

The Weekly Ontario

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W. H. Morton, J. O. Herity,
Business Manager. Editor-in-Chief.

THURSDAY, APRIL 22, 1915.

"WAR TAXES" NOT FOR WAR.

The new "War Taxes" that came into effect yesterday would be paid far more willingly by the Canadian people if it were not for the knowledge that not one cent of all that may be collected will go to pay the cost of the war. It will merely be spent in supporting the graft and extravagance of the most recklessly corrupt government ever known in Canada's history. We will borrow from Great Britain this year, One Hundred and Fifty Million Dollars to finance the war expenditure. Besides that we must borrow Eighty Million Dollars more to finance the ordinary expenditures of the government for the year. In the face of falling revenues and the huge outlay that has to be undertaken on account of the war, there should have been retrenchment and rigid economy. Instead of that the government goes on madly, recklessly, extravagantly. This year our revenues will total only \$120,000,000, while ordinary expenditure will reach the enormous total of Two Hundred Millions. If by some unaccountable freak of public opinion the present government should be returned to power for another five-year term in the coming forced election and this saturnalia of waste continues to the end of that time, our Dominion will then be in as bad a position as British Columbia is in now. In that province the government of Sir Richard McBride has spent or given away everything in sight until there is nothing more to spend or give away to the grafters. The province is bound hand and foot to corporations and smooth promoters. Little wonder is it then that Sir Edmund Walker, president of the Bank of Commerce, and chief financial adviser of the Borden government has issued the following warning to the Canadian people:

"In the years to come we shall be bending our backs to a taxation such as, in this country which has been singularly free of taxation, we have never known before, and so also will our children for generations to come."

THE COMING ELECTION.

It was fondly hoped by many sanguine souls that the war, with its mighty issues and great sacrifices, would exercise a salutary influence upon our social and political life. It was believed that those who remained at home could not be unmoved by the heroism of those who abandoned all, and took every risk, to fight their country's battle at the front. It was imagined that the temporary truce in party warfare would be an object lesson to the public on the worse than futility of ordinary partisan strife.

We regret to say that, so far as Canada is concerned, none of those anticipations have been realized. Whether it is because we are too far removed from the scene of combat, or because of some inherent defect in the character of our people, it must, however, reluctantly, be confessed that this greatest of all world-struggles has apparently left us unimproved as a people. We are, alas, "doing business as usual." We are apparently going to do still more nefarious business, so far as the Government of the Dominion is concerned, if the general belief that an early election is to be forced upon the country is to be credited.

That a General Election is to be called in the near future—without apparent justification or excuse—seems to be as good as certain. The Government appears to feel that its followers will stand for anything.

There is not even a pretence of necessity for an appeal by the Government to the electorate at this time. Parliament has a year and a half to run before the expiration of its legal term. There is not a single issue now calling for settlement at the polls. The country is a unit with reference to the war and all necessary expenditures and efforts in connection with it. Absolutely no questions have arisen between the parties. Liberals stand exactly where they have always stood with regard to the tariff. So do Conservatives. There has not even been any severe or undue criticism of the Administration with reference to improper expenditures in connection with the war.

The rascalities charged by the Opposition concerning certain military outfitting contracts are practically admitted by the Government. They could not be denied. What is there, then, to submit to the electorate? Let those who, silently or otherwise, are backing the Government

in its intended action answer if they can to their own consciences. It is not for us to judge them. We, ourselves, must frankly admit that we are free from the influence of partisanship. Still, we think that even partisanship should be decent. At such a time as this, it should merge more or less in patriotism, in regard for public decency in consideration for the rights even of opponents.

Let us attempt to look at the situation dispassionately and try to see if any reasonable plea can be put forward for unduly exciting the political feelings of our people at this time, and dividing them on unreasoning party lines. It must be acknowledged that no such plea has so far been forthcoming from those who rightly or wrongly are believed to be intending to precipitate an election more than a year before it is due. Should the Government call an election now, neither they nor their followers would be able to deny that they were doing so for purely selfish purposes—because they think they can thereby gain a party advantage at the sacrifice of public interests.

