

The Charlottetown Guardian

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THE ALL-IMPORTANT QUESTION

In Queen's County we are approaching the most critical stage in our parliamentary history, when we shall be weighed in the balance of patriotism and judged for ever by the result. In both parties there is an element which does not recognize the clamant need of departing from the old-time party lines in conducting the election. Among Conservatives there are many who honestly believe that it would have been better for Canada and better for the Empire had Sir Robert L. Borden accepted Sir Wilfrid Laurier's rejection of coalition as final and gone to the country on the issue. Among Liberals, on the other hand, there are those who have had a lifetime association politically with Sir Wilfrid Laurier, who admire him as the Old Chief. Now that he has followed a course which they know to be mistaken, these Liberals feel a twinge of conscience, a pulling at their heart-strings concerning their path of duty as citizens of the Empire. To such as these one of our contemporaries writes on what it describes as the "talk of pain."

"The political fortunes of this or that party leader are but as dust in the balance when weighed against the safety of the State. Sir Wilfrid Laurier is a man of winsome personality, and has his strong points as a Parliamentarian, but were he the most angelical of human beings he could not have such a claim to the loyalty of his followers as his country has. He would be a vain man, indeed, were he to set himself up as a rival of his fellow-Liberals. At a time when Canadian lads take heart-breaking leave of the mothers they love, when Canadian husbands wrench themselves away from the wives of their bosom, when fond fathers are bidding a long and perhaps last adieu to the children they idolize—all to fight the battles of the Dominion and the Empire to which it belongs—why should a party chief repine because his followers quit his side to perform their civil and political duties to their country in the war crisis? And why should any of the followers who thus separate themselves from him speak of it as if it were of moment in these times of the sundering of the tenderest bonds, bonds in many cases never to be reunited? We do not close our eyes to the fact that Sir Wilfrid Laurier's position was one of difficulty, but not for a moment do we think of sparing him because he chose the worse part. It was for him to decide whether he would, regardless of political consequences, stand unflinchingly behind our fighting men or let himself be ruled by disloyal agitators in Quebec. He had a fair chance. He had the offer of a place in a National Government and of the privilege of filling half the seats in that Government under Sir Robert Borden. He refused. He was called upon to make up his mind whether he would boldly profess conscription in Quebec and prove himself really leader there by bringing the people to that view, or weakly subscribe to the unpatriotic views spread broadcast in the province by firebrands. He failed his country and he failed his party. That being so, it is not fitting that genuine win-the-war Liberals should sentimentalize about the snapping of the ties that formerly bound them to him. Those Liberals who prefer still to be held by those ties rather than to give their whole heart to their bleeding country's cause are not taking the war or their duty to their country very seriously."

That is the position today so far as the Liberals are concerned. They are being invited freely and without any loss of prestige to enter upon a union with the Conservatives, which, as the Patriot obligingly showed on Saturday, will result in a gain numerically for the Liberals in the House of Commons. Why should Sir Robert Borden and his colleagues seek to jeopardize the party and party prospects this way? Because they consider the Empire's perils greater than any misfortune that possibly could befall a party and for the duration of the war Sir Robert and his colleagues, both Conservative and Liberal, want partyism wiped out of Canada so that our whole energies may be devoted

to crowning our arms with victory. When all that has been accomplished there can be a return to party, but it will be a different kind of partyism than that to which we have been accustomed during the past generation.

BENEFITS OF ECONOMY

It is a significant fact and worthy of serious thought that the general health of the province is better today than in many previous years. The wards in the Prince Edward Island Hospital were never so empty as they are today and the doctors tell us that the city was never as free from sickness as at present.

This, in the face of the present high cost of living, in spite of the consuming anxiety in practically every home concerning loved ones on the battlefields. And it is safe to say that it is because of these two great factors in the life of today, not in spite of them, that the health conditions are as they are. One physician attributes the cause to the high cost of living, necessitating more frugality in eating and the cutting out of unnecessary luxuries. Overeating and indulgence in unnecessary food stuffs, often rich and indigestible, it is well known, is the source of dyspepsia and that is the source of a very large proportion of the diseases to which the race is subject.

And there is another, perhaps a greater cause. The people today have bigger things to think of than their own little ailments. Many of the little indispositions, if brooded over, soon become magnified into diseases, calls upon the doctor and often a prolonged course of medical treatment. Today, anxiety for others overshadows these petty things; they are not brooded over and consequently they do not develop and the result is a general uplift in the public health.

On behalf of the soldiers at the front and the civilian populations in our allied countries there is a call for economy in food stuffs. The call is being received with sympathetic willingness to help but there is an even more irresistible call than this, the inability of the great majority of our people to indulge as formerly because of the cost. They cannot pay the price and retrenchment and economy are imperative. It is gratifying to know that such economy compulsory or voluntary, can be practiced not only without injury but with positive benefit to the general well being of the people.

THE PEACE PROSPECT

To those who have been and still are predicting an early ending of the war through the collapse of Germany, Lord Northcliffe's recent statement at a dinner given in his honor in Kansas City, will come as a cold douche. He declared the war was only beginning. "It is impossible," he said, "that this should be a short war. There are no facts which will form the basis for such an opinion. While it is possibly true that one-third of the German population has become sickened of the war the ruling two-thirds are firm in their conviction that the war is being prosecuted successfully to a victorious culmination for their government."

