

THE CHARLOTTETOWN GUARDIAN

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ARE THEY EQUAL TO THE TASK?

The question agitating the public mind in this province today, agitating it to the point of suggesting the calling of indignation meetings, is "Is the present government worthy of being entrusted with the considerable financial undertakings which, whether necessary or not, are now known to be in contemplation?"

Every measure they have advanced during the present session they denounced with all the vehemence they could command before the election. When acceptance of the Highways federal grant was proposed by the late government all the Liberal members in the House opposed it during the election campaign every Liberal candidate raised his voice against it as an "infernal scheme" to extort taxes from the farmers.

The increased taxation for educational purposes proposed by the Arsenault government the then Liberal opposition and the Liberal candidates for election declared to be unnecessary, extravagant and unjustifiable because, they claimed, the revenue was ample for all requirements, including a substantial advance to teachers. They promised that, if elected, they would not only carry on the affairs of the country without taxation but would do so without the War and Health Tax.

They voted, during the passing of the estimates at the last session, for a reduction of salaries in government offices and for the abolition of several offices which they designated as "useless."

On the strength of those representations and promises they were elected and no sooner were they ensconced in the "seats of the mighty" than they turned their backs upon every promise they had made and took to their bosoms every policy they had formerly denounced.

This in itself was sufficient to arouse the distrust with which the country is seething today, but there was more than this. To justify their change of front they resorted to tactics which would have been culpable even in a school-boys' mock parliament. Through their organ, the Patriot, they launched a series of scare headed warnings of the impending taxation and the reasons for it.

A statement, signed by the Provincial Auditor and magnified by the Patriot, was made to do duty as a "financial statement" at the beginning of the regime. When it was shown that the "statement" simply showed the expenditures of the Arsenault government for supplies for the year and which the Bell government would have been obliged to purchase, had they not been supplied before hand, this camouflage "financial statement" fell flat.

The commission to investigate conditions at Falconwood and "discoveries" made in February, although launched in the Patriot's biggest type, also proved a boomerang and proof that the first thing the government did for Falconwood on assuming office was to do nothing and continue doing it throughout the winter.

This camouflage propaganda, the denial and subsequent admission of Mr. Landrigan's discharge from the School Supply, and other evidences of smallness and untrustworthiness, have convinced the people that a party so erratic and so tricky is not to be trusted with the serious financing that is foreshadowed in the warnings given.

Members of the government are themselves, we are informed, at sixes and sevens on the proposed taxation, many of them realizing that the work of the government so far has been the digging of their political grave. It is quite probable that a loud Halt will be heard from the country districts before the game proceeds much farther.

PROSPECT AND RETROSPECT.

Looking backward we find we have passed through a winter that has made a record for cold and storms. This is not true of this province alone; it was a record throughout the world, a record for zero weather and destructive storms.

Weather predictions are proverbially uncertain but reputable farmers have from many years observation claimed that cold, stormy winters with abundance of snow and rainfall are invariably followed by dry summers.

Whether this rule holds for the coming summer or not no one can predict but, although weather signs may fail, there are certain well known principles governing cultivation in all kinds of weather and, whatever the signs may forebode, the wise farmer will be guided by these principles.

One of these is to get the seed into the land as early as possible, that is, as early as the soil is sufficiently dry for it; The moisture absorbed by the soil from the snow and rains of the winter and spring will be sufficient to give the grain a good start before there can be any prolonged drought to check it. With a good covering of grain growth to protect the rootlets and the soil, the moisture will be conserved for the use of the plants.

Another principle which should not be lost sight of is that frequent cultivation, that is harrowing, helps to conserve moisture. Harrowing frequently during dry weather before the grain comes up will be found a great help in the conservation of moisture.

Early seeding, that is, at the earliest date in which the soil is fit is, generally speaking a safe one to follow in any kind of a season; frequent cultivation during dry seasons is also a safe rule to follow.

CURRENT COMMENT

The boycott in Ontario against the high cost of potatoes while not as yet influencing the price has decidedly curtailed consumption, Toronto consumption, which in normal times amounted to fifteen cars daily or seventy five cars per week, has dropped down to only ten cars per week. The Drury Government refused to take any action towards reducing the cost, on the ground that to stimulate production and keep the men on the farm they should have the benefit of the highest price obtainable. On the other hand the strongest fear is expressed that the high price of seed potatoes will result in a reduced acreage and thus have the opposite effect. Dealers are not optimistic as to continuation of high prices and operate nervously at present rates. New southern potatoes are expected on the market within a month when a much easier market is expected. The Woman's Council, Toronto, insist that with Canada's last years crop 21,000,000 bushels over the previous year, an investigation should be held into the cause of such prices.

