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At The Federal Capital

The last week of the Parliamentary session was a strenuous week. Sittings of the House of Commons were held forenoon, afternoon and late each night. A greater number of divisions were taken during that week than during all the rest of the session. Several incidents of considerable importance were brought out and one or two members, whose loyalty to Unionism had been more or less in doubt from the beginning of the session, showed what might be fairly termed the political cloven foot. This was particularly true of Mr. Fielding, who had been elected to Parliament as a Unionist by acclamation, who had attended the Government caucuses during the session, and who had been selected as the chairman of an important committee. As has been already stated in this correspondence, Mr. Fielding chose his seat in the house right between the Government and Opposition parties. He had not voted against the Government in any divisions prior to Tuesday, May 21st, but on that date, when the question of the Yukon election was up for discussion, he espoused the Opposition cause, made a speech in their behalf and voted against the Government. On two subsequent occasions, on the Title's Resolution and on the motion sprung by Sir Wilfrid Laurier to repeal the War Time Election's Act, he did the same thing. The applause with which the Opposition greeted the little man's departure from the Government support, would seem to indicate that they regarded his action somewhat in the light of a prodigal's return. Whether or not they subsequently treated him to a mess of fattened calf is not recorded. Another incident of a more pleasing nature than Mr. Fielding's conduct, was the appearance for the first time this session, of Sir Thomas White, who had returned from California, where he had been recuperating his somewhat shattered health. Sir Thomas looks well, and his entrance to the Commons Chamber was greeted with generous applause. A day or so later another pleasing incident occurred, Dr. Thompson, member for the Yukon, whose election had been in dispute, entered the chamber and took his seat amid the applause of the members. Of this election a dispute arose of which something will be said below.

A lively discussion and several divisions took place on the motion to adopt the report of the committee on Privileges and Elections, relative to the Yukon election. The Unionist Candidate in the election was Dr. Thompson, above referred to, and his opponent was Mr. Congdon. In the civilian vote Mr. Congdon had a slight lead, but the military overseas vote gave Dr. Thompson a very considerable majority. The election did not take place on the 17th of December, but was one of two or three deferred elections. A technical point was raised against Dr. Thompson's return on the ground that the soldiers vote, which was cast between the 19th of November and the 17th of December, could not be applied to the candidates in this election, in as much as they were not nominated when this soldier vote was taken. The question was referred by the Government to the committee on privileges

and elections. The report of this committee was presented to the House of Commons by Hon. Mr. Guthrie, chairman of the committee, who moved its adoption. The report was to the effect that the soldier vote was properly applied to the respective candidates, and the candidate having the majority of all the votes should be declared elected, and the returning officer should be so instructed by Parliament. To this motion the Opposition moved an amendment that, instead of reporting to the House, the committee should report to the Supreme Court of Canada, where the question should be decided. In support of his motion Hon. Mr. Guthrie presented an admirable argument. He was supported by Hon. Mr. Meighen, in an argument of most extremely cogent reasoning. Mr. Fielding took occasion to discuss the question in support of the amendment presented by the Opposition, and in this way made his first break from the Unionist side, amid the applause of his former friends of the Opposition. There were those in the House, who had all along suspected the sincerity of Mr. Fielding and who, when they saw the course he was now pursuing, were disposed to believe that he had been playing a watching game and perhaps hoped on this question, he might be able to draw some small following from the Unionist members. If he had any notion of this kind he was disappointed, for there is no evidence that anyone changed his convictions on this vote, in consequence of Mr. Fielding's plunge. He and the members of the Opposition are very welcome to whatever glory they may draw from the little man's action on the occasion. After the question had been well discussed, the division was taken and the vote stood; for the Government 193 to 68 for the Opposition. This did not finish the discussion of the question. Mr. Lapointe of Kamouraska, moved another amendment, and after a brief discussion a second division was taken, showing 102 for the Government and 69 for the Opposition. Finally the third division was taken on Mr. Guthrie's motion, which carried by a vote of 103 for the Government to 60 for the Opposition.