There is no demand for an election from their opponents. There is none from the country. There is none from anybody but interested partisan schemers. In the Motherland, although the time is almost up, the Opposition are actually begging the Government to prolong the life of the present Parliament by special Act, so that there can be no General Election until after the war. The Government, therefore, have announced that they will favorably consider the request. Here, the Opposition are ready to accept an election, should one be prematurely called, although they have made it perfectly clear that they are quite willing to await the statutory date in the autumn of 1916.

The rank and file of the Government's supporters in Parliament are naturally not eager for an election. They were elected for a full term, more than a fourth of which is still to run. Many of them must know that there will be no return for them when they are again forced to appeal to their constituents. Others must be aware that their cases are extremely doubtful. Yet, at the crack of the party whip, they must all cringe and submit.

And who wields the party whip? Obviously not the Premier, but a small clique in his party, to the ambitions and machinations of which he, as well as his supporters in Parliament and the country must bow. Sir Robert Borden has apparently been completely cowed by the machine managers of his party. The "ring" which cares less than nothing for him or his principles as a gentleman of his party or the interests of their country, is bent on having an immediate election, because it hopes thereby, while public attention is distracted by the war to snatch a partisan victory which can be utilized, later on, to the advantage of the sordid interests and ambitions of its members.

It is for the Canadian electorate to decide what action it will take in such an emergency. We feel very confident that there is sufficient patriotism and decency among the Conservatives, and Independents of this Dominion to rebuke the "Manitoba wonder" as he deserves, and in the only way that a person of his political morals and constitution can comprehend.

ABOLISH THE SENATE.

Hon. Robert Rogers has found his excuse for plunging this country into a general election in the midst of war. The poor, old, decrepit Canadian Senate is to be the goat for King Robert and his Germaniac subjects.

The Senate was pursuing the even tenor of its slumbers, little dreaming of the pent-up flood of indignation that was raging in the manly breast of the Honorable Bob, when suddenly his clarion call resounded throughout the Commons—"Them Has-beens has got to go. The people is demanding it in thunder tones."

Robert, the Honorable, and The Ontario do not often see eye to eye. But with this particular plank in his platform we heartily agree.

Senate Abolition—that is the thing. Let there be no half-measures, no maudlin talk of "reform." The thing to do is to dig up the evil by the roots and save our money. It costs this poor debt-ridden country rather more than a quarter of a million per annum to maintain the exhibit of venerable curios, and, candidly, we do not think the show is worth the price.

As far as the Senate goes, our policy is total prohibition, but we are not wildly excited about it. We will be perfectly contented if our hopes in that regard are not fully realised until after the war. We have had to put up with the Senate and all its senile eccentricities for nearly half a century. Why then has it become so suddenly necessary to terminate its earthly career?

Canada should be bending every energy to the prosecution of this war. The Canadian people unitedly desire that the government should support Great Britain in her hour of supreme trial to the utmost of its ability. That strong, united support cannot be given if our people and even our soldiers in the trenches are separated into hostile parties through the bitterness of what must prove an exceedingly bitter election.

The people who can prevent the perpetration of this crime are the influential Conservatives to whom the success of their party at the

polls is secondary to the success of the British cause on the battlefields of Europe. We have talked with a number of such Conservatives—men who have never cast a Liberal vote, and they have strongly expressed their disapproval of the forcing an election at this time, and have threatened revolt against a policy that they consider little short of treasonable. Earnest protests from a sufficient number of these men might still avert this disgrace, not only from the Conservative party, but from all Canada.

Appeals from the Liberal side can accomplish nothing. They are interpreted as cowardice and the fear of the result of polling. To men of the type of Bob Rogers it is inconceivable that any Canadian citizen could have any other thought than the welfare of his party. Patriotism, in the large sense of placing the interests of the nation and the Empire before those of mere tactical advantage in the realm of politics, is to him the doctrine of idealists and fools.