How sweetly the Government and its followers get along together has been commented on before. Most of the Bills presented for passage have been so mutilated and disfigured by government supporters in committee that their identity is almost lost before reaching the final stage. On the discussion—on church matters where lawyers and politicians are not usually in their element—Mr. A. C. Saunders, who is considered a mild debater, was met with a demand from Hon. Mr. Hughes: "It is out of order, and I ask the Hon. Gentleman to take that back." But the Hon. Gentleman didn't take back worth a cent, and continued, "The chairman of the Committee did wrong," "going beyond their duty." Then Mr. Speaker interposed "The Hon. Member has no right to make such a remark!" Truly a happy family.

There are indications that the camp is overtaken with internal troubles. Hon. Members are showing a petulance which might become sulky children, but altogether out of place for occupants of responsible public positions. One member meets you with a smile. He has succeeded in caucus. Another has a dark cloud-like frown. He has met with reverse from his darling political associates. Others display an air of independence. Didn't care a continental how it went. He had no personal interest. Meanwhile the heaviest pop-guns worry. Too much exposure of their methods and the country is seething with discontent. To face the issues and race the people requires a courage, which alas they do not possess, and so delay of legislation and dilly-dallying with public business is the waiting programme. The public are the sufferers.

This discord found expression in the Veterinary bill, which met such opposition at the outset that its life was threatened. Later Hon. Mr. Lea championed it as a Government measure when it met with much mutilation but a better measure of success. It has been clipped on a part of its sting, but in the

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THE BOY WHOM THE FATHERS OF THE NATION FORGOT

The Y. M. C. A. is not a civic institution in the sense that it is supported by municipal or national taxation. But it is a civic body in that it is accomplishing a civic duty and fulfilling a civic need. It is as necessary in its field of endeavor as the public school and the state university, because its mission is identical with theirs—the betterment of citizens. It is educating boys to be strong in brain, strong in body and strong in soul. It is giving them culture in its educational classes—their, sinew and good red blood in its gymnasiums, morality in its ethical courses. It is helping them not only to be brighter men, but also to be better men and mightier men. It has grown to be a powerful factor in city life, because the reason for its existence is powerful—because, however wisely the Fathers of the Nation planned the welfare of those who could spend their boyhood in school and at play, they made no provision for the little fellows whose poverty and misfortunes burden their childhood with the harness of commerce. As our cities grow, the growth of the Y. M. C. A. must be commensurate. It calls for support and deserves it. It makes its appeal with the same right and in the same spirit that the State makes its demand upon every just citizen to contribute his share towards the maintenance of every function which insures the highest type of citizen.

HERBERT KAUFMAN.

Is Japan Forcing Opium on China?

There is very urgent need that attention should be directed, once again, to the question of the opium traffic in China; that the facts should be faced; and that an attempt should be made to appraise the situation for what it really is, says the Christian Science Monitor. Thirty or forty years ago China was an opium-ridden country. Not only was the poppy cultivated without let or hindrance, anywhere, but enormous quantities of the drug were imported from India and elsewhere. The most enlightened amongst the Chinese were always well aware of the danger which threatened their country from the practice of opium-taking, but it was not until the seventies of last century that any serious effort was made to deal with the scourge. About that time, however, the Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade was formed in the United Kingdom, and, quite undaunted by the apparently stupendous nature of the task, it flung

creation of another monopoly it wins out. Better for the country if the laws of merit, supply and demand were allowed a freer course.

There is still a certain amount of clutter in the mainland Liberal press for a general federal election. Not that they want one, but they think it sounds nice and exhibits a bravery which they do not possess. If they were taken at their word, and an election called on, the melancholy of their walking would resound from ocean to ocean at the government's cunning in springing an election upon them, in hopes of snatching a victory, and involving the country in needless turmoil and expense. It has always been their custom, almost before the writs of one election are put on file, to start their prattle about the government losing the confidence of the people and are only just dying for a chance to hurl them in oblivion. The rock bottom trouble is, they want something to talk about, they have nothing in the line of sound public policy to offer, and they offer this, dreaming that it is a trump card, but it never takes a lift.

That the government is framing their legislation so as to ensure the formation of extensive election machinery is abundantly evident. The Hon. Mr. Arsenault made the wisest suggestion that while the clause creating the Board of Education was under revision, it would add much to the efficiency of the Board if some outside educationalists were added. Members of the Government, of which it now consists, are not as a rule expert educationalists and the inclusion qualified outsiders would give them the benefit of much needed practical assistance. It was voted down. The disposal of its affairs must remain in political hands, no matter how the cause of education may suffer.

The same principle underlies all other government legislation. The Road Act provides for a class of officials, sufficiently remunerated and endowed with sufficient powers to make them useful cogs in an up-to-date election machine. The Hon. Attorney General in one of his explanations remarked that these road overseers would have the collection of taxes, (and taxes we are told will be large) and "THE GOVERNMENT WILL HAVE OTHER WORK FOR THEM TO DO." The \$400,000 to be spent under the Highways Act, will also operate as a smoothing oil to the machine. The Patriot's invitation of May 8th, 1919, "Come to the crib and get your pile," will surely hold good, but with it all, it will never be sufficient to stem the tide of popular indignation for the deceptions practised on the country at and preceding the last election.