There has been much mischief, though probably innocent and well meant comment about troubles in Germany, about desertions among the German soldiers and growing jealousy among the allies of the Central powers. Most of these were founded on rumors deliberately circulated by the Germans to prevent as far as possible the prosecution of war preparation among the Entente Allies. One has only to look at the map and then at our casualty list, to see what progress has been made. The battle line on the western front is only a few, a pitifully few, miles from where it was two years ago and even these miles are only to be found in some localities. In Belgium we have only a small corner and the line has not moved perceptibly while the Germans hold practically the whole of Belgium. Farther south we have moved them back a few miles. On the Russian front the Germans are winning, and last week the Austro-Germans captured from the Italians all that the latter had won in the last three months.

When we consider the cost with which our little gains have been won there is little to cheer. Our Roumanian and Serbian allies have been put practically out of business; our Russian ally is out of it for some time to come and the Italians are not available to hold their own.

With these facts before us there is little hope of an early termination of the war, and if we are to win out at all we must stop predicting the early collapse of Germany and look more to our own weaknesses and the vital necessity of putting our whole strength into the conflict.

SEEMING INCONSISTENCY

Sir.—This week the householders will be waited upon in their homes and asked to sign a pledge card, in which they promise to use, as far as possible, substitutes for wheat flour, beef and bacon, and to eliminate all waste in their household economy.

Our papers are filled with appeals from the food controller to deny our selves for the sake of our boys at the front, and to save as well the civil population of Great Britain and her Allies from starvation. We are told that England looks to Canada to supply in great part her needs, and that to do this we must manage to spare at least one quarter of the wheat we usually consume.

In the past our churches have always led in every good work and it is thus the more surprising to see right beside those appeals advertisements of two of our most prominent city Churches for teas where "all the delicacies of the season" are to be had. These teas though given for a worthy object are not to feed the hungry, but rather to tickle the palates of those who have full and plenty in their homes. Surely our churches can find other means of promoting their charitable objects besides needlessly wasting the food we are so urgently called upon to save. If THEY set the example of extravagance how can the people be expected to economize.

I am Sir, etc

CONSISTENCY

BELL BOY HOPES FOR A JOB ON THE BENCH

TORONTO, Oct. 26.—Under the caption of "the services of the baronet and the sacrifices of the bell boy" the Toronto Telegram last evening quoted a letter from a former employe of one of the local hotels, who has been at the front since the outbreak of the war, and wounded at Vimy Ridge, in which he asks that the manager keep a place for him "on the bench" at the end of the war, and says: "Let Sir Joseph Flavelle and all the affluent civilians who have Sir Joseph Flavelle for their type and symbol imagine themselves weighed in God's scales of sacrifice for Canada alongside the writer of the letter quoted."

"Heroism always was and always will be less lucrative than hogs. The country that traffics in heroism cannot reward that heroism as lavishly as the civilians who traffic in hog-reward themselves. The utmost that the country requires of Sir Joseph Flavelle and other civilians was represented in the expectation that they would cast all the efficiencies of great business organizations into the treasury of a nation's need. These civilians were expected to take out of that treasury the same rewards that these same business organizations had earned in times of peace. The least that the country expected of this wounded bell-boy and other soldiers was that they would cast themselves into the treasury and take their personal reward in death, wounds or hardships."

"The evidence of Sir Joseph Flavelle reveals the exceeding great reward that civilians accept for war services and war sacrifices. These war services and war sacrifices are as nothing compared to the sacrifices of the young soldier who asks no higher reward than a job as a bell-boy from the country he has helped to save."

"Sir Joseph Flavelle of his abundance cast into the treasury his services as chairman of the Imperial Munitions Board and the efficiencies of a great business organization. 'Sir Joseph Flavelle took out of the treasury a baronetcy plus a war profit of \$3,000 every working day. The bell-boy cast in all that he had, even his life,' for three years. The bell-boy expects to receive nothing out of the treasury of a nation's gratitude but his old job on the bench."

DAILY SELECTIONS FOR GUARDIAN READERS

Furnished by W. S. Louson,

SOMEWHERE.

(By Julia Caroline Ripley Dorr.)

How can I cease to pray for thee?
somewhere
In God's great universe thou art
today;
Can He not reach thee with his tender
care?
Can He not hear me when for thee
I pray?

What matters it to Him who holds
within
The hollow of His hand all worlds,
all space,
That thou art done with earthly pain
and sin
Somewhere within His ken thou
hast a place.

Somewhere thou livest and hast need
of Him;
Somewhere thy soul sees higher
heights to climb;
And somewhere still there may be
valleys dim,
That thou must pass to reach the
hills sublime.

Then all the more, because thou canst
not hear,
Poor, human words of blessing, will
I pray,
O true, brave heart God bless thee
where-so'er
- In His great universe thou art to-
day.