The next live question to occupy the attention of the House was the motion of Mr. Nickle, to abolish hereditary titles in Canada, and the amendment thereto by Mr. Richardson. This motion had been discussed some time previously, and the debate had been adjourned. Before the adjournment of the previous debate, the Prime Minister, Sir Robert Borden, had pronounced on the matter. He read to the House an Order-in-Council, which had been passed by the Government, and intimated that it was his intention to take the matter up with the Imperial authorities when he visited England this summer. It was thought, perhaps, in view of this statement of the Prime Minister, Mr. Nickle and Mr. Richardson would not be disposed to carry the question to a vote, but on this date, May 21st, they persevered in their former attitude regarding the question, and the debate was pushed along on those lines. The Prime Minister then moved an amendment to the amendment of Mr. Richardson, to the effect that the matter, for the present be left to be dealt with in accordance with his former statement, regarding the Order-in-Council and his intention of further discussing it with the Imperial authorities. Among those who took part in the discussion was Mr. Burnham of Peterboro. Mr. Burnham, in the course of his speech, made the rather remarkable statement that he had consulted the leader of the Opposition, and had been told by him that the voting down of the Prime

Minister's amendment would not be regarded as a vote of want of confidence in the Government. Sir Robert Borden, after several other members had spoken and after he had been asked in what light he regarded the point raised relative to want of confidence in the Government, plainly and emphatically stated his position. In the first place, he said it seemed to him a rather extraordinary course for a member to pursue, to consult the leader of the Opposition, regarding a motion of want of confidence, rather than seek advice from the leader of the Government. He then said that his course was quite clear, and he candidly placed himself in the judgment of the House. Should the members present not approve of his sub-amendment, he would be forced to consider that he could no longer regard himself as responsible for the carrying on of the business of the country, and that he would at once ask the Governor General to relieve him of office and send for someone else to carry on the Government. This declaration placed the matter in a very much more serious light, and those on the Government side who might have had strong feelings against hereditary titles in Canada, allowed all these personal feelings to disappear and showed they were prepared to stand by Government. It has just been said that the members on the Government side took this view—not quite all of them. When the division was called the Prime Minister's amendment was sustained by a vote of 104 to 71. Mr. Nickle voted with the Opposition, so did Mr. Fielding and Mr. Thomas Foster of Toronto. After the division was taken, attention was called to the fact that Mr. Richardson had not voted. Mr. Richardson declared that he had desired to withdraw his amendment, but as he was unable to do so without the unanimous consent of the House, he stated he would not vote against the leader of the Government, however much he might have favored his own amendment; for the very fact that he was convinced that no other man in Canada could take Sir Robert Borden's place, as Prime Minister. The main motion as changed by the Prime Minister's amendment was then agreed to on division.

On Wednesday the 22nd, the attention of the House was engaged nearly all the time, after routine proceedings, by a discussion, initiated by Mr. Copp of Westmorland, N. B., who, on the motion to go into committee of supply, started a discussion on the Government's manner of conducting the overseas military vote at the late Federal Election. Mr. Copp spoke about four hours, or rather between speaking and reading occupied about that much time of the House, and made very serious charges against the Government. Mr. Copp is a very windy, loud-mouthed speaker, and the greater number of his charges had no greater authority behind them than that of W. T. R. Preston, who officially conducted the business of the overseas election, on behalf of the Opposition. Many of our readers, doubtless, have some remembrance of the career and political reputation of this Mr. Preston, otherwise known as "Hug - the - machine Preston," whose crookedness in connection with ballot switching and other corrupt operations at election times necessitated his departure from Canada. After being provided for in one capacity or another in different countries of Europe, by his liberal friends, he was, in connection with the overseas military vote in the last federal election chosen by the Laurier party as their official representative. So unreliable and utterly discredited is the reputation of this Mr. Preston in matters political, that there are apparently few in the province of Ontario who would believe his oath. It is on the ro-

presentations of this man that Mr. Copp undertook to convince the people of Canada that something out of the proper course had been done in connection with the taking of the Military Vote overseas, in the Federal Election of December last. Mr. Copp might have brought on his charges at an earlier stage of the session and could have brought the matter before the House otherwise than as an amendment to the motion to go into committee of supply. He would then have a better opportunity of having a wider discussion for his subject and a better chance to have his motion adopted, were there any argument behind it warranting such a course. But he preferred to bring up the matter in the dying days of the session and on the motion to go into committee of supply. He knew, as everybody knows, that a motion of that kind means in every instance a want of confidence and, as a consequence a defeat of the administration. He of course, was quite satisfied that what he had to say was talk and nothing else, and knew very well that he could not present any substantial argument that would convince independent members of parliament. Consequently he felt it the safest course to proceed as he did, knowing very well that his motion, as an amendment to go into committee of supply would be defeated. As we have already said, he occupied four hours in presenting his case. It was not by any means an exceedingly interesting matter and Mr. Copp's audience during the greater part of his discussion was very limited indeed. Mr. Copp's motion was seconded by Mr. Archambault who made exceedingly extravagant charges against the Government, in connection with the voting of the soldiers. The motion was supported, on the Opposition side, by Sir Wilfrid Laurier and Mr. McMaster. The charges were admirably answered, refuted and repudiated, in splendid speeches by Hon. Mr. Burrell, Secretary of State, Hon. Mr. Doherty, Minister of Justice, Hon. Mr. Sifton, Minister of Customs, and Sir George Foster who was leading "the House in the absence of the Prime Minister." The division was taken well on towards midnight and the vote stood 92 for the Government to 61 for the Opposition. Thus ended, after occupying a whole day in discussion, Mr. Copp's loud and windy charges.

