

The Charlottetown Guardian

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FRIDAY, MARCH 16

OPENING OF LEGISLATURE

The speech from the throne, delivered by his Honour, the Lieutenant-Governor, at the opening of the third session of the Provincial Legislative Assembly yesterday, was of more than ordinary interest. It referred to the recent retirement of the Duke of Connaught from the Governor-Generalship; after an extended incumbency in which he won in a remarkable degree the sympathy and respect of our people. Alas, the Duchess of Connaught has not long survived her return to the Mother Country. Her Royal Highness was of a quiet and lovable disposition and endeared herself greatly to all who had the privilege of enjoying her friendship at Ottawa. Her death will be a sad blow to the aged Duke who, it will be remembered, was recently appointed to the charge of all the Canadian troops in England.

The war naturally occupied a considerable part of the Governor's speech and reference was made to the invaluable work of the Development Commission during the past year. As mentioned in yesterday's Guardian, the past twelve months has been especially remarkable for the prosperity and well-being of the province. Not within living memory has agriculture proved so remunerative as at present and this prosperity has similarly been shared in by our fisheries. In this connection the Governor's speech foreshadows the introduction of proposals by the government providing for fishermen opportunities for technical education in their calling.

The Leader of the Opposition, Mr. John H. Bell, lost no time in entering upon a controversy with the Government. He repeated objections he took last year to the majority of the committee appointed to select standing-committees of the House making these selections. He spoke five times on this subject and ultimately brought in a minority report which was rejected. The Government followed immemorial precedents of the House in their procedure and, as the Premier pointed out, as it is the House as a whole that appoints the committees through their adoption of the report of the majority of the committee, it was merely a waste of time for Mr. Bell to attempt to make the views of the minority as represented by himself govern the proceedings of the House.

OUR PEAT DEPOSITS

In yesterday morning's Guardian we published the report submitted by Mr. Percy Pope to the Prince Edward Island Development Commission on the Peat Deposits which are found in large quantities in different parts of the province. Mr. Pope, who is one of the principal coadjutors of the President, Mr. Frank R. Hartz, in the work undertaken by the Commission, has laid down a straight business proposition, indicating the cost of the plant required, the cost of operation and other incidentals and concludes that a good margin of profit can be obtained by selling the manufactured product at four dollars per ton.

Soft coal is at present selling at from seven to eight dollars per ton and the available supply is so short that we are threatened with famine, our railways are practically tied up for want of coal, an embargo, in whole or in part, has been put upon transportation on every railroad in Canada, all because of the scarcity of coal. And the prospect is that coal will become both dearer and scarcer in the years to come. The causes which have produced this scarcity still exist and will increasingly exist—scarcity of labour and increased consumption of coal in industrial plants. It would appear then that the manufacture of fuel at present would be not only opportune but remunerative, and also patriotic. With some millions of tons of available fuel lying untouched in our province, and our people actually suffering for the want of it, the straight business report submitted by Mr. Pope, showing that a profit of one to two or three dollars a ton could be made by the proper utilization of it, should certainly be sufficiently attractive to ensure the installation of the necessary plant.

The manufacture of peat fuel has long since passed the experimental stage. The federal government has, after some years of experimenting and at a considerable cost demonstrated the practicability of turning our peat deposits into valuable fuel. Machinery is available for the work and all that is required is to make a beginning. We have almost unlimited quantities of peat in this province, situated in convenient and easily accessible localities. We have also an unlimited demand for fuel, an assured market at profitable prices.

Who will undertake the organization of a company for this development? To supplement the information furnished by Mr. Pope the Department of Mines will furnish such further particulars as may be necessary regarding machinery, plant and general working. Shall this undertaking also be dropped for want of en-

terprise? Shall we wait until some speculator from the United States or one of our sister provinces comes in to take charge of our peat deposits?

IRELAND AND LLOYD-GEORGE

The world, at least the world outside the territories of the Central Empires and their allies, must greet with deep regret the resurrection of the Irish question in parliament, the demand for home rule for all Ireland at once, while the great war is going on.

Friends of the Entente may worry too much, and enemies of the Entente may be too gleeful. Perhaps the most effective speech on the Nationalist side was made by "Willie" Redmond, in khaki, a soldier though more than fifty years old. Irishmen are not antagonizing the interests of the Empire as they understand those interests. They are merely making an ill-timed play for what is very dear to the hearts of their constituents.

Mr. T. P. O'Connor and Mr. John Redmond and their following reject all idea of compromise. They want home rule, merely for themselves, along with the right to prevent home rule for Ulster. The answer of Premier Lloyd-George is as frank, as manly, as consistent with his past, as any utterance by a parliamentary leader ever was. He owns frankly that feeling in Ireland is hot. He says:

Although Ireland is more prosperous than ever, she is no more reconciled to British rule than she was in Cromwell's day. The government is ready to confer self-government on those parts of Ireland clearly demanding it. I would say to the Sinn Feiners, "You can have home rule for the asking, but we won't place under your heel the people who do not want home rule."

