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FAIR PLAY

FOR THE

Province of Quebec

By JOHN BOYD

Author of

"The Life and Times of
Sir George Etienne Cartier"

Montreal, 1917

JUSTICE FOR QUEBEC.

NOTHING MORE, NOTHING LESS.

SIR LOMER GOUIN'S STATESMANLIKE DECLARATION.

"They talk of isolating the Province of Quebec but Quebec is no further from Toronto than Toronto is from Quebec. They speak to us as they do to children, whom they wish to frighten, by threatening us with the dark room. But first and foremost, let it be well understood we are not under the tutelage of anybody and in this Canadian land we are not the children but the seniors. We are here by the right of discovery, bequeathed to us by our forefathers, by the privilege of the time-honored title of pioneers, by the right of courage, worth and constancy, by the will of the most puissant of all powers, — the decree of Providence and we are here to stay. This Canadian land was first the land of our ancestors, it is our native land and we intend to live in it as the equals and the companions of our fellow-citizens of other origins, the friendly and loyal neighbors of those who surround us. We intend to live in it and we intend to die in it as our forefathers before us and we shall do so."

"I do not use these words as a threat. I threaten nobody. I simply wish to say to the other Provinces that we have no animosity against anyone. All we ask is justice, nothing more, nothing less." — *Sir Lomer Gouin, K.C.M.G., Prime Minister of Quebec. Speech in the city of Quebec, November 10th, 1917.*

FAIR PLAY FOR QUEBEC.

By JOHN BOYD.



A few observations on existing political conditions by an English speaking Canadian, who is more concerned with the future status and welfare of the Dominion, than with the success of any particular set of politicians may be *apropos* at the present time.

It is an undoubted, though regrettable, fact that the national ideals, so fervently cherished by the founders of the Dominion, are in a fair way of being completely discarded and their great work injured, if not completely destroyed.

What are the causes of the lamentable and menacing conditions that now confront the Dominion? The two main causes in my estimation are :

I. The Imperialistic movement, which has made such headway within recent years.

II. The racial discord and sectional division which have been created in Canada to serve base political ends and which have been countenanced

and supported by the forces of special privilege and political autocracy, which are now endeavoring to secure a strangle hold on the country.

I. — THE IMPERIALISTIC MOVEMENT.

For years the ultra Imperialists, both abroad and at home, with the most powerful support, have been carrying on an insidious campaign to undermine the national ideals cherished and formulated by the Fathers of Confederation. Their efforts and achievements I have fully dealt with in a work "The Menace of Imperialism," which I have just completed as a supplement to the "History of the Life and Times of Sir George Etienne Cartier." Here I may be permitted to emphasize the main points.

To any one versed in Canadian history it is clear that the efforts of Canadian statesmen, until within comparatively recent times, were devoted, as far as regards military organization and operations, to the maintenance of as large a measure of autonomy for Canada as had been secured, after much effort and struggle, in the purely political sphere, and that the Imperial authorities for many years were in complete accord with such a policy. But of late years the

ultra-Imperialists despite the earnest and persistent opposition of Sir Wilfrid Laurier and other Canadian representatives have succeeded gradually, skillfully and diplomatically, in changing all that and as a consequence Canada has practically reverted or is rapidly reverting to the position of a Crown colony or to use the historic phrase employed by Sir Robert Borden in happier days a "mere adjunct", a position, which the present Premier himself declared with reason would never be tolerated by Canadians.

All those who know anything of Canadian history know perfectly well that the conditions that now prevail were never the ones contemplated by John A. Macdonald and George Etienne Cartier nor in fact by any of the other Fathers of Confederation.

Flushed with their triumphs the ultra-Imperialists are now preparing for the full accomplishment of their design, which is nothing short of the creation of a great centralized political organization, a military, naval and political consolidation or federation of all portions of the Empire under the governance of a supreme legislative body siting in London.

This ambitious scheme has been outlined by

the author of "The Problem of the Commonwealth" which represents the views and designs of the famous Round Table association which has branches all over the Empire and the leading lights of which are Sir Joseph Flavelle, Sir John Willison, Sir Clifford Sifton, Z. V. Lash, Sir Robert Falconer of Toronto University and Sir William Peterson of McGill, aided and abated on the other side by such men as Lord Northcliffe, Lord Milner and Sir Max Aitken (Lord Beaverbrooke). Much to the astonishment and dismay of many Canadians who, like myself, had faith in the staunchness of his Canadianism, Sir Robert Borden gave his countenance and support to this scheme in an address which he delivered in London during the sessions of what became known as the Imperial War Cabinet.

