the creator of Sherlock Holmes, had been duped by a spiritualist medium. Nevertheless The Daily Mail says London is medium mad. Consulting rooms of fashionable mediums are thronged by eager enquirers, and we are assured that while complete strangers are treated to communiques they can secure a fairly interesting second or third sitting, if in the meantime the tools and spirit of the medium have found out something about them.

The revival of interest in the possibility of communiques with the dead is attributed to the heavy losses during the war. Sir Oliver Lodge and Sir Conan Doyle published books declaring that they had communications with their boys and with their comrades who perished on the field of battle. About all that can be said about these communications is that they indicate a world of the dead rather more supple than the world of living, and the exposure of one of Sherlock Holmes' pet mediums ought to make people more satisfied with the world of the senses. At the same time it is perhaps natural that people should wish to communicate with their loved dead, especially those who perished in battle, though it is a rather sorry commentary upon their state of culture that they should be taken in by almost any fakir professing mediumistic powers.

Clergymen of the Protestant faith are busy denouncing the craze for occultism, and the Roman Catholic Church have placed on absolute prohibition upon any dabbling in spiritualism. And they probably have reason. The cardinal doctrine of the Christian religion is not compatible with the claims of the spiritualists. If it was necessary for the Almighty to become incarnate in human form in order to deliver a message to humanity, obscure ghosts of the dead have not much chance of sending authoritative messages through the veil of mystery.

TIME SAVING.

While the world is being reconstructed an overhaul of parliamentary procedure might be in order. Gladstone said that parliamentary time was the nation's treasure, but often it is squandered in prodigal fashion. The privilege or right of members to ask questions of the Ministers is an important one, but much of the time spent in asking and answering questions is sheer waste, particularly in the Local Legislature. If this time was saved, perhaps there would not be the annual spectacle of bills being rushed through in the closing hours of the session with inadequate consideration, and sometimes important matters being laid over. Other provision could be made to give the members the information they and their constituents are entitled to.

Some members use the question paper in order to have their names published in their constituency. It is recorded that a certain Highland member of the Mother of Parliaments was driven to this expedient, because when he addressed the House his elo-

quence was so impetuous that few could follow him and none report him. So he occupied himself writing question till he earned the reputation of being the most inquisitive man who ever confronted a Minister. Of his hobby, Sir Wilfred Lawson observed:

"The Weary Weir with queries queer
The question paper crams;
Oh, was there e'er another weir
That caused so many dams?"

Many of the questions with which members of the Provincial Legislature take up the time of the House could be asked and answered at almost any season of the year. Usually the permanent heads of departments prepare the answers anyway. That long lists of questions, many of purely parochial interest, should be read at least twice on the floor of the House appears a waste of time. They could be handed to the Ministers or deputies, and the answers could be published in bulletins which would go to the newspaper offices. Mostly the questioners are concerned to attain the blessed perquisite of publicity.

AUSTRALIAN AFFAIRS.

The return to power of the Hughes Coalition Government in Australia appears to involve a revision of the constitution of the Commonwealth. Before going to the country Premier Hughes induced Parliament to agree to a programme of legislation designed to curb profiteering and shackle local and international trusts, a programme which involved interference with the rights and powers of the various States forming the Federation. In spite of considerable opposition from the States' Rights' factions, Hughes drove his measures through the Commonwealth Parliament, and proceeded to put them in operation; though his course is subject to ratification by a national referendum. It is expected that the need of increased authority on the part of the Commonwealth Government to deal with conditions which have developed during the war will lead to a national convention next year to recast the whole Constitution of the Commonwealth.

CARLETON COUNTY.

The Globe: "Interesting is the report which comes from Woodstock that efforts are being made to secure the election to the Legislature by acclamation of a returned soldier who shall be independent. It is within the province of political parties to make what arrangements they choose regarding candidates, but why should the Government be a party to any scheme, arrangements, plan or deal in connection with the Carleton County vacancy? The constituency is entitled to a member to fill the place of one who died—has been entitled to that member ever since the vacancy occurred. The one and only reason why an election was not ordered more than a year ago was the Government's fear that the result might be the election of one who would not be in accord with the Government policy. For this cause, and for no other, Carleton County has been deprived of representation for two sessions, and may be still longer deprived of representation if the negotiations for the acclamation of a soldier fail. While the election of an opposition supporter or a member of the United Farmers' Organization. They should not be deprived of their rights because of party political considerations."

The Board of Trade Journal says: "A civic bureau in the United States asks us for information as to what part the women of St. John are playing in the chamber of commerce movement. Our answer is: directly, none; indirectly, a wonderful part. Direct service from the women of St. John in the councils of commerce can only be expected when there are no hospitals to be built or enlarged, no sick or distressed to be cared for, no helpless little children to be mothered, no orphanages to be helped, no poor to be fed and clothed, no playgrounds to be supported, no kindergarten to be sustained, no patriotic work to be done, no soldier service to be performed, no churches to be kept running, no human suffering to be alleviated. These are the movements in which our women are playing a wonderful part, and which, indirectly,

affect the very vitals of commerce." A lady correspondent writing to The Standard recently wondered why women were not invited to help in the work which the Commercial Club has undertaken. Evidently she thought women had time for greater activities. Perhaps the high cost of living makes them think men need help in running the business affairs of the community.

