

The Weekly Ontario

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THURSDAY, APRIL 1, 1915.

"UNCLE" JOHN HYATT.

The death of "Uncle" John Hyatt removes from this life one of the most honorable and lovable characters that has ever enriched the environs of the Bay of Quinte district. No one who knew Uncle John ever doubted the honesty and sincerity of his motives. No one ever associated with him without a certain reverence and affection for one of the kindest and truest of nature's noblemen. He had a shrewd intelligence and a sturdy independence of mind, and he always advocated any cause that he deemed to be right with all the ardor and zeal of an evangel of good. But bigotry, narrowness or self-interest never entered into his appeals. When the Ross government became decadent and corrupt, Uncle John, though a life-long Liberal, took the platform and went from constituency to constituency telling the people it was time for a change. And the change that came in January 1905 was said to be more the result of the earnest sermons of John Hyatt than of any other contributing cause. Last June his stirring and impassioned addresses to the electors of Prince Edward to return a supporter of temperance reform had a potent influence in the great political turn over in that county. Those present at the meeting at Massassaga just prior to the election will recall how a wave of emotion swept over the audience during Uncle John's address, and almost to a man they stood up and declared that they would by their ballots do their part to end the domination of liquor in the province of Ontario. A noble-minded patriot, a true, sincere, great-hearted Christian gentleman has entered into rest. Our public, social and religious life has suffered a grievous loss. Never was the need greater in Canada for men like John Hyatt. It is not pessimism that discerns in the sordidness, the brazen assurance of corrupt men, the popular acclaim of sinuous grafters, the debauching of immigrants and a purchasable electorate, dangers that threaten our representative institutions and the very foundations of our Anglo-Saxon freedom. John Hyatt stood like a rock against all that was false and dishonourable. He pointed out the way to better things and illustrated by his unpretending, manly faith and uncompromising integrity that truth was mighty and should be made to prevail among men.

J. G. Holland must have had such a one as John Hyatt in mind when he wrote,—

God give us men. The time demands
Strong minds, great hearts, true faith and willing hands;

Men whom the lust of office does not kill;
Men whom the spoils of office cannot buy;
Men who possess opinions and a will;
Men who have honor; men who will not lie;
Men who can stand before a demagogue
And damn his treacherous flatteries without winking;

Tall men, sun-crowned, who live above the fog
In public duty and in private thinking!

For while the rabble with their thumb-worn creeds,

Their large professions and their little deeds
Mingle in selfish strife; lo! Freedom weeps!
Wrong rules the land, and waiting Justice sleeps!

THE OLD STORY.

It was unworthy of a man occupying the position of Prime Minister of Canada to attempt in a discussion of a question of tariff policy, to seek to fasten upon his opponents the charge of disloyalty. To say that it was unworthy is to say the least that could be said with regard to it. Sir Robert Borden so far forgot the dignity of his position as to read to the House of Commons, the irrelevant statement which a German paper is alleged to have made with reference to the naval controversy in Parliament some two years ago.

We do not know, and we do not care whether or not an obscure newspaper in the Kaiser's dominion ever made such a statement. Sir Robert Borden once read to the House of Commons what he declared repeatedly was the opinion of the London Economist. It turned out that the London Economist never expressed such an opinion. But, in any event, what a German paper may or may not have said two years ago is of no importance.

If there was any rejoicing among the Prussian militarists over events in Canada, it was

more likely to have been occasioned, as Mr. E. M. Macdonald very effectively retorted, by the knowledge of the fact that Sir Robert Borden had joined hands with, and owed his return to power, largely, to the alliance which he formed in 1911 with the Nationalists of Quebec, who were once described by the Halifax Herald as "violently anti-British and dangerous in the extreme," and who, campaigned in the General Election of 1911 on the cry of no naval assistance to Britain in any shape or form, and by the further knowledge that Sir Robert Borden had taken three of these self-same Nationalists into his Cabinet, and had heaped honors and rewards upon men who threatened to "bore holes in the British flag to breathe the air of liberty."

One of them, indeed, no later than last week when Parliament was speaking with one voice in voting the money to strengthen the hands of the Mother Country in her supreme struggle openly protested against the extravagance of Canada's contribution towards the war issue, and urging that "the moment our soldiers had reached the Old Soil the maintenance of our forces should be looked after by the Allies. This extraordinary outburst was allowed to pass without remonstrance from the Government side. If it, perchance reaches Germany it will, no doubt, cause great joy among the war lords, as emanating from a prominent member of an important section of the Conservative-Nationalist Alliance. If Sir Robert Borden wants to raise issues of this kind, abundant material can be found to answer him.

A NOBLE THIRTEEN.