Well might the Canadian Premier describe, as he did, the constitutional changes that had been made without the sanction or approval of the people as "revolutionary". Not only are they revolutionay, they are anti-Canadian, anti-national and unpatriotic, using that much abused word in its proper sense to designate the real interests of our own country.

IMPERIALISTS AND THE WAR.

As has been pointedly observed by another Canadian, (John S. Ewart), whose staunch patriotism cannot be called in question, the ultra-Imperialists are taking advantage of war necessities and engagements in order that at the end of the war they may carry into the Empire Conference or convention, which it is proposed to hold for the readjustment of political relations, a partially accomplished fact. Professing concurrence in the necessity under present circumstances for unity the Imperialists, as he further observes, have not hesitated to precipitate a most skillfully planned attack upon Canada's powers of self government, an attack which they must have known would arouse resentment, in Canada. The result is that there has been forced upon us a struggle for the freedom of our own land and Canada's voice must be heard before the readjusting conference meets. It is to be hoped, for the sake of our national autonomy, that that voice will be heard with no uncertain sound.

The time is coming, nay, I believe that it has already arrived when the greatest issue confront-

ing Canadians is that of Canadianism vs. Imperialism or, in other words, the maintenance of Canada's national autonomy and complete powers of self-government or political freedom as opposed to the ultra-Imperialistic scheme of centralization and consolidation. There is, I believe, sufficient patriotism amongst the masses of the Canadian people to assure the triumph of real Canadianism over all the formidable forces arrayed against it. In fact we should have good cause to despair of our future if it could be conceived that a majority of Canadians would be so untrue to the ideals of the founders of the Dominion as to countenance by their votes the designs of the ultra-Imperialists of whom Sir Robert Borden has become the high priest on Canada. As Hon. Rodolphe Lemieux has well observed "these men act as men with no regard for the autonomy of Canada. For them Canada is nothing more than a dependency of Great Britain. What they wish is the Empire and colonials who are not Canadians but nothing more than colonials." Canadians would be unworthy of their past if they were content to fill any such *role* as that.

As things are going now it promises not to be

very long until Canadians will be forced to make a choice between three entirely distinct alternatives — Imperial Consolidation or centralization, absorption into the United States or the full, entire and complete independence of the Dominion. When that time comes, I am confident that the mass of the Canadian people will be true to the national ideals of the Fathers of Confederation, that to use the words of one of the greatest of them, Sir Charles Tupper, Canadians will “ever retain the entire, complete and independent management of their own affairs.” To think otherwise would be to believe that Canadians were so lacking in patriotism as to be recreant to their great past and to the splendid destiny that was foreshadowed by the founders of the Dominion.

THE RACIAL AGITATION.

II. Racial Antagonism — Discord — Disunion :
— One of the strongest if not the strongest indictments against the *regime* that we have had at Ottawa for the past few years is to be found in the racial discord, division and disunion which have resulted in a condition that threatens the very stability of Confederation. As I have had

occasion to say elsewhere (Preface to the French edition of *Cartier and His Times*), the ideal of a united Canada so fervently cherished by John A Macdonald and George Etienne Cartier, in fact by all the Fathers of Confederation, appears to be further from realization than ever. On the contrary discord rather than concord prevails throughout the Dominion and from far and near may be heard the rumblings of antagonism and division. Never in fact since the founding of the Dominion have racial animosities and sectional differences been as pronounced as they are at present.

What is the reason of this alarming state of affairs. The fault for the racial cleavage that exists, it seems to me cannot with justice be ascribed to the French-Canadians. In fact as a student of history I venture with confidence to affirm the the record will be searched in vain for a single instance where the French-Canadians as a people have attempted to work injury or to do an injustice to their fellow Canadians of other origins. On the other hand it is self evident from what has taken place, that the French Canadians have been persistently attacked and maligned in certain quarters. The hostility enter-

tained against them by a certain group in Canada has culminated in a systematic campaign of slander and misrepresentation. Their institutions, their customs, their language and their religion have been made the targets for attack and even their loyalty, their courage and their patriotism have been called in question. Where they happen to be in a minority, instead of being treated with liberality, justice and fairness as the English minority in Quebec always has been, they have been treated harshly, illiberally, unfairly and tactlessly. Had Sir John A. Macdonald been at the head of Dominion affairs, had Edward Blake or Oliver Mowat been the leaders in Ontario who can doubt that there would never have been all the agitation over the Ontario school question, which has been a brand of discord for the whole Dominion ?