HORRIBLE DETAILS OF TURK'S CRUELTY

Burial alive of babies in trenches with the bodies of their mothers, who had been slaughtered or allowed to perish from exposure, was practiced by the Turks in their work of exterminating Armenians. It was declared by the Rev. Henry Riggs, missionary of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions to Harput, Turkey, who recently came back to the United States. A trench was dug beside a camp of Armenian women, he said, and as they met death the survivors were forced to drag their bodies to it and bury them. "The gendarmes said they could not take care of the babies that were left behind so many of those were buried with their mothers," Dr. Riggs said. "When I visited this camp I frequently saw Turks wandering about among the Armenians picking out pretty girls and little children to take away to their homes. Some mothers told us that they had themselves thrown their babies into the Euphrates River rather than allow them to be taken to Moslem homes. Many more threw themselves into the river to escape a bondage of shame worse than death."

Five Hundred Dead in Mile

"About 15 miles from Harput is a lake hidden from sight with many ravines about it. We were told that the Armenian exiles were being killed and left in these ravines. Two Americans investigated and brought back photographs and actual facts. They saw in a 20-mile ride 10,000 human bodies, most of them killed by the bayonet. With a few exceptions they were women and children and the mangled conditions of their bodies showed the horrible fate that had been theirs." The story of the deportation of the Armenians of Harput is one of "perfidy, violence and murder," Dr. Riggs went on adding. "It is nearer to the truth to say the Turkish Government undertook the extinction of the Armenian population." After the issue of an edict for all Armenians to go to Mesopotamia, he said, there came the arrest of all the men of standing.

Massacred in Crowds

"They were sent out on the road tied together in groups of two to five," he said, "driven and beaten by the gendarmes. Of the first party, 500, one young man survived to tell the story of what happened. The party was taken into a ravine and ordered to sit down, he told me. Then the gendarmes climbed up on the surrounding rocks and fired with their rifles into the crowd of bound prisoners as long as they showed signs of life. The man who told me the story succeeded in getting his knife and cutting himself loose. As he made his dash for liberty he was followed by a volley of shots, but got away unscathed. All the other men of that and similar parties were ruthlessly butchered."

Thousands Die of Thirst

"The women and children were then started on the road toward Mesopotamia in companies of two or three thousand. By indirect routes they were forced to wander about until the summer heat and disease wasted away the majority. I saw one old man, who had traveled 200 miles, start out to go the remaining 250 miles, carrying on his back his pack of quilts and clothes; and on top of that his aged, palsied wife, who could not walk. Often the routes chosen took the people over waterless deserts, where thousands perished from thirst. I passed through such a region where thousands of bleached skeletons each side of the way told the story of a waterless journey across the plains in August."

Three-quarters Perished

"The people who passed through Harput from the north usually spent two or three days in camp within sight of my home. The sights we saw there can never be forgotten. They were absolutely without shelter, day or night, from heat or cold. The air was unacceptably foul from dead bodies lying near. As we approached the women and children came around us like hungry wolves, all restraint lost in the one desire for a piece of bread. The sick and dying lay around under the blazing sun with no one to care for them, waiting for the end. One place I saw a row of twelve dead women and children who had been lying in the shade of trees. With them was one little baby still alive. The shade had lifted and the burning August sun had fallen on them and killed them. A long trench was dug beside the field where these people were encamped. The people themselves were obliged to dig and fill it. As soon as one died she was dragged to the trench." In January, 1916, Dr. Riggs said, there were 485,000 deported Armenians in Mesopotamia while in May, 1917, the most careful investigation showed only 112,000 survivors, more than three-quarters having perished from famine, pestilence and massacre in 15 months."

U. S. LOOKING TO CANADA

WASHINGTON, D. C. Oct. 28.—The Hon. Simon Fees, speaking on the Soldiers' Insurance Bill in the House, urged the United States to follow the plans of the Canadians in the work for returned soldiers. The Dominion he said had accomplished more than any other country in the war toward successfully re-educating and rehabilitating her soldiers.

BITTER PARTISANS UNITE, CHEER UNION MINISTERS

REGINA, Oct. 26.—The departure of the three Cabinet ministers, Messrs. Calder, Crerar, and Meighen last night for Winnipeg was one of the most remarkable depot scenes witnessed here in years.

Premier Martin and all ministers and the Liberal members of legislature and federal constituencies intermingled with Hon. W. H. Willoughby, leader of the Opposition, and Conservative members of the Legislature. The binding quality of nationalism could not be better expressed in more definite terms, considering the extreme bitterness of the partisan battle which was fought in Saskatchewan only a few months since between these same men.

Among the Liberals, none were more conspicuous than C. M. Hamilton, of Yellowknife, who gained fame a few short weeks ago as chairman of the Winnipeg convention which endorsed Sir Wilfrid, and he was vociferous in his farewell. In Winnipeg the ministers will arrange at a conference for Government candidates in the three city seats and straighten out the differences in certain rural seats.



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AFTER HIM.

"Well, Mary, what did you think of the pictures at the exhibition?"

"Oh, sir, there was a picture called 'Two Dogs after Landseer,' but I looked at it for half an hour and couldn't see no Landseer!"



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