

THE CANADIAN LIBERAL MONTHLY

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FOLLOW UP—LIBERAL CONFERENCES.

NOW that the experiment of District Liberal Conferences has proved a success by two splendid gatherings in the Province of Ontario, it behooves other Provinces to be up and doing. It is an inspiration to have a gathering of about 300 or more of the active workers from ten Counties to assemble for an exchange of views through the medium of short speeches and resolutions not to mention the effect of social conversation in arousing enthusiasm.

Let other Provinces follow on. In the West a Conference could be held covering the area of each Federal Riding and the Maritime Provinces could choose areas suitable to their local conditions.

The Conferences are composed of leading Liberals from each Municipality or District, and the discussions are on Liberal principles and not particularly on Provincial or Federal affairs. The common bond of principle unites the forces.

CHIEF APOLOGIST OF THE BORDEN GOVERNMENT SAYS NO POLITICS IN CONDUCT OF THE WAR.

THE Hon. Arthur Meighen, who has been well described, as the special apologist for the Government, stated in his recent speech at Montreal that the Government had not sought to conduct the War for the advantage of the Conservative Party. For sheer audacity, this surely is unparalleled. No one knows better than the same Mr. Meighen that the whole **conduct of the War by Canada has been from a Conservative standpoint and under Conservative domination, and that to a very large extent the Canadian War expenditures have been made with a kindly eye to Conservative Party interests.** It is unnecessary to adduce evidence in support of this statement. It is common knowledge in every village, town and city. It has been exhibited in the purchase of supplies, in Civil appointments arising out of the War, even in the Military service, in short, in every phase of the War situation; and oh! the pity of it! **The charge we make against Sir Robert Borden and the Conservative Party is that they did not grasp the awful seriousness of the situation created by the War, and instead of taking counsel with their principal political opponents and thereby bringing about a harmony of interest and action towards real National Service, arrogated to themselves the full power and authority to carry on affairs in the old time political way. In the face of an unprecedented and unparalleled crisis calling for the sacrifice of health, life and wealth by all classes of the community, the Government carried on affairs in the same old partisan**

way, and on the same old principle of, "to the victor belong the spoils." Worse than that, the brains of the country have not been utilized to advantage. There are many able men within the ranks of the Liberal Party unfit for active service, and who would be only too glad to serve their country, without compensation, in useful capacities, but never have they been given an opportunity, except in a very few isolated cases, where their influence is overshadowed by the weight of Conservative numbers.

By way of illustration we find a Conservative in charge of the Pension Board; a Conservative at the head of the Hospital Commission; a Conservative in charge of the Patriotic Fund, a fund subscribed to by the whole people; a Conservative at the head of the Imperial Munitions Board.

Then look at the Directors of **National Service**, eleven in number, all of whom, except possibly one, are Conservatives; also the directing heads of the Militia Service outside of the permanent officials of the Militia Department are all of the same political stripe.

In the **City of Ottawa** thousands of people have been appointed to the Service to meet conditions arising directly from the War circumstances, and in no single instance has an appointment been made after consultation with the Liberal Party. The patronage of these appointments has been largely dispensed by the Ottawa Conservative Members of Parliament.

And yet the Hon. Arthur Meighen says, "we have not sought to conduct the War for the advantage of the Conservative Party."

RETIRING TO PREPARED POSITIONS.

THERE has been a recrudescence of activity among the Conservative forces and General Hughes has surrendered, but before doing so has, by a strategical counter-thrust, cut off Commander Borden's retreat to prepared positions and has held him in the front line by a literary barrage of more than usual intensity. That the General was a tactician was generally conceded; his skillful guerilla operations upon the field of munitions along with Counsellor Allison and others of the S'teenth Company of Fuse-ileers were universally known, but that he was able, even without the assistance of Guide Allison, to pick his trail and circumvent the efforts of his commander to quit the army while on the march and seek safety in a Supreme Court or Privy Council dugout was a surprise to many.

If the situation as alleged by his leading general is authentic—Commander Borden was about to lead a Safety First campaign—the fact will be received with mixed feelings by the Dominion's army of citizens. There will be disgust at their Leader's attempt to find cover, mingled with satisfaction that he will be compelled to fight to the end—however ineffectively—and in the end take his punishment. Indecisive and vacillating, when confronted by the problems his own weakness and incapacity had thrust upon him and beset by intrigues among his own staff, the Commander did not appear capable of bringing up his "tremendous reserve," but sought safety in a retreat to prepared positions.