Is it to be wondered at that the French Canadians should have indignantly resented the attacks made upon them? Ardently attached as they are to their native country — the most essentially Canadian of all Canadians — the French-Canadians naturally object to being treated as aliens and pariahs in a country of which their ancestors were the discoverers and colo-

nizers and for the development and progress of which they have done and are doing so much. The worst enemies of the Canadian Confederation, in fact, are the narrow minded extremists who, ignorant alike of the history of the country, the real status of the French Canadian people and the principles of true liberalism, toleration and equity, have done all that they could to set race against race in our great Dominion.

QUEBEC AND THE WAR.

Even the attitude of the Province of Quebec as regards the great war has been grossly misrepresented. Surely it will not be forgotten by English speaking Canadians, with any disposition to be fair, that at the very outset of the conflict Sir Lomer Gouin as head of the Province of Quebec and on behalf of his French Canadian fellow-countrymen hastened to show practical sympathy with the cause of the Allies by the gift of six million pounds of Canadian cheese, a most timely and serviceable offering, that subsequently the Government of the Province, on Sir Lomer Gouin's initiative, contributed one million dollars to the Patriotic fund, that the total contributions to date from the Province of Quebec

to the Red Cross and Patriotic Funds amount to over six million dollars (\$6,000,000) and that there is hardly a single family in the whole of Quebec that at one time or another, since the beginning of the war has not made material donations, such as clothes and comforts of various kinds, for the soldiers and refugees, an action that has evoked the warmest praise from France, Belgium and, in fact, from all the allied countries.

In addition to this material aid, in itself, of no mean value, thousands of gallant young French-Canadians voluntarily joined the colors and many of them subsequently shed their blood and laid down their lives for the cause of the Allies. The statement, so often made, that the French-Canadian contribution to the overseas forces has been numerically negligible is a falsehood, pure and simple. The latest figures in fact show that Quebec has contributed 47,000 men to the Canadian forces enlisted for the war, which is certainly not a negligible number. Nor have French Canadians any reason to blush for the conduct of their compatriots at the front. The heroism displayed by the famous 22nd Battalion, composed exclusively of French-Canadians, furnish-

es one of the most glorious pages in the whole history of the war and will be an enduring answer to the traducers of the French-Canadian people. Is it known generally to English speaking Canadians, as it should be, that through this Battalion alone which has been maintained as a unit throughout the war, nearly ten thousand French-Canadians have fought, that not one of the original compliment remains and that hundreds of the others have made the supreme sacrifice. Mr. Stewart Lyon, the Canadian Press representative, whose splendid portrayal of events at the front have placed all Canadians in his debt, has told us something of the heroism displayed by French-Canadians in the war zone.

Those who attack Quebec, for what they are pleased to term its slacknesse in connection with the great war, utterly fail to take into account the peculiar conditions, they forget that the people of Quebec are to a greater extent, perhaps, than those of any other portion of the Dominion, a purely agricultural people, that they have not been permeated with the military spirit, that they are peculiarly attached, through long occupation, to their native soil and that the demands for domestic needs were a bar to enlistments on

an extensive scale. More than that no account, whatever, has been taken of the one hundred thousand or more French Canadians who as Col. Mignault has pointed out have been engaged in the making of munitions, — surely an effective aid to the Allied cause. And had the right methods been employed at the proper time, had French Canadians of military standing, instead of strangers, been engaged in the work of recruiting, had the earnest cooperation of Sir Wilfrid Laurier and Sir Lomer Gouin been secured by those responsible, as they should have been, at the very outset, had the attempt not been made as we now see with disastrous consequences, to monopolize the credit for all that was done for one party and had a more generous spirit been shown to French Canadians in other portions of the Dominion who can doubt that many more French Canadians would have enlisted than actually did?