Another month has almost passed—the second one—since the Patriot alarmed the people with its sensational scandal dope regarding conditions at Falconwood Hospital. There were no objectives strong enough in the editor's vocabulary and no type in the office black enough to picture a situation of privation and horrible neglect amongst the unfortunate inmates of this institution. Two months have melted away since this frightful disclosure. No tenders have been publicly called for to remedy those alleged shameful conditions. The house has been in session a whole month and not a whimper of information has been offered or a measure of relief asked for. In the meantime the government are perpetrating, and have perpetrated FOR THE LAST EIGHT MONTHS, this intolerable state of affairs.

China's Great Effort

After years of patient and devoted effort, during which the society rallied to itself the most enlightened aid, not only in China but far beyond her borders, an agreement was reached between Great Britain and China whereby a gradual reduction was to be brought about of the amount of opium imported into China from India, on the basis of a corresponding reduction of the manufacture of opium in China being effected. The next great step was the Hague Conference of 1912, and the next, the promulgation throughout China of a most drastic anti-opium law. The importation from India practically came to an end in 1913, and when, in that year, the Chinese Government took over the great stocks of opium at Shanghai, the trade in the drug was practically brought to a close

Charge Against Japan

Then came the great war, and, as the years of it passed by, the position of most nations, even neutrals, steadily became more straitened. China was no exception. There are always millions of people in China very near the border line of want. The war did not help them; neither did the long-drawn-out struggle between the north and south at home, the intrigue and counter-intrigues, the little wars, the vast systems of brigandage, make the path of the Chinese any easier. The Chinese people, who, by an effort the stupendous nature of which is not even yet appreciated, had shaken themselves free from the bonds of opium, never in all their history stood so much in need of help as during the years which immediately followed the final act of liberation at Shanghai, in 1913. No country was in a better position to afford this help than was Japan. How did Japan use her opportunity? By embarking upon a deliberate, government-organized, government-subsidized attempt to rivet, once again, upon the Chinese people the bonds from which they had so newly freed themselves.

Also Selling Morphine

Missionaries confirm the statement that great quantities of opium are being smuggled into China by means of the postal service which Japan has established in all the principal cities of the country. As Japan declines to allow any examination of these parcels, it is possible, the missionaries declare, for opium to be sent to the uttermost parts of China, and every use is being made by Japan of the opportunity "Hypodermic syringes," one statement says, "are sold at such low prices and so openly by the Japanese that anyone who wishes may purchase them, and also so morphia, which the Japanese are urging upon the Chinese people, telling them that it is an antidote for opium, and will help to free them from the habit." This last is, perhaps, the crowning mercy.

Openly Planted

The effect of the Japanese effort is seen nowhere more clearly than in this: a year ago, China was still fighting valiantly against any recrudescence of the scourge of opium-taking. A sincere effort was still being made to enforce the anti-opium law, in spite of the determination of Japan to thwart the authorities in all directions. But today, there is noticeable, according to the statement of the missionaries, a terrible lessening of effort. "This year," one statement runs, "planting is done openly. Seed can be obtained through the officials and planting is encouraged." Opium," declares another, "is again coming into use to an alarming extent, being cultivated freely in some of the provinces, perhaps under the penalty of a fine, which is readily paid, and eagerly received. The outlook is exceedingly dark." And so it goes on. And yet Japan would have the world believe that the very logic of events has marked her out as China's best counselor and friend.

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The Reason Why A FAR BETTER WAY. (Kitchener Telegraph). A far better way to prevent the circulation of Hearst publications in Canada than by prohibiting their entry would be a widespread boycott on the part of every red-blooded Canadian. WHAT IS A PIKER? (Worcester Telegram). In these days of extravagance the answer propounded to the question, "What is a piker?" by a former member of the Stock Exchange deserves consideration and attention. The answer came after a moment's deliberation and reflection and was: "A piker is a man who lives with in his income." Like similar answers, it has, beneath its light-heartedness, material for thoughtful considerations. A KITCHENER STORY (Westminster Gazette). One of the good stories that are

STICKING TO CAPITAL PUNISHMENT. (New York Times). In refusing to pass a bill doing away with the death penalty in this State, and thus making its enactment impossible at this session of the Legislature, the Senate probably has shown its accord with the public sentiment on the subject that prevails among us. The question, however, is one sure to come up for consideration again and again, and it is not unsafe to prophesy that some day a bill like the one proposed will get on our statute books. The tendency of change has long been in that direction—as long, indeed, as since the ferocious days, when most crimes were capital, including petty thefts. The causal relation is not clear and may not really exist, but the decreases of crime and the amelioration of the law's severity at least have gone together in all countries. How many murders the perpetration of the death penalty prevents nobody knows. That it prevents some could not be denied; that many it does not prevent is equally undeniable. Meanwhile, whoever chooses to escape the gallows or the electric chair has an easy way to do so. He need only refrain from murder nowadays, and from treason in time of war, and he is quite safe.

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