

The St. John Standard

Published by The Standard Limited, 22 Prince William Street, St. John, N. B., Canada.

H. V. MacKINNON, Managing Editor.
ALFRED E. MCGINLEY, Editor.
United States Representatives:
Henry DeClerque, Chicago, Ill.
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Advertising rates on application.

ST. JOHN, N. B., FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 1915.

"We are fighting for a worthy purpose, and we shall not lay down our arms until that purpose has been fully achieved."—H. M. The King.
TO THE PEOPLE OF THE EMPIRE—Every fighting unit we can send to the front means one step nearer peace.

POLITICAL PEACE OR WAR?

Developments at Ottawa during the past twenty-four hours lead to the opinion that the question of an election or extension of the parliamentary term is likely to come to a decision much more quickly than has been generally expected. The Times, last evening, contained the statement that Sir Robert Borden had asked for an extension of the parliamentary term "for a year and a half after the war, and that the seven vacant seats in parliament shall be filled without contests." The Times also says "it is understood that the opposition leader offers to agree that the term of parliament be extended for a year. This would make parliament run two years from the present time."

As far as The Standard can learn from the best authority in Ottawa, the Government has received no offer from Sir Wilfrid Laurier. The opposition leader, on the contrary, has received two offers from Sir Robert Borden. The Prime Minister first suggested that the term of parliament should be extended for one year from its expiration, and if, by that time, the war had not been fought to a finish, a further extension could be arranged. This is the proposal which the Times claims Sir Wilfrid Laurier suggested, but no information to this effect is obtainable in Ottawa. If Sir Wilfrid has any such idea as the Times intimates he has, apparently, communicated it to that newspaper before notifying the Premier. A most remarkable proceeding.

The Prime Minister's alternative proposal was that the parliamentary term should be extended for one year after the conclusion of peace. This, if adopted, would be a most acceptable plan, as it would leave Canadians of all political parties absolutely free to devote their attention to the prime business of the hour—Canada's participation in the Empire war. Then, after the war had ended the political parties would have a whole year in which to prepare for the elections.

This is the proposal of the Canadian Premier and the most rabid Liberal cannot say that it is not in the best interests of the country; if, indeed, there is anything in the contention that a general election now, or six months hence, or at any other time, would so dislocate conditions that necessary work in connection with the prosecution of the war would suffer. That was not the experience in other parts of the Empire. Sir Wilfrid Laurier has not yet acceded to either plan. He is attempting to temporize with vague generalities until—shall we say—he has another opportunity of examining the political situation and deciding what action would be most advisable from a purely partisan point of view.

Sir Robert Borden also proposed that existing vacancies in the representation should be filled by acclamation, but to this Sir Wilfrid does not agree. What is the reason? If he is sincere in his expressed desire to avoid political strife in war time why does he hesitate to take advantage of the Premier's proposal? Why does he agree to some elections by acclamation but demand a contest in others? Let us examine the evidence in the case.

According to the Times Sir Wilfrid is willing that the Restigouche county vacancy should be filled by acclamation. Restigouche was represented by the late James Reid, a Liberal, and by an acclamation agreement a Liberal would succeed to the seat. But we are informed that the disposition of Restigouche county has undergone a marked change in the past four years, and it is even said that if an election were called there tomorrow the Conservatives would score a victory. This being the case is it not quite natural that Sir Wilfrid should be willing that a contest be avoided? Would it be good politics for him to take any other view?

In East Hamilton, another seat he is willing to have go by acclamation, the Conservatives, for years, have had such a safe majority that a contest could not change the result. By acclamation the Liberals would be saved the expense of a hopeless fight as well as the humiliation consequent upon certain defeat. Again a case of keen politics rather than keen patriotism.

But in what seats does Sir Wilfrid desire to fight? In Brandon and Lisgar, Manitoba; in Kings, Nova Scotia, and Carleton, Ontario. In the first two seats the Liberal candidates would naturally hope to drag in the scandal in connection with the Manitoba public buildings and the discredited Roblin government. In Kings, Nova Scotia, they would take advantage of the actions of Mr. Devitt Foster and despite the fact that he has been repudiated by Sir Robert Borden, would attempt to blame the Government for what scandal was shown in connection with horse purchases. In Carleton, Ontario, the Garland case would be the principal issue. Mr. Garland also has been repudiated by Sir Robert, but the Liberals would be prepared to ignore that fact and attempt to blame the Government for his shortcomings.