Thursday, May 23rd, was the last working day of the session, and was certainly a strenuous day. A very comprehensive programme confronted the House when it met at 11 o'clock Thursday forenoon. Many millions of estimates had yet to be put through, some in the main estimates, some in the supplementary estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1918, and all of the supplementary estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1919. Among other matters up for discussion in the forenoon sitting was a short amendment to the war Time Elections Act. This was necessitated to meet the case of by-elections. When this amendment was under consideration in Committee of the whole House, and when there was not a full attendance of members, Sir Wilfrid Laurier took advantage of the occasion to seek a snap verdict. He moved an amendment to the effect that the War-Time Elections Act be repealed. A division was taken immediately, which showed a vote of 74 for the Government against 33 for the Opposition. That was the last division of the session. Discussion of supply and Ways Means occupied the greater portion of the time during all the sittings of this day. There were no very long discussions, although occasionally there was some sharp debate. It was announced early in the day that prorogation would take place some time that day, probably about ten o'clock p. m. and all were quite desirous of bringing the business to a close. Yet many were anxious to discuss items as they came up. Lengthy speeches were out of the question, and any one who had the temerity to extend his remarks to anything approaching unnecessary length had short shrift, as the House or committee, as the case might be, were not in the temper to be unnecessarily delayed. As a consequence numerous brief speeches were made and

votes of supply went through with extraordinary celerity. When six o'clock came it was suggested by the Leader of the House that business be resumed at seven o'clock instead of eight, the usual hour for resuming in the evening, from seven to twelve o'clock at night many millions of estimates were put through, and odds and ends of the sessional business were pushed along to conclusion. Finally, after the hands of the clock had just passed the noon of night, a loud rap was heard on the door leading into the chamber, and the announcement was made to Mr. Speaker that a messenger from His Excellency The Governor General was in waiting. Mr. Speaker requested that the messenger be admitted. Then appeared Lieutenant Colonel Ernest J. Chambers, Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod, whose presence was not by any means unfamiliar to the members of the House. He executed his three bows in his usual excellent and gentlemanly manner and announced to the Speaker of the House that His Excellency desired the immediate attendance of the House of Commons in the Senate Chamber. Then, he most gracefully bowed himself out backwards. The Speaker, then with the House of Commons, proceeded to the Senate Chamber where His Excellency, in His Majesty's name, gave the Royal assent to the bills that had been passed during the session. Then Mr. Speaker Rhodes announced that the Commons had voted supplies necessary to carry on the business of the country until Parliament should meet again. His Excellency then thanked the Commons for the supplies and assented to the supply bill. His Excellency then read, in English and French, an address to the assembled Senators and Commoners, and in due form parliament was prorogued. It was within fifteen minutes of one o'clock, Friday morning when the proceedings thus formally ended.

P. E. I. In Parliament

(Hansard May 17th, 1918)
 House in committee of Supply on estimates of Minister of Railways:
 Mr. McIsaac: I am pleased to notice that the Minister of Railways has an item of \$65,000 in his estimates for the completion of the terminals at Port Borden and Cape Tormentine, where the car ferry steamer Prince Edward Island plies between Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick. I need not say that I deeply regret that the minister has not found it convenient to include an amount in the estimates at least to commence the standardization of the gauge on the Prince Edward Island railway. I would not suggest to the Government, as my hon. friend from Prince (Mr. Read) has done to standardize the gauge from Port Borden to Charlottetown. That would only be a piecemeal proposal. I would not dictate or suggest to the Government where they should begin. But I sincerely desire that they shall make a beginning as soon as reasonably possible. And when they do begin to standardize, it should be done in such a way that all portions of the province traversed by the railway will be benefitted. As I had occasion to say before, in consequence of the death of coastal steamships, the removal of the products of Prince Edward Island will be a very difficult problem this very year. Notwithstanding that a great many of our sons I am proud to say, have gone to fight our battles at the front, I am satisfied that there will be a very considerable increase of agricultural production in Prince Edward Island this year. That being so, we shall have much more to export to provide food for the soldiers fighting our battles. We have scarcely any idea of how productive Prince Edward Island is for the very fact that we have never had sufficient facilities to ship our products from the Island. The car ferry steamer "Prince Edward Island" is a splendid ship. In my opinion, she is the greatest product of marine architecture of her class. During the past winter, which was unprecedentedly severe and arduous, she made daily trips across the Straits; several times a day, sometimes. As I said before the question of winter navigation of the Straits