Ulster, then, is the bone of contention. Ulster under the strong leadership of Sir Edward Carson, is as unyielding as the Nationalists. But it will be remembered that both Mr. John Redmond and Sir Edward Carson accepted the Lloyd-George plan of last summer, and that this fell through, according to general understanding, only because of the successful attempts of candid friends of both sides to sow seeds of discord.

We think the feeling of most Irishmen in the Dominion is that Erin should take half a loaf rather than no bread; that the exclusion of Ulster from a home rule scheme could only be a temporary arrangement; and that a policy of justice by an Irish Parliament toward all interests would bring Belfast men to seek union. The half-loaf is available at once. Mr. Lloyd-George is not quibbling. That never has been a weakness of his. He has never quibbled in all his public life.

A CERTAIN RICH MAN

One of our exchanges draws attention to the fact that one of the largest contributors to the Patriotic Fund is a man who was "broke" a short time before the beginning of the war, or who at least was carrying on a small business in what appeared to be a rather precarious way. Then he got into the manufacture of munitions, and began to take in thousands where he had taken in dollars before. Should the war continue for another year he might become a millionaire, for up to the present time he is supposed to have made a great fortune.

The fact that he contributes so handsomely to the Patriotic Fund is much to his credit. Other men who are making money just as fast, and who are as unscrupulous as he to making large sums of money, have so far failed to give anything worth mentioning for their country. Some of them are making their haul out of the demands for war material. Some are making it out of the artificial advance in prices of necessaries of life. In either case it is blood money.

Public opinion would support the Minister of Finance in making still greater demands upon those men who are being daily enriched by this war. Taxes which would have been denounced as "confiscatory" a few years ago are now taken as a matter of course. In the British Isles these tremendous imposts are met without a murmur. The Englishman says with the poet, "Here and here has England helped me; how can I help England?" They realize that for their life would not be worth living with all their wealth if Germany should win this war, and they realize, too, that their dollars can fight almost as effectively as soldiers.

Nor do the wise among them expect that as soon as the war is over there will be a sort of revolution that will establish the rates of taxation, and the general theory with regard to private property, that existed in July, 1914. They know that statesmen of all countries will be laboring in the future to arrange for a more equal distribution of wealth. It is not the Socialists nowadays who are saying, "Why should one man have a million pounds and another man be risking his life for a shilling a day?" Nor will people be put off with the old argument to the effect that if the property were equally divided to-day, somebody would have more than his share and somebody less than his share tomorrow. It is improbable that any of us will live to see the time when any such experiments will be made, but we feel on all sides the pressure of new ideas, new determinations that after the war there will be limits set upon the wealth a man may acquire, and upon the poverty he may endure.

NOTES

Never start on a journey Friday if Saturday is pay day.

Truth is better than falsehood, but false teeth are better than no teeth at all.

THE AUTO BUS SERVICE

Sir,—Your editorial "The Motor Bus Service" is strictly to the point and expresses the sentiments of all citizens whose goodwill is worth having. When the Motor Bus Company submitted their proposition to the City Council, as a citizen of Ward 5 and a taxpayer, was much pleased at the prospect of having a long walk converted into an auto ride for the small fee of five cents. Ward 5 is farther from the business part of the city than any other ward. But the pleasing anticipation has been dispelled, for lo, the successors of the old poor vagrant councilors, whom I believed to be resting quietly in their graves, suddenly appear and block the wheels of progress. And how? By an intelligent presentation of facts showing that the proposed Street Car Service would be injurious, financially or otherwise, to our citizens? Not at all. They had acted the mule by placing themselves against this project, which would bring untold relief and comfort to our citizens, they found themselves (noble statesmen) in a position to prevent its being even discussed, and took advantage of the situation! By their obstinacy the citizens of Charlottetown are doomed to a tramp, tramp, tramp it out for another year. I have no hesitation in saying that such treatment is simply brutal and I, as one resident of Ward 5, will meet these misrepresentatives at the next civic election and shall know why we are thus treated; and I shall not be alone. I pay an annual tax of a good round sum and the privilege of riding, even sometimes, to and from my work, would make me feel that I was getting something for my taxes. But it must be the same old tramp, tramp, tramp!

Of course the Street Car Co. is not asking us for a cash subsidy—no additional taxation, only an exemption from taxation for ten years and why should we tax a much required institution as a Street Car Service? We are being well laughed at throughout North America for our silly antipathy to automobiles, but this last piece of civic legislation is a scream, more anon. I am, sir, etc.

WARD FIVE. Charlottetown, March 15th.

