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ST. JOHN, N. B., SATURDAY, JUNE 23, 1917.

"We are fighting for a worthy purpose, and we shall not lay down our arms until that purpose has been fully achieved."—H. M. The King.  
TO THE PEOPLE OF THE EMPIRE—Every fighting unit we can send to the front means one step nearer peace.

## A SERIOUS SITUATION.

During the past few weeks several unfortunate incidents in St. John have created a feeling of uneasiness. A strike, conducted by a number of employees of master plumbers but not including, so far as The Standard is able to learn, the whole former membership of the plumbers' union, has been in effect. There is at all times a public sentiment in sympathy with workmen of any class who desire to obtain for themselves what may be regarded as fair and reasonable treatment in the way of wages, and hours and conditions of work. In the present instance the particular demands made by the striking workmen are not very clearly understood by the public at large and perhaps for this reason sentiment in favor of the dissatisfied workmen is not as strong as it might otherwise be. On the other hand the several incidents referred to have created and are still developing in the public mind a serious condemnation of those who are now on strike and whether this adverse opinion is justified or not will depend to a very large extent on whatever explanations or evidence may be adduced by the men themselves.

The property of a master plumber, situated a few miles from the city, was destroyed by fire. The property of another master plumber in St. John was made the object of an attempt at arson. Most serious of all—and this is sufficient to arouse the community to a very strong feeling—is the circumstance of the death of Robert Harris. The victim in this case was a young man employed as a plumber, who a few evenings ago was struck on the head by a stone or piece of brick and died in the St. John Infirmary.

Whether with or without cause, the truth not yet being known, the activities of the police have been directed to members of the plumbers' union now on strike as the guilty parties in two at least of these affairs. Naturally public sentiment is formed according to the lines of activity displayed by those in authority and the feeling among the majority of St. John people today is that the striking plumbers or their sympathizers have been responsible for the murder of young Harris and the destruction of Mr. Crawford's property. This is a very grave situation, confronting a group of men who may or may not be entirely innocent. And so long as suspicion points to that group through police activities and otherwise, they will fail to enjoy the sympathy of the independent public in their efforts to obtain proper recognition. It is the duty of the plumbers' union, if that body is officially on strike, to produce absolute evidence clearing every member from the suspicion of implication in either of these lawless acts. If on the other hand any ill-advised or criminal-minded members of that body have been guilty of these serious violations of the law their fellow members should lose no time in assisting to bring the culprits to justice. Let them act at once.

## AS TO "THE BLOKS."

Judging from published reports of recent anti-conscription meetings in the province of Quebec a favorite diversion of the wind-jammers who, on such occasions, declaim against the "injustice" of compulsory military service, is to speak disparagingly of men born in the British Isles who have come to Canada to live. "Blocs" and "immigrants" seem to be favorite terms by which to address these men.

It should not be forgotten, first, that for many years Canada has been very glad to get these "blocs" to come to this country and make their home with us. Prior to the outbreak of war elaborate and costly advertising campaigns were conducted by the Dominion immigration department and by every one of the Canadian provinces, for the purpose of placing the advantages of this country before the very men who are now the subject of the abuse of the Montreal Quebec "soap-box" epileptics. They have been good citizens and Canada has been glad to honor them.

Secondly, it is probably not too much to say that the "blocs," as they are contemptuously termed, made up the greater part of the first Canadian contingent, even today the parts of Canada showing the greatest proportion of British born have led in the recruiting returns, a recent statement to the House of Commons showing indubitably that in voluntary enlistment in the Canadian forces the "blocs" led all the rest, while those who, today, fight with their tongues on the squares and market places of Montreal and Quebec supplied fewer soldiers in proportion to their population than any other element in the country. Those familiar with the personnel of the first battalions that have gone from New Brunswick do not need to be told what a large proportion of British born was to be found on every muster roll and the same can be said, only in greater degree, of every other Canadian province.

No matter what French-Canadians may think, it certainly is not prudent for agitators of that race to make statements such as those referred to. Men of British birth coming here are not coming amongst strangers, but come to a country that is every bit as British as the one they left. Canada is part and parcel of the British Empire and shall always remain so—the province of Quebec included—and so long as the glorious old Union Jack waves over this fair land just so long will the "blocs" be welcomed.

The French-Canadians are a fine people, but in the past they have been deceived and they are being deceived and misled today by the Lauriers and the Lemieuxs of the Liberal party, but they must be made to realize that outside of the province of Quebec there is a great throbbing world and that no people can live to themselves alone without suffering deterioration. They must learn to look beyond the St. Lawrence and the Ottawa, and that is one great lesson the experiences of this war will help to inculcate.

If French-Canadians properly understood what is at issue in this war they would not hesitate to do their part

and the men who now engage in abusing the "blocs" would be found glad and willing to come forward to fight side by side with those same British born in the battle of democracy and freedom against the most tyrannical species of oppression ever inflicted upon the civilized world.

Suppose, as Sir George Foster pointed out on Monday, Germany should win and should succeed in forcing her way through the cordon of British warships in the North Sea and should land an invading army on the banks of the St. Lawrence, the churches in Belgium and Northern France and the atrocious treatment meted out to priests and nuns by the invaders of that country tell what would happen in the event of an invasion of Canada. If there is no invasion it is only because the might of the British fleet, manned by "blocs," such as French-Canadian orators today abuse, stands between the province of Quebec and harm. The men French-Canadians today assail are in reality paying the premium for the safety of their traduced. That is the whole story. There is nothing else. And when any speaker, no matter how excitable he may be, refers to the British born in Canada as "blocs," then he is insulting the representatives of that race that has made it possible for Quebec and all Canada to live in safety and prosperity.