BASE ATTACKS ON QUEBEC.

Even as it was, while the Province of Quebec with open hand was giving material assistance to the cause of the Allies, whilst its sons were fighting, bleeding and dying on the battle-fields of

Europe, what was the course of a certain section in Canada? To serve the basest of ends the French Canadians as a whole were represented as lukewarm, as slackers, disloyal, unpatriotic and even lacking in courage. The vilest slanders in their regard were published, not only throughout the Dominion, but in many of the leading newspapers of the United States. To one of the worst of these attacks which appeared in the columns of the *New-York Times*, one of the most influential of the American papers, I took occasion, at the time, to reply but the animus and unfairness which actuated the campaign were apparent from the fact that, while ample space was given to the attack on the people of Quebec, room was found for only a small portion of the reply, the whole of which, however, was subsequently published in other newspapers. The simultaneous publication of many articles similar to the one, which appeared in the *Times*, was too significant to be accidental. It was an evidence of a well thought out campaign. This systematic and carefully arranged campaign naturally had the effect it was intended to have, the creation of ill-feeling in the other Provinces against Quebec and the accentuation of the racial

cleavage in Canada. And when speaking in the city of Hamilton, before a large audience of Ontario people, I ventured to assert—as I do now—that *the French Canadians are the most essentially Canadian of all Canadians*, — and asked for fair play for them from other Canadians, one of the leading Toronto newspapers, which is now amongst the strongest supporters of the new-political combination declared that I should have been driven from the platform for speaking as I did. What a fine illustration of tolerance fair play and liberality !

Whilst this insidious and ignoble campaign was being waged and whilst perfewd speeches were being made on liberty, democracy and liberality, was there one member of the Government at Ottawa to rise in Parliament and fearlessly denounce the slanderers of Quebec, the real authors of racial discord and national disunion as John A. Macdonald and Edward Blake did not hesitate to do when Dalton McCarthy was carrying on a similar unholy and unpatriotic campaign against the French Canadians ? Not one word of protest — I blush to say it — was heard from a single English-speaking member of what was once the great Liberal-Conservative party.

From that fact alone was it not apparent that the once great party of Macdonald and Cartier had ceased to exist or that it had reverted to the reactionary policy of the days of Sir Allan McNab ?

THE TRUE CANADIAN SPIRIT.

Fair minded Canadians will be inclined, I believe, to compare that attitude with the attitude of leading French-Canadian statesmen, of the men who represent the real feelings and sentiments of the mass of their compatriots. Has Sir Wilfrid Laurier — with whom I may be permitted to say that I have not always seen eye to eye politically — ever failed to denounce all attempts to arouse racial discord and to appeal for cooperation and harmony between all Canadians ? Has it not been his constant aim to see realized in practice the dream of the founders of the Dominion — a great free commonwealth in which men of all races would as Canadians work together despite the difference in their origin ? What was the head of the Province of Quebec, Sir Lomer Gouin, doing when the hue and cry was going forth over the land against his Province and his people ? Appealing in the city of

Toronto for a better understanding between English and French speaking Canadians, and urging all to forget any differences there might be and to work in concord and harmony for the welfare and advancement of their common country. Did not Sir Lomer Gouin rather than the traducers of the people of Quebec strike the note of true Canadianism and patriotism when he said in his Toronto speech, a speech that rightly gained him national recognition as one of the broad gauged statesmen of the Dominion. — “ Nature, history and Providence all proclaim our brotherhood ”., and when he held up to all his fellow Canadians the noble ideal cherished by the great French Canadians Father of Confederation, George Etienne Cartier — a united Canada with respect for the rights of all. The calm dignified hearing of the head of the Province of Quebec was a striking rebuke to the extremists and fanatics.

Did their campaign cease ? By no means. The most despicable tactics were next resorted to. Whilst nearly two million sturdy habitants were pursuing their usual peaceful avocations, undisturbed by the hue and cry, a few criminals and jail birds in the city of Montreal, incited by

agents paid with Government money, were creating disorder and committing crime in this great cosmopolitan centre where the worst elements of the foreign population foregather. And these few miscreants, incited to do their dirty work, have since been, and are still being, held up to the rest of the Dominion as representative of over two million of the most law abiding, peaceable, honest and industrious people on the face of the earth.