Mrs. Robert Parmenter, Holloway Street, has received from her brother, Robert McCums-kay of H.M.S. "Imperieuse," a letter from which we quote the following extract,—

"I suppose you know that Cousin Willie Butterworth was killed at the front, and Uncle Bob's two sons, Sidney and Willie Denwood are wounded. Willie Denwood is a prisoner in Germany. Sidney has gone to the front again. There are thirteen of us serving with the colours, so that is not so bad, is it, Bob? Grandmother Denwood says she is quite proud of her grandchildren. She still gets about although she is over ninety."

The grandmother who has thirteen grandchildren fighting the battles of her country, may well be excused for saying she is "quite proud" of her descendants. In fact that extremely modest expression does not seem to us to come anywhere near to doing justice to the noble quality of the thirteen stalwart grandsons who marched away to do their part towards restoring freedom to enthralled Belgium. One had fallen, a martyr to the cause, another had been wounded and taken prisoner, and a third as soon as his injuries were healed, had "gone to the front again."

That is the spirit that will make Great Britain victorious in this war.

We have not yet in Canada come to any such general realization of our duty at the present crisis. But we have had some inspiring examples of what it means to be a true patriot.

In one of the Campbellford papers we have read how Fred Blue, son of Mr. and Mrs. James Blue of that town had travelled all the way from Texas, a distance of 2280 miles, to enlist for overseas service with the Third Contingent. He had been away from home for four years. His brother Frank was already away with the Patrias.

Some weeks ago, we reported that Mr. Frank E. Egan, son of Rev. J. Egan, North Front Street, had arrived home from the Peace River district to enlist with the Second Contingent. Mr. Egan was far to the north, and before word reached him the war had been going on five weeks. He at once started for Belleville and spent eight days travelling in a canoe before he reached the regular lines of communication.

Then we have Captain Gordon B. Johnson, son of Mr. J. W. Johnson, M.P.P., who was on the opposite side of the earth, in Japan, when the war tocsin sounded. After much difficulty he secured a leave-of-absence from his position, hastened across two oceans to Canada and joined his old regiment, the Royal Engineers.

Canada has proved since the outbreak of war, that she possessed many true patriots among her native sons. Before the war is ended she will have shown that her sons are inspired by the heroic quality as well.

Our only regret is that the great mass of our young men have not yet seemed to realize the gravity of the crisis through which the Empire and civilization is passing. But as time passes and the casualty lists begin to reach nearer home we may confidently expect wider demonstrations of the patriotic spirit so conspicuously shown by Fred Blue, Frank Egan and Gordon Johnson.

"PRO-GERMANS."

A Conservative reader of The Ontario, whose judgment and good opinion we value highly, has protested against our use of the term, "Pro-German," as applied to a certain section of the Conservative press and the Conservative party.

We do not think that our friend quite

catches our view-point. We would be very sorry indeed to refer to the Conservative party as a whole as being pro-German in its sympathies. Such a statement would be grossly false and unjust.

Aspersions of this nature have frequently been cast upon the Liberal party in the past, but no sane Canadian, who knows conditions as they are, believes that there is anything but the truest loyalty and devotion to the Empire and the Flag among the rank and file of both parties today. And because the Liberal party has been slandered and misrepresented in the past would be no reason for us now to attempt to get even by publishing slanderous and untruthful assertions about our opponents. The great bulk of the Conservative party is firm and true in its fealty to British connection and the British Crown, and an unfortunate thing for Canada it would be if one of our great parties representing half our population were otherwise.

The epithet, "Pro-German," we applied to that section of the Conservative press and to those Conservative politicians who are seizing upon the present as the opportune moment to spring a general election.

The constitution does not call for an election before September 1916. Why then is an election talked of now?

We believe that only one answer can fairly be given to that question. The practical politicians now in office are convinced that if the government went to the country during the time of war that flag-flapping, shouting and the khaki color would stir up such enthusiasm as to insure their return for another five-year lease of power.

In other words they would make use of the war and the Empire crisis to further selfish political ends and to attempt to gain a tactical partisan advantage.

While the government should be centering its utmost attention upon the war and the vast and intricate problems it presents, its whole energy would be absorbed in a useless, and unnecessary election contest.

An election held during the time of war would be characterized by unprecedented bitterness and ferocity. Our country, that is now united in its determination to end the war as quickly as possible would be divided into two hostile camps, and the cause of Germany would be answered just as effectively as though some Canadian DeWet had raised the standard of rebellion, and by creating disunion paralysed our offensive powers.

That is why we called such men "Pro-Germans." By fomenting dissension among the people in this great dominion they would be fighting the battles of Germany just as effectively as if they were enrolled in the German ranks.

The Conservative papers assert that the Liberals oppose the holding of an election in the midst of the war because they fear the result. We do not agree with that opinion because we know it is false. The Liberal party is now in opposition; the balloting could do no worse than to leave them in opposition still. They have nothing to lose and much to gain.