## NO REFERENDUM.

With but few exceptions the English Liberal newspapers in Canada have disapproved of Sir Wilfrid Laurier's suggestion to fight the war by referendum and now that a French-Canadian anti-conscriptionist has gone one further and moved that the conscription proposal be given the "six months' test," Sir Wilfrid does not stand to secure even the support of his own province.

Mr. Barrette's proposal for the "six months' test" does not merit serious consideration for a minute, and it is not likely that it will receive it. Its sole purpose is to remove the conscription measure from the realm of parliamentary consideration for half a year, and it proposes no useful substitute, suggests no alternative, merely plans to throw the whole subject out of the window and declare to the world that Canada has quit.

Sir Wilfrid is sufficiently crafty to go further than his co-speechmaker. He professes to be concerned only with submitting the question to the people, and he is willing that the soldiers serving overseas should be given the opportunity to declare themselves on the proposal. Ordinarily and aside from all political considerations there might be something to commend the idea of the Liberal leader to common sense and judgment, but today, with Canadian armies in France and Flanders locked in a death grip with the foe, it is not to be heard of.

This war cannot be fought or won by referendum. Conditions are serious, the question is too vital. What is to be done must be done quickly and too much time has already been wasted. Interrupting Mr. Lemieux on Tuesday Sir Herbert Ames struck the keynote

when he said: "Instead of talking here, wasting time, you should be sending men to the front." That is the only question of importance. Germany will not wait while Canada is cavessing public opinion whether we shall invoke compulsion to secure the 100,000 men needed to fill the Canadian armies and repair the terrible wastage of war. The need is for action and at once. The English Liberal newspapers to their everlasting credit see and realize this and it is this fact and no other which causes men like Hugh Guthrie, Fred Pardee and Dr. Michael Clark to break with the Liberal party. These men are as strongly Liberal now as at any time in their parliamentary career but, faced with the need of the time, they are prepared to sacrifice their party in order to lend their support to the measure that will best and most quickly supply Canadian soldiers where they are needed—on the battle fields of France and Flanders.

Messrs. Guthrie, Pardee and Clark have seen the vision. Sir Wilfrid Laurier, still blinded by the beam of partyism, has missed it. In that he has lost an opportunity and has failed to live up to his position. There can be, there will be, no referendum. Canada is at war and will continue to the finish no matter what the cost. The great heart of the Canadian people beats with the Government in this hour and beats truly.

## SIR ROBERT PROMOTED RECRUITING

(Continued from Page 3)  
Dealing directly with the question of how best to make the men who should go to the front go there, Mr. Graham declared that the conscription bill had been thrown into the arena of public opinion in a most irritating and awkward way.

Conscription Necessary.  
There has been no necessary implication that compulsion would be resorted to, and no education of the people in respect to this move. However, he believed that conscription was necessary and that the government was not to vote against any measure that would have the effect, directly or indirectly, of assisting in the prosecution of the war.

In regard to the referendum amendment, Mr. Graham took the ground that the people would be consulted on the issue any way, through a general election. The government was already preparing for an election and had been preparing for it for months. The Prime Minister had suggested only a few days ago that the people should be consulted before this bill was put in force. An election, said Mr. Graham, would practically serve the same purpose as a referendum, since the people, in electing their representatives, would give their verdict as to what the next parliament should do and who should do it.

Favors Election.  
"I believe," he said in conclusion, "that the people of Canada would be asked to divide on this issue among us as individuals, for on this question we are not divided into parties. Many on the other side of the house accept the view of some gentlemen on this side of the house, and some on this side accept the view of the majority on the other side. We will have to go to our electors upon our personal attitude in this matter, and I believe that an appeal to the people through an election would clear the atmosphere as nothing else would. For the reasons which I have given, and for others which I have not time at present to deal with, I intend to vote against the proposal of a referendum and in favor of the bill."

Sir Thomas White.  
Sir Thomas White said that he proposed to discuss the bill in the spirit of moderation which had characterized the remarks of the majority of speakers who had preceded him. This was probably the greatest debate that had ever taken place in the house. It had produced great speeches made by men from the sincerity of their hearts. He could quite understand the wrench it gives a man to sever ties of party allegiance. On the government side of the house it was realized that those who differ from the government's proposal

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**Little Benny's Note Book.**  
The Park Ave. News.  
Cut in the Lip with a Spoon. Wile Benny Potts and his cousin Artie Alexander was scraping a pudding bowl and racing to see which could get the most. Artie Alexander missed his mouth and stuck himself in the lip with the spoon. Not being serious enough to call an ambulance, but being serious enough to make Artie Alexander lose about 7 strokes.  
Military News. Kumply B. consisting of General Martin, Captain Potts, Lieutenant Wernick, Kernel Simkins, Sargent Hunt and Private Percy Weaver, is willing to go to war with Kernel Roosevelt if he will leave them all keep their different officers ranks, all except Private Percy Weaver, who sees he is tired of being the only private and wooden go even if Kernel Roosevelt came and asked him himself.  
Short Story.  
Almost a Hour Late.  
Hay, miater, sed Puds Simkins, will you please tell me the time, please?  
Time? Serieny. Its jest 20 minutes after 7, p.m.  
The next meal Puds Simkins had was breakfast.  
Sports. A cap pitching contest was held last Saturday, the object being to see who could make their hat stick up on top of the last post. Sam Cross winning just as Platfoot the cap came and stood down at the corner for about half a hour. Sam Cross jest standing there looking innocent, not feeling like climbing up after his cap till Platfoot went away, on account of it properly being against the law.  
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