In other words, Sir Wilfrid is prepared to yield only where he has no chance of gaining and to fight wherever there is the vestige of an opportunity to conduct a campaign of scandal and muck-raking. Liberal newspapers may call that policy a patriotic one if they wish but to most sane people it will appear solely in the light of sharp political tactics.

If the Liberals are in earnest regarding their desire for a truce they will accede to one or the other of the Prime Minister's proposals. If they refuse their reasons for that refusal will be well understood. The Government is desirous of political peace, but does not purpose to pursue a peaceful course if their opponents are bent on war. The decision is plainly with the opposition no matter what their newspapers may say. If a war-time election is held and it should be found that partisan strife is aroused where the best interests of the country desire peace, then the people themselves can be depended upon to place the blame where it belongs. The Government and the Conservative party face the situation with complete and warranted confidence.

GREECE AND ROUMANIA.

Greece is ready to make the concessions demanded by the Allies, and all indications point to Roumania also co-operating in the manner desired. These factors, developing during the past twenty-four hours, have done much to clarify the Balkan situation and remove the uneasiness which, admittedly, existed, while it appeared possible that the Allies might be called upon to face one, if not two, opponents.

The people of Greece have always manifested a kindly feeling toward the Entente Powers, particularly France, but to offset this popular regard there has been strong pro-German sentiment in the Greek court, and, if we except Venizelos and one or two of his colleagues, in the Greek government as well. This is not surprising when it is remembered that King Constantine's consort is closely related to the German Royal family and naturally her influence would be exerted in that direction. It has never been established that the Queen of Greece desired active participation in the war on the side of Germany so much as she wished that her people should remain absolutely neutral. In this she will have much sympathy for Europe, during the past sixteen months, has had a terrible object lesson of the awful effects of war between great nations.

However, absolute neutrality for Greece, carried out with the strictest attention to all that the term implies, could not have satisfied the Allies; neither would it have helped their case. For the prosecution of the campaign now waging in the Balkans it was wholly necessary that facilities for landing troops and supplies should be extended, and it was the advantage of this sort, and which Greece could contribute, that the Allies desired rather than the aid of her armies or warships. If absolutely neutral, Greece would be obliged to disarm forces of the Allies coming into her country. Ordinarily this would cause no comment, as witness the case which occurred earlier in the war, when a British naval column was arrested for inadvertently trespassing on Dutch territory.

The fact of their arrest did not arouse question as to the attitude of

Holland, and with different conditions in the present case there could have been little cause for resentment had Greece followed the example of the Hollanders. But the war zone in the Balkan campaign is so situated, and the position of the invading armies is such, that, if the Serbians were to be saved from annihilation, troops should be sent to their relief by the shortest route. That route entailed a landing at Saloniki and transportation over territory where, under the strict letter of the law, Greece could intervene. Intervention in this case would have proved a great obstacle to the Allied arms, hence the necessity of obtaining from the Hellenic nation the concessions they have now given, and for which they will undoubtedly be richly rewarded after the war.

There is, however, another side to the case. Under the agreement with Serbia Greece was bound to come to the assistance of her sister nation if attacked. The claim was put forward that the situation in which Serbia finds herself does not come within the meaning of that treaty and there is room for argument on that score. Presumably, when the treaty was framed the situation the framers had in mind was another Balkan war, when Serbia or Greece might be attacked by other Balkan powers. But anything so titanic as the conflict into which the world has been plunged could not have been anticipated by the Greek and Serbian statesmen who were parties to that agreement. Consequently, when the call for assistance came, Greece found herself on the threshold of a very difficult situation. That she has come out of it as well as the most recent despatches indicate is a credit to her and a distinct triumph to the representatives of the Allied Powers to whom was entrusted the solution of the problem.

With Roumania the case is wholly different. There has never been any authentic indication that she would do other than side with the Allies, for she owes to Russia practically all she knows of freedom and constitutional government, and it would be the basest ingratitude were she now to take sides against her protector and ally herself with the Austrian, with whom she has had long standing differences.