But admitting that the Liberals are quaking with fear about being forced to go to the polls—is that any justification for the Government to play into the hands of Germany by bringing about this untimely and criminal division of our forces?

Let our friend ask himself,—If there had been no war would the government have wanted an election in June 1915?

Verily, we feel certain the government would otherwise have hung on until the last hour of the five-year term.

In a political way this war came along as the greatest piece of good fortune that ever happened to any government in Canada.

Last July it was recognised by Conservative and Liberal alike that the Borden government was fast hastening to that bourn whence no politician returns. Bread lines in all the large cities right in midsummer, utter stagnation in business, falling revenues, and a host of hungry hangers-on who could neither be denied nor supplied, apparently told the tale of early dissolution and death.

Then suddenly out of the blue came the bolt of war. The "Emergency" that had been accurately foreseen for at least two years, but for which neither uniforms, rifles, nor sheepskin boots had been provided, suddenly hove in sight. Every Grit was reminded that he had been told so, and if it hadn't been for the demilition stubbornness of that group of fossilised remains, otherwise known as the Canadian Senate, Great Britain might have had three empty ships that she didn't need, while she might still have been waiting for a hundred thousand or two Canadian soldiers that she did need.

The war came and upon it the Conservative party could at once shift all the manifold ills from which the country was suffering. Where there had been despondency and hopeless depression there arose buoyancy and swaggering confidence. The genial and affable Bob Rogers got on his war-paint and proposed an election in November as the proper means of celebrating their deliverance. He was held in restraint for a time by his less optimistic leader, but we have been told by those who assume to know that he was promised the desire of his heart this coming

June.

We do believe, however, that if they attempt to carry out this crime against the British Empire that there will be recorded against them such an overwhelming power of public opinion as will practically extinguish their party.

Be that as it may, The Ontario will oppose with all the means at its command any such treasonable attempt to divide our people during this crisis of war. We will oppose our own party quite as strenuously should they for the sake of partisan advantage try to force the government into an appeal to the country.

Parties mean little. Winning this war means everything.

Canada borrows \$100,000,000 from Great Britain on account of the war, and makes Britain pay the interest by taxing British goods. What do you think of that.—Kingston Whig. Excuse us. But we think that it is rotten.—Hamilton Times.

Sir John French sends the cheering news from the front that he does not believe it will be a long war. "Spring," he says, "promises well for the Allies." And, General French, who is right on the spot, ought to know a great deal better than the arm-chair prophets at home.

Hyslop Brothers, bicycle manufacturers, Toronto, were unable to secure a government contract for bicycles, although they could have supplied them cheaper than what the government paid the other contractors. The Hyslops may be Grits, and were not on the patronage list.

Twenty-nine thousand dollars as a result of the first day's canvass is a magnificent tribute to the genuineness of the loyalty of what Senator Corby would be pleased to call "this grand old city of Belleville." Times are hard, and business dull, but when money was necessary for patriotic purposes, the money came. Well done, Belleville!

"Safety first" enabled a United States railway company to operate a whole year without a single passenger being killed in a train accident. But lack of safety-first precautions caused the death of nineteen passengers on the same road. Six of them fell off moving trains. Two slipped off station platforms in front of trains. Two stood so close to the edge of platform as to be struck by train. Three crossed tracks at stations in front of trains. One was struck by a coach and thrown under the train and one assaulted by another passenger and was thrown from train.

"HOW WILSON DIED."

Short was the time to make ready;
Sure was the death to come;
A thought for wife, mother, sweetheart,
Or the little ones at home.
A glimpse of the bright sun shining,
A glimpse of the burning sand,
A glare at the foe advancing,
A grip of comrade's hand.

Though Matabele impis
Poured swift across the plain,
Thick as foam in a steamer's wake
Behind them lay their slain.
Right up to the rude zareba
Where two score troopers lay,
Who showed how English soldiers
Could fight and die that day.

Yet up went each white helmet,
And clear arose the strain,
The death song of the gallant hearts,
That ne'er might fight again.
Tell me, in warfare's annals
Hath ever such sight been seen;
As these with heads uncovered,
Singing "God save the Queen."

The last command was "Die like men,"
The savage horde rushed in;
But clearly still the song was heard
Above the awful din.
No sound of triumph or anguish,
Naught could that anthem drown;
Singing, unconquered, one by one,
The Englishmen went down.

And after the fight was over,
King Lobengula's pride,
Marvelled among themselves, "What kind
Can these men be who ride
Right into the valley singing
Song of a woman, their Queen.
Foemen oft have we vanquished;
None like these have we seen."

"Let us lay their dead with ours,
Here let us build a mound
So broad, so high, we can see it
For three days' journey round,
In memory of the battle where
Our bravest fell like sheep,
And T'Chaka's curse on him who dares
Disturb them in their sleep."

—R. David Meyers.

*Captain Wilson in Matabeleland

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