has been solved. The solution of that problem, which had caused so much difficulty, hardship, disappointment and uncertainty to our people, has caused a revolution of feeling, and the matter of winter navigation of the straits is now accepted as beyond any question. Consequently we feel exceedingly grateful to the Government for what they have done in furnishing this magnificent steamer and solving this difficult problem and placing us in continuous communication with the Intercolonial and other railway systems of the Dominion, which was written in the bond at the time we entered Confederation. It was the lack of this understanding which prevented Prince Edward Island from going into Confederation with the original four provinces in 1867. In 1873 the Imperial Order in Council contained what the Island asked for, but it is only now that we have succeeded in getting the link across the Straits. As the minister knows the standardization of the gauge is the complement of the car ferry steamer. I think I can say that, though I have no warrant for saying it. As we all know, the people of Prince Edward Island are not poor, although it is a small place. They have contributed most generously to the loans that Canada has floated. I feel I am safe in saying that if the Government would issue a special loan of \$2,000,000 for the purpose of broadening the gauge on the Prince Edward Island railway, the people of Prince Edward Island have the money; and they will by the bonds and furnish the necessary funds to complete the work. If the Government take that departure, they will solve at least one difficulty in connection with the problem of standardizing the road. If the Minister of Railways, in his supplementary estimates, provides a sum for the commencement of this work he will do something that will be dear to the hearts of the people of Prince Edward Island, something for which the people of that province will never cease to be thankful, and something which will be a benefit to the whole Dominion as well.

(Hansard May 23, 1918.)
 House in committee of supply on estimates of Minister of Public Works:
 Harbours and rivers—Prince Edward Island—Mink river, repairs to wharf, \$1,500.
 Mr. McIsaac: I would like to ask the Minister of Public Works concerning two matters. One is the boat harbour at North Lake and the other the dredging of the boat harbour at Neufrage. As the minister understands, there is now at North Lake a boat harbour where the boats can come in and out at high water; but in consequence of the shifting of the sand, it is likely to become shallower and fill up. Further than that, the provincial Government finds it necessary to build a bridge across there, and it would be out of reason for them to do so unless something was done by the Federal Government to make the harbour substantial. This is a matter of extreme importance to a very large number of fishermen.
 Mr. Carvell: My hon. friend has brought this matter before me a number of times during the last three months. I have made inquiries, and I find a report from the engineer that it would require some \$15,000 or \$35,000 to do this work. I have information from a gentleman in whom I have the very greatest confidence that about \$2,000 will do it. I am going to investigate the matter. There is a general vote for the Maritime Provinces, and if the work can be done for a reasonable sum of money, I may be able to arrange to do it out of the general fund. I shall, however, have the matter thoroughly investigated and do whatever is proper.

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Progress of the War

London, May 28.—The Crown Prince's show may have started as a diversion of the Kaiser's battle, but it has developed into one of the biggest operations of the war. Following up their gains of yesterday with unabated force, the German armies today drove the British and French back along the twenty miles front between Vailly and Berry-Au-Bac. Greatly outnumbered and almost overwhelmed by the enemy's superior forces, the allied forces were forced to fall back rapidly. Putting their greatest forces against the center of the Anglo-French line, the Germans pushed their way across the plateau that rises between the Aisne and Vesle rivers. Late today they had succeeded in crossing the Vesle river at several points near Fismes, the French war office stated tonight. The loss of Fismes, an important railroad center on the north side of the Vesle river is serious. The German gains cut off Rheims from the west and will seriously cripple the allied communications in this sector.

London, May 29.—The Germans today advanced at all points in their great Aisne salient, capturing Soissons on the west, making a gain of seven miles in the center, and half encircling Rheims on the east. The total gain in three days' fighting has a maximum depth of twenty miles. Ludendorff attacked with redoubled force on all sides of the wedge he had driven into the allied line. The French before Soissons were forced to give ground rapidly in the face of the terrific attacks of the enemy. In places, observers report, they were outnumbered ten to one, and little by little they withdrew to give Foch's reserves time to come up. Last night the French were clinging tenaciously to the west outskirts of Soissons. On the west side of the salient the Germans pushed forward to a line running south from Soissons through Belleu, Septmonts, Ambrief and Chaerise. On the south they reached Loupigne, and northwest of Rheims the force of the enemy's drive forced the Anglo-French troops to withdraw across the Aisne-Marne Canal, along a line running through Brouillet, Savagny and Thillois.

