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LONDON, SATURDAY, JANUARY 6, 1917

POLITICAL ORGANIZATION
OF THE EMPIRE

The Toronto Daily News, in common with most observant and thoughtful Canadians, holds that after the War the organization of the Empire will be one of the questions insistently demanding solution. In the course of an article on the subject it says:

"Whether or not all Canadians favor a new Imperial Parliament for the purpose of defence and the conduct of foreign relations, it is quite clear that after the war some fresh machinery must be set up. Most of our people are now ready to concede this much."

They have not got very far in the consideration of the problem who concede vaguely that "some fresh machinery must be set up;" little if any further than those who refuse all consideration because they call all such questions "Imperialism" and think that quite sufficient.

That the new Prime Minister of England is about to call together the Prime Ministers of the various overseas Dominions is a fact of great significance. It emphasizes the importance of a question which we have frequently proposed as one imperatively demanding thought, study and discussion, if Canadians are to decide intelligently the future of Canada.

In the same article The News says: "The other side of the picture is that the so-called Imperial Government has no real authority over the self-governing Dominions for whose safety it is responsible, and that it has to depend for the revenue necessary for Imperial defence upon taxes voted by the people of the British Isles alone, supplemented by the voluntary contributions of overseas communities. This loose plan is neither consistent with the determination of the Dominion peoples to be fully self-governing, nor with the growing necessity for a representative authority which can handle properly the rapidly multiplying problems of the Empire."

Without that consideration which it deserves some "loose plan" setting up "fresh machinery" and involving "voluntary contributions of overseas communities" may be accepted by Canadians as a compromise settlement of a question which will certainly present itself for solution after peace has been restored.

For the moment we shall consider only the question of "voluntary contributions" of taxes for any purpose to a Government responsible only to a Parliament in which Canada is not represented. Any such contributions, voluntary or otherwise, would be subsversive of the very root-principle of responsible government. For it is from the basic right of the people through their representatives to give or withhold the revenues that all development of real self-government originated seven centuries ago; and it was through respect for this irrefragable principle that responsible self-government has been preserved. For be it remembered that there has been no continuous democratic progress. Far from it. Often the usurpations of kings, and the not less objectionable and dangerous usurpations of the oligarchy which has ruled England since the Reformation down to very recent times, made self-government little more than an empty term; and the growth of democracy has been openly feared, hated and thwarted by the ruling classes.

Professor Greene, in his "Short History of the English People," paints the following picture of what we often unthinkingly refer to as the British democracy:

From the time of Charles II. to that of George III. not a single effort had been made to meet the growing

abuses of our Parliamentary system. Great towns like Manchester or Birmingham remained with a member, while members still sat for boroughs which, like Old Sarum, had actually vanished from the face of the earth. The effort of the Tudor sovereigns to establish a Court party in the House by a profuse creation of boroughs, most of which were mere villages then in the hands of the Crown, had ended in the appropriation of these seats by the neighboring land-owners, who bought and sold them, as they sold their own estates. Even in towns which had a real claim to representation, the narrowing of municipal privileges ever since the fourteenth century to a small part of the inhabitants, and in many cases the restriction of electoral rights to the members of the governing corporation rendered their representation a mere name. The choice of such places hung simply on the purse or influence of politicians. Some were "the King's boroughs," others obediently returned nominees of the Ministry of the day, others were "close boroughs" in the hands of jobbers like the Duke of Newcastle who at one time returned a third of all the borough members in the House.

The counties and the great commercial towns could alone be said to exercise any real right of suffrage, though the enormous expense of contesting such constituencies practically left their representation in the hands of the great local families. But even in the counties the suffrage was ridiculously limited and unequal. Out of a population, in fact, of eight millions of English people, only a hundred and sixty thousand were electors at all.

How far such a House was from really representing English opinion we see from the fact that in the height of his popularity Pitt could hardly find a seat in it. When he did find one, it was at the hands of a great borough-jobber, Lord Clive. Purchase was the real means of entering Parliament.