What criminal folly ! What insane tactics ! How can it ever be hoped to secure national unity by such methods ! They are about as reasonable and logical as the attempt to make out that the French Canadians alone are opposed to conscription when, as the demands for exemption in other parts of Canada, as it is in Quebec. The very fact that the people of Quebec have maintained their composure under so much abuse, slander, and misrepresentation is the strongest evidence of their regard for law and order and of their true patriotism. They have rightly bided their time until they can constitutionally express their resentment at the polls.

TO ISOLATE QUEBEC.

Now to cap the climax, while with cynical effrontery, it is being claimed that there is no desire to politically isolate the Province of Quebec, the attempt is being made with little disguise to set the rest of the Dominion against this Province. A vote for Laurier, it is being said throughout the Dominion by certain people, is a vote to place the country under the heel of Quebec. The folly does not even end there. To declare for instance, as a leading member of the Government is reported to have done at Winnipeg, that a vote for Laurier and those who support him is a vote for the Germans, is nothing short of an outrage which should be resented by every fair minded Canadian.

The great Province of Quebec will not be isolated from the rest of the Dominion, let that be distinctly understood. Two million people, forming one of the most important ethnical groups in the country, cannot be so isolated, and those who cherish any such dream are likely to have a rude awakening.

As such an eminent leader in public affairs as Lord Sheughnessy has well observed "the

good old Province of Quebec will always remain the bulwark and the strongest support of the Canadian Confederation, notwithstanding the irritation and resentment sometimes displayed when the Province is criticized — and it must be said mischievously — by a number of people whose efforts as citizens of the country should be directed towards a good understanding and conciliation.”

Not only is Quebec the oldest and one of the most important Provinces of the Dominion, but it is one of the most prosperous and best governed of all the Provinces, and what should be especially remembered is that it was constituted by the founders of the Dominion, the pivotal province of the Canadian Confederation. Whatever may happen, therefore, in the pending election, the representation from Quebec with the members from the other Provinces, who will act with Quebec, will form a formidable factor — perhaps hold the balance of power — in national politics, so that Quebec's influence will continue to be potent, as it always has been.

In the meantime it would be well for those who are responsible for the attacks on the French-Canadians and who talk so glibly of

isolating Quebec from the rest of the Dominion, to take to heart the striking and dignified words uttered by the Prime Minister of the Province, Sir Lomer Gouin at Quebec: —

“They talk to us of isolating the Province of Quebec from the rest of the Dominion. But Quebec is no further from Toronto than Toronto is from Quebec. They speak to us as they do to children, whom they wish to frighten, by threatening us with the dark room. But first and foremost let it be well understood, — we are not under the tutelage of anybody and in this Canadian land we are not the children but the seniors. We are here by the right of discovery bequeathed to us by our forefathers, by the privilege of the time-honored title of pioneers, by the right of courage, worth and constancy, by the will of the most puissant of all powers — the decree of Divine Providence and we are here to stay. This Canadian land was first the land of our ancestors, it is our native land and we intend to live in it as the equals and the companions of our fellow-citizens of other origins, the friendly and loyal neighbors of those who surround us. We intend to live in it and we intend to die in it as our forefathers did before us and we shall do so.

"I do not use these words as threats. I threaten nobody. I simply wish to say to the other Provinces that we have no animosity against anybody. All that we ask is justice, nothing more, nothing less."

When a similar spirit to this is displayed by all Canadians the racial ill-feelings and antagonisms which are now the curse of our country will cease. May that auspicious day soon dawn.

The hint has been thrown out in certain quarters that Quebec might withdraw from the sisterhood of Provinces and Confederation be smashed into its original fragments. Heaven forbid. That was not the dream of Macdonald and Cartier and Brown. No — despite all the efforts of all the extremists and Francophobes in the Dominion Confederation will not be destroyed. Quebec will not be allowed to leave the Confederation. English-speaking Canadians will not permit anything of the kind. But we will not make Quebec stay in Confederation by compulsion and threats, by harshness and injustice, but by fair play, by justice, by fraternity, by a spirit of true liberality and common Canadianism. And when national sanity returns as it must, when good feeling and concord between the two

great races are restored as they will be, English-speaking Canadians and French-Canadians, joined hand in hand, will march forward together to the great destiny that awaits their common country.