It is, however, but natural that the astute statesmen who sit at the council board in Bucharest, before committing their country to a terrible war, should want to know where they will come out, and what are the prospects for a successful issue. It is believed that satisfaction on these points has now been given, and in a very short time the fine Roumanian army will be fighting with the Allies against the forces of the Central Powers.

With Greece giving guarantees of what may be termed passive assistance, and Roumania actively participating in the war, the situation in the Balkans is decidedly brighter. Whatever temporary successes may be gained by the Austro-German-Bulgarian forces will be offset in time, and there is every indication that in that area, as in all others, the Central Powers will find they have not only been out-manoeuvred and out-generalled but, when the armies meet in pitched battle, as meet they will, they will be decisively outnumbered and out-fought.

Y.M.C.A. SOCIAL HELD LAST NIGHT

"Gym" class entertained members of the Ladies' League—An enjoyable evening.

The Y. M. C. A. was the scene of a social event last evening when the boys of the Y. M. C. A. gymnasium class entertained the Ladies' League to the best of their ability. Nearly one hundred were present. Parlor, guessing and musical games were enjoyed in the large rooms upstairs and following this those present retired to the gymnasium where group games were played on the floor.

The musical programme consisted of a vocal solo by Dr. Percival Bonnell, a violin solo by Miss Dunlop, assisted by Mr. Dunlop, and selection by a quartette from the Harmony Male Glee Club, consisting of Alphonso Smith, Thomas Guy, Dr. Leonard and Geo. Currie. This programme was greatly enjoyed. Refreshments were served during the evening.

It is probable that a number of these entertainments will be held during the winter months and judging by this opening event they will be popular.

HOTEL ARRIVALS.

Royal.
A. S. White, Sussex; J. Gibson, Toronto; B. F. Smith, E. Florenceville; J. R. McCann, Florenceville; V. O. Phillips, Berlin; A. B. Fortier, Toronto; J. T. O'Connor, Halifax; C. S. Robertson, Sydney; J. E. Masters, Boston; R. H. Blennerhassett, Montreal; J. A. C. H.

Little Benny's Note Book

BY LEE PAPE.

Me and my cousin Artie played filipeeno for a sent yesterday, the way to play it being to hand sumbody sumthing, and if they forget there playing filipeeno and take it, you, filipeeno, and then they haf to give you watervir your playing filipeeno for.

With me and Artie tried to hand catch uthir things for about a hour, and neethir of us wood take anythins, jest saying, Lay it down, lay it down. And after a wile we started to play Kernel Roosevelt in Africka, Artie being Kernel Roosevelt, and he held out his hand, saying, Well, good by, sitzins, Im going to Africka to shoot hipperpotmusses.

Good by, Kernal, I sed. And I shook his hand, and Artie yelled, Filipeeno, filipeeno, you took my hand.
No sir, no fare, I sed, your hand dont count, its attached to your body. That dont make any diffrents, we sed evverything counted, didnt we, and a hand is sumthing, sint it, sed Artie. So I had to owe him a sent awn. I sed, I want to give him, and I want to give him, and I want to give him sent to try to get the wun I owed him back, and we kopp awn handing catch uthir things awl day and neethir of us wood take anything, and Artie stayed at our house awl nite, sleeping with me, and in the middle of the nite, I wook up and thwat of sumthing, and I started to shake Artie, saying, Hay, Artie, hay, hay.

Wat, sed Artie without wakin awl the way up.
Heer, wake up, heer, heer, take this, I sed. And I kopp awn shaking him and Artie opened his eyes and I took my pillow and shoved it at him and he took it jest as he was going to sleep agen, and I yelled, Filipeeno, filipeeno.

No fare, no fare, I wasent awake yet, no fare, that dont count, sed Artie.
Evverything counts, I sed, now I dont owe you anything. And I went to sleep agen, and so did Artie, I gess.

deron, Detroit; F. T. Ross, St. Stephen; Mrs. G. C. Boyd, Calais; A. W. Hay, J. A. Heydon, Woodstock; D. R. Kennedy, Jr., Montreal; F. B. Kelsey, Portland; A. W. Demant, New York; W. F. Todd, H. French, St. Stephen; W. R. Hance, A. S. Martin, H. Angus, Toronto; J. P. McKinnon and wife, Mulgrave; J. T. Halsey, Truro; V. A. Barnwell, Pictou.

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