Seats were bought and sold in the open market at a price which rose to £4,000 and we can hardly wonder that the younger Pitt cried indignantly at a later time: "This House is not the representative of the People of Great Britain. It is the representative of nominal boroughs, of ruined and exterminated towns, of noble families, of wealthy individuals, of foreign potentates." The meanest motives naturally told on a body returned by such constituencies, cut off from the influence of public opinion by the secrecy of Parliamentary proceedings, and yet invested with almost boundless authority. Newcastle had made bribery and borough-jobbing the base of the powers of the Whigs.

George III. seized it in his turn as the base of the power he purposed to give to the Crown. The Royal revenue was employed to buy seats and to buy votes. Day by day, George himself scrutinized the voting-list of the two Houses, and distributed rewards and punishments as members voted according to his will or not. Promotion in the civil service, preferment in the Church, or rank in the army was reserved for "the King's friends."

Pensions and court places were used to influence debates. Bribery was employed on a scale never known before. Under Bute's ministry an office was opened at the Treasury for the bribery of members, and £25,000 are said to have been spent in a single day.

Nevertheless, all through this time of oligarchical government or misgovernment one principle was held sacred; that the people through their representatives controlled the revenue, and that the Government was responsible to these representatives. The very bribery and corruption that for the time being made representative and responsible government a farce, yet respected this principle. Indeed the buying of votes in the House of Commons was, in a way, homage paid to the inviolability of the principle.

In the Seven Years' War the British Parliament provided the funds. The American colonies benefited enormously. Following this war the British Parliament provided the men and the money to protect the colonies in Pontiac's War. Here the benefit was primarily if not exclusively American. Yet when the British Parliament attempted to collect from the unrepresented colonies revenue to help defray the expenses of these wars, the Colonists rightly refused to contribute.

As a Minister, Pitt had long since rejected a similar scheme for taxing the colonies. He had been ill and absent from Parliament when the Stamp Act was passed, but he adopted to the full the constitutional claim of America.

Writes Green:

He gloried in the resistance which was denounced in Parliament as rebellion. "In my opinion," he said, "this kingdom has no right to lay a tax on the colonies. America is obstinate! America is almost in open rebellion! Sir, I rejoice that America has resisted. Three millions of people so dead to all the feelings of liberty as voluntarily to submit to be slaves would have been fit instruments to make slaves of the rest."

Lionel Curtis in his "Problem of the Commonwealth" dealing with self-government in America unreservedly agrees with Pitt and the American rebels:

"Had such a principle," he writes, "been practicable at all, the greater national interests of American life would have passed from the control of their representatives to that of the people of Great Britain. In the end they would have controlled none of their affairs other than those which are today controlled by the provincial government of an American State. The British Government had embarked on the one course which was necessarily fatal, and the result was a revolution in which the Americans secured their independence and the British Commonwealth was torn asunder and brought to the verge of destruction."

Nor is the project of "voluntary contributions" on the part of the Colonies to Imperial revenue a new idea. At one of our Imperial Conferences all the Colonies except Canada accepted the plan. Canada alone with clearer vision and more intelligent loyalty firmly rejected the reactionary proposal. In the "Problem of the Commonwealth" the matter is thus spoken of:

For some years such contributions were voted by all the colonies south of the line. In 1900 the six Australian colonies were merged in the Australian Commonwealth and the national government of Australia continued these contributions, until some objection was raised on the ground that the practice was contrary to the principle of responsible government. The Commonwealth parliament was free as air to make or withhold the contribution. But at the moment the Commonwealth parliament had voted the contribution they lost control of its administration. Its expenditure, however guarded by conditions imposed on the grant, yet lay in the hands of a ministry responsible not to the parliament and electorate of Australia, but only to the parliament and people of the British Isles. The backward tendency of this principle can be seen by the simple process of picturing its application to every branch of the public service. Suppose that the Australian parliament, having framed and voted estimates for all the departments, were content to entrust the expenditure of the total sum to the Imperial ministry, it would clearly have reverted from responsible to unrepresentative government. Responsible government can exist only in so far as the laws, and especially those relating to the expenditure of money, are executed in detail by ministries liable to be dismissed from office by the same electorate as that which votes the money. Public opinion in Australia refused to perpetuate an arrangement which violated this principle and insisted that, in future, the ships must be purchased, equipped, manned, and controlled by ministers responsible to, or, in plain words dismissible by, Australians. A demand for powers to create and maintain navies of their own on the part of Australia, and presently of Canada, was the practical result of an instinct which forbids a people which has once put its hand to the plough of self-government to look back.