STANDS WITH FRENCH CANADIANS.

In the meantime, as an English-speaking Canadian, who is also proud of being a native of the historic old Province of Quebec with its great traditions and its storied past, as one who knows the French-Canadians and who admires them for their staunch Canadianism and their many sterling qualities, I desire, with all the vigor and force at my command, to protest against the attempt that is being made in certain quarters to set the rest of the Dominion against Quebec. It is a policy that is not only unpatriotic but suicidal and against the best interests of the Canadian Confederation. But, I am proud to believe, the nefarious campaign, that has been carried on against this Province, is after all but the work of a small, though very active and noisy band of extremists, with the object of serving the ends of certain interests and that the great mass of Canadians will unmistakably show that they have no sympathy with it. It is gratifying to know that the voices of leading English-speaking

Canadians have already been heard in protest, and I am especially pleased that the worthy and broad-minded representative of the English-speaking minority in the Government of the Province, Hon. Walter Mitchell, has vigorously and eloquently defended our French-Canadian fellow-countrymen. When the full perfidy of the campaign is realized as it will be in good time, it will be to the credit of those English-speaking Canadians who were fair enough and liberal enough to side with the people of Quebec.

Upon the minds of the traducers of the French Canadian people I would like to imprint certain words. They are not words of mine but of one of the greatest writers in the English language, a Britisher of the Britishers and therefore a believer in justice and British "fair play" — Arthur Conan Doyle. Those words are these :

"I do want to take my hat off once again to the French-Canadian. He came of a small people. At the time of the British occupation, I doubt if there were more than a hundred thousand of them, and yet the mark they have left by their bravery and activity upon this continent is an ineffacable one. You pass right through the territory of the United States down the

valleys of the Illinois and of the Mississippi and everywhere you come across French names — Marquette, Joliet, St-Louis, Mobile, New Orleans. How came these here? It was the French Canadian, who when the English colonies were still clinging to the edge of the ocean, pushed round from the North into the heart of the land. French-Canadians first traversed the great American rivers and sighted the American Rockies. Keep farther north and still their footsteps are always marked deep in the soil before you. Cross the whole vast plain of Central Canada and reach the mountains. What is that called, you ask? That is Mount Miette. And that? This is Tête Jaune. And that lake? It is Lake Brulé. They were more than scouts in front of an army. They were so far ahead that the army will take a century yet before it reaches their outposts. Brave, enduring, light hearted, romantic, they were and are a fascinating race. The ideals of the British and French stock may not be the same, but while the future of the country must surely be upon British lines, the French will leave their mark deeply upon it. Five hundred years hence, their blood will be looked upon as the aristocratic and distinctive blood of Canada, and even as the Englishman is

proud of his Norman ancestors, so the most British Canadian will proudly trace back his pedigree to the point where some ancestor had married with a Taschereau or a De Lotbinière. It seems to me that the British cannot be too delicate in their dealings with such a people. They are not a subject people but partners and should always be treated so."

POLITICAL AUTOCRACY.

The situation created by those who have succeeded in fanning the flame of racial prejudice into a conflagration is sufficiently serious and disquieting . But this is not all. Other grave dangers confront the country.

The existing *regime* has developed into what is little short of a political despotism. Had some of the things, which have lately been done in this country, been attempted in other countries, it is questionable whether there would not have been serious trouble. It is in fact a proof of the law abiding character of the Canadian people and their true patriotism that they have been as patient as they have until they have been given an opportunity of expressing their views at the polls. Not only have the rights of the citizen been interfered with unnecessarily, onerous restric-

tions and burdens imposed, high handed proceedings countenanced, the press muzzled and a reign of mental terrorism inaugurated, to the detriment of freedom of utterance but the most shameless attacks have been made under the form of supposed free parliamentary government on the political rights and liberties of the people.

The extension of the parliamentary term beyond the constitutional period was a clear violation of the Constitution, and a further extension was only prevented by the opposition which the proposal encountered. Had those in power, had those who are contemplating further assaults on Canadian autonomy, had in fact all the reactionaries in Canada had their way the people of the Dominion would not, even now, have the opportunity of registering their verdict at the polls as they are entitled under the Constitution to do at the expiration of every five years. Nor is this all.