German Guards Shun West Front

LONDON, March 10.—Pte. Thurgood of Vancouver, and Sam Gordon of Montreal, who were taken prisoner in April, 1915, members of the original contingent, have succeeded in escaping and have reached England. The two men state there was not much difficulty in escaping as the rivers are frozen over. Parcels are reaching prisoners much more irregularly lately, they state, and it is evident that Germany's difficulties of transport are increasing. The condition of prisoners in camps is not so good as once was the case, but these two men think this is not due to the guards, who are anxious to treat prisoners as well as possible in order to avoid trouble in camp. When trouble does arise the guards are packed off to the western front.

Every soldier admits he fervently hopes to avoid such a fate. Ptes. Thurgood and Gordon were taken care of by crossing the frontier and were sent to England with seven other British soldiers who also escaped with nearly 250 Russians. The latter, say these Canadians, escape in large numbers.

GREAT ADVANCE IN FOOD

OTTAWA, March 13.—The cost of food in Canada has gone up about seventy-five per cent since the war began, according to figures compiled by the Department of Labor. It has risen about eighty-seven per cent in Great Britain, the same report states. In January, 1914, the cost of a list of twenty-nine staple foods weighed according to family consumption averaged \$7.73 for sixty cities in Canada, as compared with \$10.27 in January last.

The cost in January was an increase of twenty-six cents over December. The price of meat, which had remained stationary for some months showed appreciable advances. Flour and sugar averaged slightly lower than a month ago.

DAILY SELECTIONS FOR GUARDIAN READERS

Furnished by W. S. Louson.

GIVE WORDS OF CHEER.

Do not keep the alabaster boxes of your love and tenderness sealed up until your friends are dead. Fill their lives with sweetness. Speak approving, cheering words while their ears can hear them and while their hearts can be thrilled by them.

It takes so little to make us sad. Just a slighting word or a doubting sneer. Just a scornful smile on some lips held dear; And our footsteps lag, though the goal seemed near. And we lose the courage and hope we had. So little it takes to make us sad.

It takes so little to make us glad. Just the cheering clasp of a friendly hand. Just a word from one who can understand; And we finish the task we long had planned. And we lose the doubt and the fear we had— So little it takes to make us glad. xN, aay 1JX MHT RAD RHT HMHS

CAN'T IMAGINE HUN DISTRESS IS ADMISSION

Prussian Food Controller Tears the Veil from Conditions

SHOCKING ABUSE OF BREAD TICKETS

Take Blame From Britain And Place It With Almighty

LONDON, March 10.—The Prussian food controller, Dr. George Michaelis, made in the Prussian diet yesterday what the Koelnische Zeitung calls a serious speech on the food situation, says a Reuter despatch from Amsterdam. Dr. Michaelis declared that the distress was such that a more serious state of things especially in the large industrial centres could hardly be imagined. He indicated the possibility that all surplus stocks of grain would be exhausted and said that very radical measures were needed to enable the people to hold out until next year.

"We have in the third year of the war," the food controller is quoted as saying, "discovered that among all sections of the people the general feeling evidenced is not one of that endurance for which we have hoped. This is human nature, but it is highly deplorable and may have most serious results."

"We have not perceived in the towns that stern supervision which is absolutely necessary in the distribution of foodstuffs. There has been widespread abuse of bread tickets, and grave circumstances as regards our stocks. Bread tickets have been illegally fixed on such a shocking scale that our entire reserves were exhausted. So when potatoes failed and bread was ordered as a substitute there was none available. Flour has been similarly hoarded, owing to the similar irregularities in the mills."

Dr. Michaelis concluded by urging the utmost severity to remedy the shortcomings while there was yet time. Some of the mills would have to be closed and the municipalities deprived of their autonomous powers. Rationing and requisitioning must be strictly applied with respect to eggs, milk, butter, fruit and vegetables. He added: "We are confronted with the thought of what would happen if this measure also should fail and what grim starvation there would be if suddenly during the closing months of the economic year we should find there was insufficiency and we could not hold out. The ensuing misery would be indescribable."

The speech caused a sensation and the Socialist Hufer, who followed, according to the Rheinisch Westfaelische Zeitung, declared that the junkers were to blame if a famine supervened. An attempt was being made, he said, to shift the blame on England.

"The selfishness of the agrarians," he said, "is the cause of the high prices. The war would long since have been ended if everybody had to suffer hunger equally. The present meat ration is insufficient. It withholds such a necessity from the people in the interest only of agrarian tariff is damnable. I recall professor Abbes' retirement from the ouzel of the war feeding department; the strikes of ammunition works in Essen and Berlin, owing to underfeeding, have only too well justified him."

The Minister of Agriculture then spoke and vigorously defended himself against attacks. He alluded to the critical situation created by the partitioning of the Entente's plan of starving Germany, and added: "For the small bread ration one can only make the Almighty responsible, who has not given us the harvest we expected."