Whether you agree or disagree with the studies of the Round Table groups, one thing at least stands out in bold relief in their presentation of the problem now confronting us. They have given serious and intelligent study to the question. Clearness of thought and definiteness of proposal characterize their writings. Amongst the half baked theories which they unhesitatingly reject are those which under any guise involve taxation without representation.

Whatever may be the nature of the plans for the political organization of the Empire, whether they be discussed informally at the coming Imperial Conference or not, it is idle to propose anything in the form of Colonial contributions, voluntarily given or arbitrarily imposed, so long as the Colonies are unrepresented in the Parliament which assumes the entire responsibility of Imperial government and Imperial expenditure.

The principle involved is so fundamental, so essential that its surrender or violation would imperil the whole fabric of responsible self-government.

LOW WATER MARK

George W. Perkins criticized the note, declaring that the United States is not ready for peace. "Declaration of peace will automatically put many of our men out of work and will give employment to many of Europe's laborers," he pointed out.

The above was clipped from a number of comments on the President's peace note by prominent men as given in the New York Times.

Comments of all sorts, of course, there have been, from enthusiastic praise to fierce condemnation. But Mr. Perkins, the prominent Republican and sometime prominent Progressive, strikes a note peculiarly

his very own. Peace would throw a lot of Americans out of work!

Time was when abandoned men deliberately lured ships on to the rocks that they might profit from the spoils of the wreck. Here is a rare instance of evolution. The wreckers' philosophy finds its appropriate twentieth century development in George W. Perkins' political solicitude for American labor menaced by an untimely peace.

A day or so after Mr. Perkins issued a lengthy signed statement finding fault with President Wilson's Note, but on other grounds. Perhaps someone pointed out to him that his first comment as reported had touched a new low water mark even in American politics.

RUTHENIAN PRESBYTERIANS

Speaking of the darker side of proselytism as practiced by the Jews Dr. Smith says: "Where force was not in their power, they obtained their ends by most unscrupulous fraud. Those who were most active in proselytizing were precisely those from whose teaching all that was most true and living had departed. The vices of the Jew were engrafted on the vices of the heathen who was released from the obligations which he had before recognized."

Three or four years ago proselytizing Presbyterians in Canada were so lost to all sense of honesty or shame that they had Ruthenian perverts masquerade as priests, and, dressed in the sacerdotal vestments, travesty the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, in their devilish zeal to seduce Ruthenian Catholics from the faith of their fathers.

If proselytizers, Jew or Gentile, Greek or barbarian, ever before obtained their ends by more "unscrupulous fraud" than this, we have never heard of it. "Woe to you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites; because you go round about sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he is made, you make him the child of hell two-fold more than yourselves." (Matt. xxiii. 15.)

This unholo zeal animated by naked and unashamed hatred of the Catholic Church is recalled by the press accounts of a Ruthenian Presbyterian synod at Saskatoon. The first day's proceedings were so lively that several delegates had to be ejected from the meeting. The next day was not altogether dull either, as may be gathered from this press despatch:

Saskatoon, Dec. 28.—The session of the Ruthenian Presbyterian Synod in St. Thomas' Church to-day was even more exciting than the stormy session of yesterday. M. Zary, of Canora, had been addressing the meeting for about five minutes when Mayor Young came in. Recognizing the mayor, Chairman Bodruk told M. Zary that he should confine his remarks to an additional three minutes, whereupon M. Zary reached into his coat pocket and drew out an egg, which he threw at the chairman. Rev. Mr. Bodruk ducked under the table.

Missing the chairman with his first egg, Zary immediately turned and threw another egg at Paul Grath, secretary of the meeting, which struck him on the shoulder. At the same time Grath, thinking that Chairman Bodruk had been tumbled over by a stone, picked up his table and dropped it on the head of Zary, who was standing just in front of the chairman's platform. Zary then made a break for the door, running the gauntlet of blows and kicks from the other delegates.