The Military Service Act passed by a moribund Parliament, which had exceeded its constitutional term and which had utterly lost the confidence of the electorate, by substituting compulsory for voluntary service, not only was contrary to the traditional policy of Canada, but was op-

posed to all recognized principles of democracy and political freedom. Its enactment under the circumstances only had the effect of accentuating the division unrest and discord already existing throughout the Dominion. Nor was this all.

The War Times Election Act, the disenfranchisement of thousands of Canadian electors, whose only crime is that they happen to be of alien birth, the granting of the franchise to women relatives of soldiers, while other Canadian women equally entitled to it will have no vote, the provisions for the soldiers' vote, especially these permitting the vote of men who have never lived in the country, swamping and overriding the votes of those, who have a real stake in the Dominion, are all enactments of a most arbitrary and reprehensible character, fraught with menace to the liberties of Canadians. As Sir Wilfrid Laurier has justly observed "such legislation is repugnant to every sense of justice and right. It has for its object and for effect to discourage and to stifle the free expression of the will of the people and to make parliamentary government a mere name without the reality."

The plea that the times are exceptional, that such measures are justified during a period of war is a very specious but a very dangerous one.

War or no war the people must be extremely careful that they do not relinquish the least of those liberties which were won after so much effort and sacrifice, as the danger is that once they are relinquished it will be much more difficult to regain them than it was to give them up. Canadians will in fact, show themselves unfit for political freedom if they countenance such attacks upon it. In the historic words of Junius "the subject who is truly loyal to the Chief Magistrate will neither advise nor submit to arbitrary measures."

SIR WILFRID LAURIER'S ATTITUDE.

In demanding that the wishes of the Canadian people should be consulted before such an unprecedented measure as the Military Service Act was put into force and in protesting, as he did, against the other arbitrary measures, Sir Wilfrid Laurier took the only course consistent with the traditions of Canadian statesmanship, real political freedom and true democracy.

Against all influences, to the cajolery and abuse of opponents, and to the desertion of old time friends and supporters, Sir Wilfrid Laurier presented and presents an unruffled front, and stands before the country to-day the great cham-

pion of true Canadianism and sound democracy. As one who has not always supported him I can with all the more sincerity pay him this merited tribute. Whether victorious or vanquished in the immediate future — and that he will be victorious I sincerely trust — time and history will vindicate him as the ideals that he upholds must prevail in the long run.

CANADA AND THE WAR.

There is not a Canadian worthy of the name, be he English speaking or French speaking, who does not desire to see the Allied cause successful and Germany autocracy and despotish swept away, not only for the sake of the allied countries but for the welfare of the German people themselves, for even Germans have to remain in the world after the war and enjoying the fullest political freedom, which they do not do now, they will add to the sum total of human happiness. All Canadians are in favor of winning the war. For any one set of Canadians to arrogate to themselves the title of Win-the-War and to use the allied flags as a shield, as the British flag has been so often used in the past, is a travesty of truth and justice, a proceeding so foolish that it is to be hoped it will deceive nobody. Yes —

Win-the-War. But in order that the war may be won is it necessary to introduce Prussian methods into Canada, is it necessary to ruin our country, is it necessary to resort to compulsion, is it necessary to establish a political autocracy at Ottawa, is it necessary to interfere with the fundamental rights and liberties of the people, is it necessary to set race against race and to seek to politically isolate the oldest and one of the greatest provinces in the Canadian Confederation? Canadians may be permitted to doubt it.

What is the use of fighting the Germans if we are to adopt their methods? More enlightened methods, a broader vision, a more patriotic and truer national policy surely would have had other and more effective results. Had a real national government been formed, as it should have been at the very outset of the war, and by that means the cordial and earnest cooperation of all sections of the population been secured, had immediate steps been taken to consolidate all the national forces, to minimize the dislocation to the country's economic life that was bound to follow from the strain of war, had measures been inaugurated without delay to curb graft and profiteering and to see that the burden should fall equally on all classes and not particularly on the

masses of the people and had steps been taken to secure union and harmony between the two great races in Canada, we would have been saved, in a large measure at least, the menacing conditions that now confront us. The eleventh hour attempt to meet the situation after the evil has been done by the formation of the so-called union government is like shutting the stable after the horse is gone. The righteous judgment of the electors cannot be evaded by any such subterfuge.