CARRANZA ELECTED PRESIDENT OF MEXICO BY OVERWHELMING VOTE

MEXICO CITY, March 11.—General Venustiano Carranza was today elected president of Mexico by what is believed to have been the largest vote ever cast in the republic.

Although the voters had the privilege of writing in or declaring any name they desired, General Carranza received all but a few scattering ballots. The estimated vote cast runs all the way from several hundred thousand to a million.

Mexico will now have a constitutional president for the first time since 1911, when Francisco Madero received more than 2,000,000 votes. General Victoriano Huerta called an election in 1914 and declared himself elected, but later nullified the election on the grounds that an insufficient number of votes had been cast. His election to the presidency marks the climax of the efforts of General Carranza, who took the field against Huerta, Feb. 1, 1915, after Huerta had seized the executive power.

THOSE SOLDIER HABITS.

BY CHARLES McEVROY.

It was the year 1919. Peace had been declared. The war was over. I met him sitting on a seat on Primrose Hill. He was a distinguished-looking man of perhaps forty-two well dressed in a frockcoat, top hat and all the etceteras which, however, were decidedly ante-dated. I was still in uniform myself, for demobilisation had not then embraced me, and I was brought to a sudden stop by his shery exclamation of "Hullo, old sport!"

The moment the words had escaped his lips he blushed furiously, and the next instant was apologising with a shery sincerity. "I can't help it," he explained feebly, "but the fact is I shall never again be able to pick up my old life. I shall never be able to realise that I am a civilian."

He produced a gold cigarette case, flicked out a Woodbine, and handed it to me. "I'm done for, that's what it amounts to," he proceeded, with the same nervous anguish in his face. "There was something about him which touched my deeper feelings—perhaps it was his display of Woodbines—and I accepted his unspoken invitation to sit beside him.

"I cannot, for instance," he continued, "realise that I am not on leave. That I have not to go back tomorrow, or the day after. I cannot resist the temptation to accept free cups of tea or coffee in those 'Soldier's Hosts' which are still open, and I shall certainly never be able to bring myself to pay more than half my fare on a railway journey. These, however, are but trifles."

He passed his hand across his brow, where I observed drops of perspiration to be gathering. "I may tell you," he said earnestly, "that in the old, gone days I was a fairly distinguished solicitor, with a good practice, and that I joined up in my 'Group' without any desire to claim a commission. For three years, more or less, I have been on Home Duty in England, and I never realised until now, how completely happy I was. My wife and children learnt a new respect for me, and my occasional week-ends passed like items from a picture play. The unexpected arrival home, the dramatic embrace, the sport of the little ones in my cap or putties, the pride of my wife in flaunting me at church before the eyes of her less patriotic neighbours—these are joys which, once tasted, cannot be shelved.

"Yet all this is nothing. A horrible discomfort is what I endured at my own office. I was but orderly for two years, and now my clerks find me sweeping out the place in the morning, dusting, and going in search of coal or wood from the office cellars. Some of my clients are officers, and I spring to attention, automatically, at the sight of them, even if they come to beg off some threatened writing. I have a horrible habit of saying 'Sir' to the office boy, who reminds me curiously of the Lieut-Quartermaster in my old Battalion, and I fill my pockets with sundry nibs and ends of pencils from my own desk."

"But this is not all. "The truth is, that my behaviour at home reaches an impossibility which I believe to be unsurpassable. My table manners I will not discuss, except to say that I invariably take a knife, fork and spoon from the plate basket and carry these about in my hand, while waiting for the meal to commence. I was called into the drawing-room just before lunch, yesterday, to meet an exceedingly dignified lady friend. I need not say that I carried this inevitable paraphernalia, and punctuated the conversation by polishing the knife on the pile of our Persian carpet. At the table I usually polish it with bread, and I cannot fall back into the habit of using more than one plate at a meal; of no matter how many courses.

"Nor is this all. For one thing, the railway passes behind my house at Balham, and at no matter what hour of the day I hear a locomotive approaching. I rush to the nearest window, and wave enthusiastically in the old hope, I suppose, which has become a second nature, of attracting some fair eye. Which brings me to my real trouble.

"Among my staff of servants is a singularly attractive young parlour maid."

He coughed, and looked agitatedly about him.

"Well, on the night I arrived at my home in Richmond, she opened the door to me, and in a moment of madness I asked her what she was doing that evening."

It was my turn to cough; perhaps sympathetically.

"I swear it was nothing but forced habit," he exclaimed, touchingly. "But the thing haunts me. She has threatened to tell her mistress, and, of course, the whole trouble is that I am not in soldier's clothes."

"Where," I asked gently, "where do you live at Richmond?"

But he was still soldier enough to ignore the question.

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