GOD'S NEARNESS TO US

Many outside the fold are shocked at our familiarity with God which is a commonplace amongst us. That we should locate Him in our tabernacles, look upon Him, touch Him with our hands, and even receive Him upon our tongue seems to them not only irreverent but incredible. Yet it is precisely because God is so near to us in the Catholic Church that the truth of her mission is confirmed, that the seal of the Divinity is stamped upon her. All her marks are, in a measure, contained in this one, that she brings God into the midst of His people. If she is one, it is because God, Who is one, dwells in her and in her faithful members who are His temples. If she is holy, it is chiefly because the souls of her children are nourished with the flesh and blood of Him Who is the source of all holiness, and Who, in a visible manner, is received into the heart of each communicant. If she is Catholic, it is because she is not a mere aggregation of individuals, but a living organism, animated by the Spirit of God, bound to expand and develop, ever ancient and ever young with divine vitality. If she is apostolic, it is because she walked with God in Galilee, yea, even put her hand into

the place of the nails and into His sacred side.

These thoughts have been suggested to us by the great mystery of the Incarnation which we are these days commemorating. The outstanding feature of that great mystery is that it brought God so close to us, in the very midst of His people, that He became our Emmanuel. In this not only were our longings satisfied, but also the yearnings of the heart of God; for He has told us that His delights are to dwell with the children of men. In the Garden, Adam walked and conversed with God, and that happy familiarity would have continued had not sin intervened. One of the greatest penalties of sin inflicted upon the people of the Old Law was that it deprived them of the presence of God; for in the day of His wrath He retired into His inaccessible heaven and left the world gloomy and desolate. If the Jews build for themselves idols of gold and copper and clay, it was because they desired to have the object of their worship in their midst.

The Incarnation satisfied that longing in a manner far transcending the most sanguine of human hopes. God not only came back to earth, but was made flesh and dwelt amongst us. He became a child among children, a man among men. Bethlehem is reproduced wherever there is a Catholic Church. The Incarnation is perpetuated by the priest at the altar, and thus God's abiding presence with us is assured for all time. Those terms of endearment which we have heard from the lips of some good pious woman: "O my darling Jesus!" "O my sweet Saviour!" are indications of a lively vivid faith in this personal presence. It is because of belief in the Eucharist that that other presence by which God is everywhere by reason of His essence, exercising His providence over each of us, is more easily realized. If we believe that He is personally present in every Catholic Church throughout the world, it is easier to believe that He is "not far from each one of us, about our path and about our bed and spith out all our ways. Destroy belief in the Eucharist, and you destroy belief in God's Providence.

The world outside the Church today gives us a sad illustration of this. It has banished His Eucharistic presence, and is thus left without God, more forsaken and desolate than were the Jews of old; for there is not even the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night to guide or shelter its children. Being thus abandoned, it has, like the Israelites, made for itself gods, erected idols of wealth, of power, of pleasure and of culture. These are today being smashed to powder. Truly a disillusioned, war-weary and grief-stricken world feels the need of God's personal presence today. A god who is a mere abstraction, a pantheistic personification of nature, a vague nebulous deity to be politely referred to in official State pronouncements, offers little consolation to the broken-hearted wife or mother whose husband or son is lying in some unknown grave on the banks of the Somme. What her heart yearns for is the living presence of the Divine Comforter. She knows that He has said "Come to Me all you who labor and are heavily burdened and I will refresh you." But how can she go to Him? Like Magdalen at the door of the empty sepulchre, she cries out in her anguish "They have stolen away my Lord and I know not where they have laid Him." Hence, thank God, the world is turning to that Church that has perpetuated God's presence in our midst. On bended knees, beneath the lamp of the tabernacle, many of its sorrowful children are realizing that peace promised to people of good will on the night of Christ's Nativity.