Paris, May 30.—The removal of children from Paris was begun this morning when one thousand children from the Montmartre district of the city were placed on board a special train, bound for a vacation colony in the department of Allier in central France. This is the first action taken under a plan for removing Paris children from the possibility of harm from a long range gun shell striking a school filled with pupils, as a church of worship was struck on Good Friday last. Mayors of towns within the military zone met in congress at Paris yesterday. The mayor of Chamont presided and the mayors of Verdun, Calais and Belfort were among the assembly. The proceedings were opened by voting address to Premier Clemenceau which recognized his noble patriotism and his immutable tenacity. An address to the Americans also was voted.

London, May 31.—"The situation is a very serious one," states the general staff. "Not only because the Germans have made such rapid progress—an advance of twenty-six miles in four days but also because they still have such large reserves available to be thrown into the battle at any point. Our transport has worked very well and there is reason to hope that the Germans will not make any further progress, although the situation must remain anxious as long as they have plenty of reserves. The immediate future depends on what course the enemy takes. The Crown Prince has used up virtually all his own reserves and some from the army groups to the eastward, but the great bulk of the German reserves are to the north. It remains to be seen whether the enemy will use them to develop his success toward Paris or pursue his original intention in striking toward Amiens

with a view to cutting the allied armies in two.

London, June 2.—The spirit which repulsed Von Kluck's hordes is again checking the invader in the region which witnessed the dashing of the Kaiser's hopes in 1914. Attempting to further successes of the last six days the Germans launched a series of terrific attacks in the sector north of the Aisne river. The ground chosen lies between the important city of Soissons and the Oise river. Each time the French, displaying the élan which has characterized their fighting throughout the war, and particularly at Verdun, repulsed the enemy with heavy losses. Monte De Choisy was the scene of the heaviest onslaughts. Here the troops of the Crown Prince made four attacks, violent in the extreme, only to be hurled back after occupying for a brief time the coveted goal. Ludendorff's forces are energetically pressing the attack between the Oise and the Marne. The French have repulsed fierce onslaughts north of the Bois Caripont and Moulins-Sous-Touvent. Foch's men are still in possession of Chateau Thierry on the left bank of the Marne. Latest reports tell of heavy fighting along the Dorans-Rheims roads. In the region of Olizy-Volaines and Ville-En-Vardenois, some of the enemy troops have succeeded in crossing this road. The French war office announces that the defenders of democracy have re-occupied Longpont, Corey, Faverrilles and Tresnes. These points, located between the Verzy and the Ourcq, were taken in violent encounters, in which the French took the initiative. The supreme crisis of the war has been reached. During the coming week the fate of the Allies will be decided. The Central Powers are at the peak of their military power and henceforth they will slowly weaken. But to the alliance a grave problem still presents itself for solution as to how to hold the enemy back during this critical period. France, weakened by four years of fighting, is now struggling against a powerful enemy who is threatening her heart. Italy will probably face an equally difficult task.

Paris, June 2.—The French troops in a counter-attack west of Neuilly St. Front drove back the Germans and also in an attack recaptured Hill 168 in this region, according to the French official communication issued this evening. The village of Champlatt also was recaptured and near Ville-En-Tardenois some ground was gained by the French troops. The text of the communication follows: "The battle continued today. The enemy's principal efforts were between the region north of the Ourcq and the Marne. Our troops stood the shock with firm courage. The Germans recaptured Faverrilles, but their attacks against Courcy and Tresnes failed. West of Neuilly St. Front our counter-attacks drove the enemy back on Fassy-en-Valois. We recaptured Hill 168 in this locality. Further south on the front of Torcy Bouresches two enemy attacks were broken up. On our right we recaptured Champlatt and gained some ground in the direction of Villeen-Tardenois.

With the British Army in the field, June 3.—The British made a minor attack against a portion of Averly Wood early this morning. The attack gave them additional footing in that wooded tract beside the Anois River. The Germans have very little room for manoeuvring west of the river, opposite the old Somme battlefield, and the loss of any ground however slight, adds to their discomfort, and gives advantage for an attack westward up the slope toward Amiens. By attempting raids and maintaining a harassing artillery fire, the enemy is keeping up at any rate a formal activity, on the front between Flanders and Montdidier in order to keep the Allied forces occupied. Every German raid has been appraised at the true value. In most instances prisoners have been taken away, some prisoners taken recently, indicate that the recent reliefs opposite the British front have brought poor troops into the line in place of exhausted divisions. It is not too easy to believe however that this practice is widespread or that it means an indefinite continuance of the present lull.