It is reported that Mr. Bryan is to tour the country under his own auspices for the benefit of the Democratic party. Kind friends suggest that he hopes to benefit his own chances of the Democratic nomination. He is reported to have no sympathy with President Wilson's jamming through programme in respect to the Peace Treaty.

A Philadelphia Church offered a pound of sugar recently to every attendant of the men's Bible class. Result, big interest in classes. What would happen if Sunday School superintendents offered a pound of bon-bons to all pupils attending Sunday School classes? Most would go bankrupt.

The statements issued yesterday by Mr. Lockhart, Collector of Customs, showing a big increase in the custom entries at the port of St. John, will be pleasing news to all citizens. It affords an additional proof that St. John and the Province generally are enjoying a good measure of prosperity.

American physicians say that real old-fashioned whiskey ought to be administered in every case of supposed wood alcohol poisoning. Recent cases indicate large risk in arriving at a prescription.

WHAT THEY SAY

Queer Ireland.

(Hamilton Spectator.) As the unbiased opinion of an outsider, the statement of Mr. S. S. McClure, the big U. S. publisher, after a three months' visit to Ireland, that it is the most prosperous, comfortable and law-abiding country in the world, should bear material weight. Sinn Feiners, however, will vigorously dissent to the two former characteristics, and their numerous outrages will cast a strong element of doubt on the latter one.

Same Old Story.

(Hamilton Times, Lib.) The other day the Hon. Mr. Raney, the Attorney-General, was denounced by some farmers' unions because he had appointed a woman to a position in the public service. Now the Hon. Mr. Nixon, the Provincial Secretary, is being threatened over an appointment in London, the party henchmen believing that they should have a say in the appointment. If the farmers are to take this stand in regard to public office we might as well recall Sir William Hearst to his old job.

A BIT OF FUN

Healthy.

"It is healthy to breathe through your nose, isn't it?" remarked the Old Fogey.
"Yes," replied the Grouch. "You can't talk when you are breathing through your nose."

Nautical Information.

Tenderfoot—"Why do they have

Benny's Note Book

BY LEE PAPE

Me and Puds Simkins was leaning against Pudes back fence last Saturday feeling glad there wasn't any school and I sed, G, I jest thout of a grate idee to make some money.

Wat? How? sed Puds, and I sed Cracking nuts for people. I can get a iron if you can get a hammer, and we'll ring people doorbells and ask them if they got any nuts to crack. Jest think of all the people that ruin their teeth by cracking nuts with them because they ain't got any nut crackers.

G, all rite, maybe we'll make about 2 dollars apiece maybe, sed Puds. And he went in his house and got a hammer and went around to my house with me. I got a iron and we went up in the next block and started to ring doorbells, wick after we had rang the first one about 10 times some lady stuck her head out of the 3rd story window. Being a red looking lady with a thing tied over her head and the end of a broom in her hand, saying, wat is it wat is it are you trying to brake the bell?

Have you got any nuts to crack? Puds called up.
Eny wat? sed the lady, and I called up, Eny nuts, we'll crack them with this hammer and iron for 10 cents a pound and prevent you from ruining your teeth.

I hate nuts, is that wat you brawt me from the back of the house for? Get off those steps or I'll throw a pale of wattr on you, sed the lady. And she slammed down the window and Puds sed, Heck, that was pritty neer a insult.

Some people dont know wen youre trying to do them a favor, I sed And we rang the next doorbell, and a long skinnie man opened the door, me saying, Have you eny nuts to crack, mister?

Wats that? yelled the man opening his mouth so wide he showed he had half empty spaces and half teeth insted of all teeth. And he jumped out and aimed 2 kicks at us, missing both of us on account of jumping so quick, and then he went in and slammed the door as if he was mad, wick he properly was, and Puds sed, This is a heck of a way to make money you can crack nuts for people by yourself if you want to.
Wich I didnt.

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knots on the ocean instead of miles?"
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"I won't give my consent."
"But, father, I tell you he has enough money for us to start on."
"What does that mean?" Taxi fare to the station?—Louisville Courier-Journal.

She—I told you to ask me in six months about accepting the ring.
Jack DeBrooke—Well?
She—Well, the six months are up, DeBrooke—Yes; unfortunately, so is the ring.

"Is it my money he is after?" a woman used to murmur, when a man came around whispering fine things."

"Well?"
"Now she says 'Is he after my vote?'"
The great ocean liner rolled and pitched.

"Henry," faltered the young bride, "do you still love me?"
"More than ever, darling," was Henry's fervent answer.

Then there was an eloquent silence.
"Henry," she gasped, turning her pale, ghastly face away. "I thought that would make me feel better, but it doesn't!"

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