THE GLEANER

ON THE BATTLE LINE

General Maurice, Chief Director of Military Operations in the British War Office, states that the conditions in the Valley of the Somme make it impossible to continue the offensive there. The principal obstacles are shell holes filled with water, and fog in the Valley of the Somme, which makes artillery observation difficult. General Maurice says: "We may be able to resume in March," and adds that "We have done the next best thing. The taking over of a section of the French line has kept us busy during the past ten days. The operation has been successful, and I will be glad to tell you the exact extent of the line taken over when I am sure the Germans know the point of junction." The French reports of late have mentioned no points north of the bend of the Somme at Peronne. It will prob-

ably be found when the fog lifts that the British army now holds all the front from a point near Dixmude, on the Yser, where the Belgians take up the task, to a point on the Somme immediately west of Peronne.

Official reports tell of great aerial activity on the part of the French and British airmen directed specially against the blast furnaces and munition plants of the enemy in Lorraine.

At almost the other end of the far-flung battle-line British aviators are busy. They bombarded Turkish camps at Galata, on the Gallipoli Peninsula, on Tuesday, and on Wednesday another group wrecked an important railway bridge east of Adana, in Southern Asia Minor.

Greece is once more in the limelight. A sensational report has been sent out from Saloniki by the Venizelos party to the effect that the Greek troops which surrendered to the Bulgars at Kavala and were thereafter interned in Germany have been ordered by King Constantine to proceed to the Macedonian front to fight against the Allies. The blockade by the Allied fleets of Greece's ports and coasts is still in force, and the Government of Greece has addressed a note to the Entente powers pointing out the growing popular resentment against the blockade.

The Russians continue to retire in Roumania, fighting stubborn rear-guard actions. Petrograd admits that in Eastern Wallacia the Czar's troops have retired to the line of the Rimnik. Berlin says that the Russians have been fighting fiercely to recover the ground lost on Tuesday and on the previous days near Rimnik-Sarat, but that after the Russian counter-attacks failed Prussian and Bavarian infantry "stampeded" the Russians from their new positions. Farther south also strongly entrenched Russian lines were pierced. Three thousand prisoners were taken, making a total of 10,220 Russians captured by Mackensen's army in the battle around Rimnik Sarat. It is clear from the German references to the nature of the fighting that the Russians are causing the Germans heavy losses in these struggles.

Along the Moldavian frontier, about seventy miles to the north of the Wallachian front, the Germans are displaying renewed activity. Petrograd reports the occupation by the enemy of a series of heights near Sezmezo. This attack is the first sign of a revival of the original German plan of driving across Moldavia direct toward Odessa at a point sufficiently far north to avoid the very difficult country in the delta of the Danube. The Dobruja advance has been of less benefit in the working out of the German plan of campaign than Mackensen at first anticipated, and the Russian forces still on the south side of the Danube, aided by British armored cars, are causing the Teutons heavy losses, and tenaciously guarding the river crossings.—Globe Dec. 29.

T. P. O'CONNOR'S LETTER

FEUDALISM DOOMED IN ENGLAND

IRELAND SHOWED THE WAY. REVOLUTIONARY CHANGES AFTER THE WAR

Special Cable to the Catholic Record (Copyright 1916, Central News)

London, Dec. 30.—The attitude of this country toward the American peace proposals has undergone some alterations during the week. The first impressions of the President's note were strongly resentful, especially because of the passage in the note which suggested that the objects of both sides were practically identical. Every man here and in the allied countries regard Germany as an outlaw nation which first forced war upon the world and then conducted it with a savagery unexampled since the Middle Ages. Again Germany was mentioned in the note as apparently equally anxious for the rights of small nations at the very moment when the old savageries of the beginning of the war were renewed daily in the treatment of Belgium, as genuinely as was other countries, especially England, who has suffered gigantic losses of life and treasure in this war, just because Belgium and other small nations were assailed.

All of this is felt to be more than human nature can endure especially from a country like America, which is akin to England, and France in the democratic spirit; the love of liberty and in the hatred and horror over cruelties such as those practiced on the Belgians, Serbs and Armenians. Moreover, the synchronizing, though apparently accidental, of the President's note with the German peace proposals, which the Allies put down to Germany's growing sense of weakness seems suspiciously unfriendly coming at a moment that saw Germany's strength waning and that of the Allies gradually reaching its zenith. Therefore President Wilson has been likened to an unfair referee who breaks up a boxing match when the favorite is going down to inevitable defeat.