THE ONLY SOLUTION.

With other drastic changes the great war has resulted in a new political alignment in Canada, the results of which will be of momentous character. On the one side — the Canadian party — composed of men from all the old political divisions who believe in political freedom, in the rights and interests of the people, in the advance of democracy within constitutional limits and the maintenance of Canadian autonomy ; on the other side — the party of the reactionaries — is to be found the Canadian Junkers, the supporters of special privilege and class distinctions, the upholders of political autocracy and the advocates of that ultra-Imperialism whose success would

imperil the very existence of Confederation. The issue that faces the Canadian people is therefore clear out.

There is but one certain solution. The remedy will not be furnished by a victory for the so-called Union Government, on the contrary such a victory would only accentuate the existing unrest and discord. What is required is not a union of politicians formed after so much shameful intrigue and supported by the most dangerous influences which as Sir Wilfrid Laurier has pointed out are now endeavoring to stifle the voice of the people and who, if successful, will be complete masters of the situation. What is required is a real union of all true and patriotic Canadians, who placing the interests of their own country first and rising above all sectional considerations and petty prejudice will rally around the man who to-day represents in Canada the cause of political freedom. The statement has been made in some quarters that never again will a French-Canadian be tolerated as Prime Minister of the Dominion. What arrant nonsense ! What foolish bigotry ! Surely Canadians are not so narrow-minded, illiberal and prejudiced as to be swayed by such considerations. Such was not the guiding spirit of Macdonald and

Cartier, and the Liberals who chose Sir Wilfrid Laurier to succeed Edward Blake gave a finer example to their fellow-countrymen. If any different spirit animates the majority of Canadians they will show themselves unfit for nationhood. What a magnificent example they will furnish if, on the contrary, from the shores of Cape Breton to the sunlit waters of the Pacific they rally to the man, French-Canadian if you will, but above all Canadian who for fifteen years served as head of the state with the greatest honor and distinction and who, though in his long career he may have made some mistakes, has always been true to the national ideals and consistent in his advocacy of concord and cooperation between the races. What a splendid thing it will be for the country, if Canadians by so doing, advance the cause of political freedom and democracy, and drive into merited oblivion the formenters of racial division, and the upholders of political despotism.

The supreme issues in the pending election could not be more clearly defined than they have been by Sir Wilfrid Laurier in his clarion call to the Canadian people : —

“The supreme end is to assist in the tremendous struggle in which we are engaged, to main-

tain the unity of the nation, to avoid the divisions and discords, which for many years kept in check, are now unfortunately again looming up, dangerous and threatening, to resolutely face the economic situation with a view of avoiding and lessening the privations and sufferings which should not exist in a country so richly endowed by nature as our country."

DEMOCRACY MUST RULE.

What is especially puzzling the politicians in this election is how what is known as the silent or independent vote will be cast, as upon that vote will undoubtedly depend the result. In this connection I believe there will be thousands and thousands who will act as I intend acting, and who casting all other considerations to the winds and remembering only that it is the administration of the last three years which is on trial will vote against a set of men who have been guilty of what is little short of national treason.

The people have the remedy in their own hands and if they only have a chance to give expression to their real views there can be no doubt in my estimation of the result. To again quote from Sir Lomer Gouin's memorable speech at Quebec...

“From Halifax to Victoria, I believe the people are for Laurier. It is democracy which rules in this country. The democratic idea has made its way in Europe and it will do the same here. If the autocrats believe that they are able to trample on democracy in this country they will find out their mistake. Democracy will overwhelm them. It has already overwhelmed others, stronger and more powerful than they are.”

Let us sincerely trust that for the future welfare, peace and harmony of our beloved Dominion, we are about to witness — as I most sincerely believe we will — the greatest rising that has ever taken place in Canada — a constitutional rising of the Canadian people at the polls, with their ballots as bullets, more deadly than any shrapnel and which will shatter the trenches of deception, special privilege, political autocracy and narrow-minded fanaticism. Without passion and without clamor but with a righteous indignation that has waited long for expression the people will enter the voting booths and register their verdict. And the result will not be, as is pretended in some quarters, a victory for the Germans, but a victory of true Canadianism and real liberalism over reaction and political despotism.

JOHN BOYD.