As we have before pointed out, the Liberal party has no fear of the result of an election. It would do nothing more at the worst than to leave them where they are now—in opposition. But the revolt of shocked Canadian sentiment could scarcely do otherwise than return them to power if they were compelled by their opponents to fight an election during the war.

The men who hope to use the war as a means to gain political advantage, and who sacrifice the interests of the Empire in their lust for power, are, worse traitors than the men who steal the war funds by their trafficking in rotten boots, opaque binoculars and spavined horses. They are worse because their power for mischief is greater. Both classes are far more formidable enemies of Great Britain than the most devoted soldiers of Kaiser Wilhelm II.

No intelligent Canadian is going to be deceived by all this suddenly trumped-up rubbish about the Dominion Senate. We all know well enough that had there been no war there would have been no election, until almost the last hour of the five-year parliamentary term. Hard times came before the war and the government realised that its race was ended when the war came along as the fortunate solution to relieve unemployment, to give us many millions more of money for our wheat and other products, and to be the convenient scapegoat for all our evils. This sudden concern about our obstreperous Senate is nothing more than the device of a political trickster with whom party dominates every patriotic interest.

Get this fact clearly into your mind, for it is a fact that cannot be successfully denied, if there had been no war there would have been no election. Therefore the Hon. Bob Rogers is seeking to use the war as the doubtful means to rehabilitate the doubtful fortunes of his party.

We do not know, and we do not particularly care what the general policy of the Liberal party is with regard to the Senate. We have seen no general statement of what the policy of the Conservative party may be. For our own part we favor abolition as the most sensible thing to do. This is the view we have taken for many years, and in that opinion we are upheld by so influential a journal as the Toronto Daily Star. But, as we stated before, the end of the war will be plenty of time to discuss the project in all its bearings and free from the pent-up passions and biased judgment of a war-time election.

Canada's first business is, and should be, the successful prosecution of the war. The Senate can afford to wait.

THE SIGNAL.

Premier Borden's heated and provocative speech in the House of Commons on the soldiers' voting proposal, and the announcement on Saturday by Hon. Robert Rogers that the Senate would be the issue leave little room for reasonable doubt that the Government has made up its mind to plunge the country into the turmoil and strife of a General Election. The heat which the Premier displayed, and the fact that the speech which he read had been carefully prepared, both go to show that the Premier's design was to arouse party spirit, and to intimidate to his followers, that the Government had finally yielded to the demands of the partisan schemers and was getting ready to take an early plunge.

There was no occasion for the Premier's stump speech. The criticisms which Sir Wilfrid Laurier and the members of the Opposition offered to the Government's proposal were not in any sense partisan, but went to show that the scheme which the Government had submitted to the House was ill-conceived in principle, and as ill-conceived in its details. One has only to think of the suggestion of taking the votes of the men serving in the trenches, amid all the horror and tragedy of war, and expecting them to pass seriously upon a question of political concern in Canada, to recognize at once the reasonableness of the Opposition criticism.

There was no occasion for the Premier's heat, and there is no excuse for bringing on a General Election at this time. The Government's term of office will not expire until October, 1916. It has a majority of between 40 and 45 in the House of Commons. The great issue before the country is that the war in which the Empire is engaged shall be carried to a triumph-

ant conclusion. Every measure which the Government has proposed, providing for Canada's participation in this war, has been loyally, cheerfully and wholeheartedly supported by the Opposition. Not a voice has been raised, on the Liberal side, against the war votes of 150 Million Dollars for war purposes, and the Liberal Party in Parliament and out of it would as cheerfully and readily give its assent to the voting of twice that sum, and indeed, any sum within our capacity to pay, if it were required for the assistance of the Empire in this life and death struggle.