However, these impressions have been somewhat modified by the suggestions advanced by various writers, both English and American, that the President's note mentions the claims of the belligerents, not as they are, but as they profess to be, and meant taking Germany's professions at their face value without enquiring further. From this there came next

the inference that President Wilson meant to invite Germany to make good her words by stating her terms. Wilson probably calculating that if this failed, Germany was out of court, while if it succeeded, Germany had to offer terms which would be either so ridiculously high as to again put her out of court, or were so palpably open to haggling as to enable the Allies to consider them.

In spite of all this, I must add that nobody here sees the likelihood of Germany offering terms which England could look upon without betraying her own interests or those of her Allies.

There is one aspect of the tremendous experiment which Mr. Lloyd George has made with his new Ministry which, curiously enough, has not attracted as much attention as it deserves in England or elsewhere. It was he alone who could have originated the daring scheme of uniting in the same Cabinet the extreme Tory and the advanced Labour man; it was this coup and its immediate success which alone enabled him to create a Ministry in face of the open hostility of so many of his former colleagues in the Coalition Ministry. The success of the coup has been more commented upon than its far-reaching consequences.

What does it mean? It means a big social and political revolution in England herself. People absorbed in the tragic perils of the big war for the moment ignore this—perhaps some of them pretend to ignore it. But it is there all the same. It is one of the many evidences that when the war is over, England as well as every other country involved, will face an entirely new world; and that all the divisions and groupings of political parties will be entirely changed. In England, as in many other countries, the land still remains the fundamental basis on which divisions of party are founded. The strange fact, if you examine the inner map of most countries in Europe even to-day, is that the feudal system still has its deep roots in the ground. In Germany it is the Junker who governs the Army, the Fleet, Diplomacy, the policy of the German Emperor; the Kaiser is only the mouthpiece and the embodiment of the other Junkers. It is they and he who have made the war between them.

In England of course, feudalism is not so omnipotent, but it is very nearly so. The House of Lords is for the most part an assembly of British Junkers; Junkers in the sense of landlords with still almost omnipotent powers. Their existence and composition as a legislative chamber is essentially feudal, for it comes from the old idea that the possession of land, very distinct from the possession of any other kind of property, gives the right to political as well as social power. Throughout England to-day still, the big landlord, with full power over the land, almost universally prevails. There are farmers, some big, some little, who for the most part cultivate the soil; but there are few of them who cannot be turned out of their holdings if the landlord so desire. The peasants who till the soil are ill-paid drudges, working for their daily and weekly wages in England, as much as in any country, a complete divorce between the land and the greater part of the population.

This state of things inspired Maurice Hewlett, one of our most brilliant men of letters, with a poem in which the English hind was pictured throughout the ages of English history. It was a poem something on the lines of our own popular poem, "The Man with the Hoe." The point on which Mr. Hewlett most insisted was that throughout all the centuries, with every social and political change through which England has passed, with every change of master at the top, under Norman and Tudor, under Stuart and Hanoverian, under George of to-day and under William the Conqueror, the English hind remains the ill-paid, landless outcast drudge. Which tempts me to this reflection; we had the same feudal system in Ireland; it was imposed on us by centuries, not merely of law but of massacre, eviction, enforced emigration, periodic famine; but to-day Ireland has conquered it, for her three hundred thousand peasant proprietors exist instead of the feudal landlords they have thrown out. It is an extraordinary contrast which suggests many reflections on the two nationalities; the small country has liberated itself, while the larger remains still enslaved to what were once their common masters.

Mr. Lloyd George's Cabinet is one of the first indications that this state of things has heard the words of doom. But behind the scenes there have been going on several other movements which indicate the now universal conviction that the older must go. There is an important committee engaged in discussing the question of agricultural production. This committee is the child of the submarine, for it was brought into existence by the prospect of England having to rely more upon her own food than upon food imported from abroad. The conclusions of the Committee have not yet been published, but I understand that one of its recommendations will be the compulsory expropriation for a time at least of any land which is not cultivated up to its highest point of production. And the persons who are most eager to press this reform on the State are men who hitherto have passed for the most reactionary of Tories.