This is not to say that the Opposition will forego its right and its duty to demand that this money shall be honestly, economically and prudently expended for the purpose for which it has been voted. The Liberal Party stands ready to vote millions for the war but not a dollar for graft, and there can be no truce which will silence criticism of the cold-blooded way in which the friends of the Government have profited out of the country's necessities, or prevent the denunciation by all right-thinking Canadians of the truly shocking revelations which have been made in the Public Accounts and other Committees at Ottawa, with reference to such contemptible transactions as the rake-off on bandages and medical supplies for the soldiers at the front.

The only occasion on which the Opposition has challenged the Government, in a formal vote, during the session was as Hon. Frank Oliver pointed out, when the Government had changed the whole fiscal policy of the country, and had taken advantage of a time when Britain was at war to impose a fresh embargo upon British trade with the Dominion. There is then no excuse for making an appeal to the country in the midst of the most crucial operations of the Great War, unless it be that the Government is brazen enough to make an issue of the operations of the middlemen and rake-off men, who have been permitted to fill their pockets with the money loaned to Canada by the Imperial Government, expressly for war purposes, and to seek justification of the series of the most revolting transactions which ever disgraced the public life of any country.

If, as the Winnipeg Free Press says, the Dominion Government go to the people this summer it "will be because the Conservative leaders think they can turn the war to their political advantage. They propose to capitalize, for their glory and profit, the terror, the bloodshed, the suffering of this Satanic war. They put themselves on the same moral plane as the scoundrels who have found in the equipping of our soldiers an opportunity for looting the money from the public treasury. If they thus group themselves with the grafters they will suffer the same public condemnation. If the Borden Government goes to the people, the mere fact of thus going will be sufficient reason for its defeat."

For our own part we can only reaffirm that if the Government now decides to put its fortunes to the test, it will be overwhelmed by an outraged public opinion. The Liberal Party will not hesitate to accept the challenge, and it need have no fear of the result. If it is to be war, let it come!

The Winnipeg Free Press is correct in stating that "the people of Canada are literally sick over the disgusting revelations of graft and cupidity at Ottawa with relation to the supplying of equipment for our soldiers in the field. The dirty hand of the corrupt heeler has taken toll from everybody. The responsibility for this disgrace rests upon the Borden Government. When it made the fitting out of the contingent an opportunity for the exercise of party patronage it made these scandals inevitable."

ROLL OF HONOR.

What is the finest death to die;
And the fairest end to make?
To fall as your country's foeman fly,
And to die for Freedom's sake!
To die with the young, the strong, the brave,
A flush on your eager soul,
Your body borne to a hero's grave
And your name on Honor's Roll!

Lead us into battle, shining overhead,
Youngest of the angels, bravest of the dead!
Lead us in your beauty, lead us in your youth,
Lead the ranks of freedom, lead the hosts of Truth;
Go before our armies, burn above our strife,
Stars in England's Heaven, heirs of endless life!

Mother, why do you weep so long?
O father! why do you sigh?
Louder in heav'n is the angels' song
As the hero souls go by!
Up, brothers, up! and strike again,
'Till you break the tyrant's rod—
The hero lives in the hearts of men
And his soul is glad with God!

Lead us into battle, shining overhead,
Youngest of the angels, bravest of the dead!
Lead us in your beauty, lead us in your youth,
Lead the ranks of freedom, lead the hosts of Truth;
Go before our armies, burn above our strife,
Stars in England's Heaven, heirs of endless life!
—Harold Begbie.

Other Editors'

Opinions

SINCERITY AS A MENACE.

Of the early Roman emperors those who persecuted the Christians were the good men, sincere and honorable according to their light. The bad emperors, the rulers whose reigns were simply periods of debauchery did not bother with the Christians. What the early disciples of the Master whose doctrine had stood the test of the ages had to fear, therefore, was sincerity misdirected.

Sincerity misdirected is a modern menace to the common weal. Floods of goodwill and enthusiasm for what is wrongly conceived to be the right are still abroad in the world. The more sincere these misdirected efforts are, the greater is their influence and, consequently, their danger.

Examples of this can be found in many human activities. In none, however, is the example so prominent as in the so-called "Peace Movement."

Human government must have its roots in human nature. Until then, the world is filled with evidences, irrefutable evidences, of a change for the better in human nature, we must be content, sad as it is our lot, to move towards the abolition of international war by slow and easy stages. Short cuts are disastrous, they defeat their own ends, and the ends of the whole movement they are intended to further. The righteous anger of a spirited nation which can find no faithful and satisfactory expression in efficient national action, once international activity has sunk to the plane of war, will operate to destroy centuries of slow and steady progress towards an ideal state of civilization, or as near an ideal state as man may progress.

One does not have to be an optimist to share the conviction that humanity in general has made noteworthy progress since the days when the ruling passion of every nation was an international hatred. We have lived to see great nations on friendly terms, holding for each other a cordial and a respect that have stood the test of delicate and irritating incidents. But one does have to be an optimist of a rare type indeed not to realize that considerable of what is boasted abroad as "progress" is artificial and insincere, too poor a basis to support a world free from the menace of war.

We have read that man is master of his fate, but we should not forget that the nature of man is master of mankind. War is hell, but it is not all hell. There is nothing hellish in the soul-stirring sight of millions of men, free citizens of the British Empire, making out to sacrifice their comfort and their lives, their stake in this life and possibly, something of their opportunity in the next, their cherished personal and family life, and the heart-warming association with their friends, all the seductive pleasures modern science has contributed to the enjoyment of our life, in order that a little "butcher's bill" of Europe might get justice instead of cruel wrong, and some future generation might enjoy the blessings of freedom and peace. We search in vain the pages in modern history, the days of artificial or pretended "peace" for a manifestation of God-like qualities to parallel this one.

So let our ultra-pacifists deplore what they are pleased to term the degradation of man in this year 1915. Man was degraded to a lower level when he pretended peace and prepared for war. In those years, he exhibited Satanic qualities the Monks of Germany himself cannot equal today, in all his fierceness and brutality. In those years, he sowed the seeds which corrupted and destroyed. Purified by this present experience, as no other ordeal could purify him, man may turn in all humility but with all courage and confidence, to the work of building anew. That he could not do while the canker of eating into his system, he could only pretend, as he did pretend.

DRINKING AND THE WAR.

In the House of Lords Lord Kitchener recently said he was having serious difficulty in getting armament supplies in the quantities expected. "I cannot," he said, "too earnestly point out that unless the whole nation works in unison, we cannot supply the manhood of the country to serve in the ranks, but also in supplying the necessary arms, ammunition and equipment, successful operations in the various parts of the world in which we are engaged will be very seriously hampered and delayed. I have heard rumors that the workmen in some factories have an ideal that the war is going so well that there is no necessity for them to work the hardest. I can only say that at the present moment, and for the next two or three months, the question of supply is, and will be, a very serious one, and I wish all those engaged in the manufacture and supply of these essential, not only that the arrears in the deliveries of our munitions of war should be wiped out, but that the output of every round of ammunition is of the utmost importance, and has a large influence on our operations in the field." In these words Lord Kitchener gave solemn warning of the military necessity of reforms in industry, mentioning the drink problem particularly, and appealing to the public spirit and patriotism of the workers concerned. The appeal has been ignored, and Lloyd George has now laid bare startling facts relating to delays and arrears in armament works holding up even repairs on battleships. There is only one remedy and that is sharp restriction of the liquor traffic. Even the great brewing interests in Britain recognize that thoroughgoing measures in that regard may be necessary if the country is not to be hampered in the prosecution of the war. Whatever the British Government thinks to be necessary in the premises will get almost unanimous approval. First of all must come unhampered prosecution of the war.—Mail and Empire.

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Notice to

On account of the many of our young men being called to the war, farm help is scarce. The coming season in need of help are to leave their names to the Agent or write to Standard Bank at the said bank to 12 a.m. and from D. J. FAIRFIELD, Employment man street, Belleville.

Captain Gardner, Kingston, has returned after inspecting the 39th Battalion. He is perfectly satisfied with the work in Belleville and says we were doing very well.