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DAILY HERALD.

TUESDAY JULY 12, 1904

MILITIA CHANGES.

The new militia bill now before parliament proposes some important changes in the management of the force at headquarters. There are to be no more general officers commanding, but the duties that have devolved jointly on the minister of militia and the commander-in-chief will be delegated to a military council of which the minister will be chairman, who will have acting with him four military and two civil members of the council, while the general supervision of the forces will be in the hands of an inspector general.

The general officers commanding have not been found a success. There has been an almost constant clash of authority between them and the government, and most of them have been compelled to pull up stakes and return to the old country before their terms have expired.

The chief trouble has been that the commanders thought they had carte blanche to run the militia as they saw fit without regard to the authority of the government which is responsible to the people for the management of the militia as they are in all other branches of the public service committed to their care. This desire to run things was especially noticeable in Lord Dundonald, who was dismissed because of his disregard to the constitutional privileges of the administration.

Sir Frederick Borden's new plan of a military council should greatly relieve the situation and bring the management of the militia more in harmony with the popular feeling and rid the country of unseemly squabbles between the government and the head officer of the force. The plan has been adopted in England and the new Canadian militia bill is patterned after the law in that country, after full consultation between Sir Frederick and the home authorities.

A TORY FACE ABOUT.

When the militia bill was under discussion in the House of Commons yesterday, Mr. Fowler, the Tory member for Kings and Col. Sam Hughes objected to the clause giving the government authority to call out the militia in the case of needed defence and in case of emergency to send them beyond the boundaries of Canada.

What would these Tory gentlemen have? Parliament called together to give authority to call out the militia? Suppose there was a sudden invasion of Canada, could the country wait for a session of parliament before our troops could be put in the field? And suppose some other part of the Empire was in danger, and immediate assistance from Canada was necessary, would these gentlemen want parliament called before action was taken?

It seems our Tory friends have entirely reversed their attitude of a few short years ago. When there was a call for Canadian help in South Africa, the Tories upbraided the government for not sending the contingents off before they could be properly equipped for the field, and now they want to deny to the government authority to call out the militia even for Canada's defence without first consulting parliament.

What remarkably sharp turns the Tories are taking these days on almost every question of public policy. In a night they were converted to support of government ownership of railways.

INFANT MORTALITY.

The mortality among infants at Montreal is most alarming, and is seriously arresting the attention of the medical and health authorities. The record for the week before last shows the death of 107 infants under seven months, and the rate grew last week to 133. The heat, ill-ventilated houses of the poor and the impurity of the milk supply are put forward as the causes of the great mortality. The situation is certainly serious and calls for immediate remedy. If we cannot do something to preserve the natural increase of Canada's population, our efforts in bringing immigrants to people the country will be seriously neutralized.

No more fitting time could be found for the explanation of the government's intention with regard to the purchase of the Canada Eastern than during the discussion of the intercolonial estimates.—Sun.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier has announced that a bill will be introduced in parliament this session to provide for the transfer of the Canada Eastern railway to the government, and when that measure is under consideration would seem an opportune time for the discussion of the project. We hear the Sun will have to exercise patience until that time arrives.)

The people of the upper provinces are commencing to appreciate the calibre of the men whom the lower provinces furnish to the public life of the country. The Toronto News, independent, speaking of recent anquets, says: "One cannot fairly ensure the two parties for being foremost in honoring such excellent types of public men as Mr. Fielding and Mr. Borden. It seems right and fitting that their party friends should take all reasonable means of encouraging men of this class to remain in public life and lend their services to the State."

The Toronto Globe, in an appreciative article on the usefulness of the railway commission, has a good word for Hon. A. G. Blair, the chairman. It says: "Mr. Blair brings to his arduous task a high order of ability, skill, railway administrative experience and exceptional capacity or work."

The militia are being withdrawn from service at Sydney, N. S., and replaced by the R. C. R. of Quebec.

Forest fires have done some \$200,000 damages in the country about Sydney, N. S. The property destroyed includes valuable lumber lands, dwelling houses, barns, one church and school building, several head of cattle and sheep together with crops.

A DREADFUL PEST.

The Cape Sable Horsefly of the Lower Florida Swamps.

A dreadful pest of the lower Florida swamps is the Cape Sable horsefly. Specimens measure an inch and a quarter in length. Their bite draws blood like the thrust of a knife. Imagine a swarm of them darting around one like so many humming birds! Fortunately they are not, at least early in the season, particularly inclined to attack man. The only domestic animal that can live in this country is the mule, and even his tough hide requires a flyproof stable for his protection and a suit of armor when outdoors. One day I engaged a mule and tipcart to save several miles of weary lugging along the strip of prairie before we struck off into the interior to visit a great rookery. When the guide brought the animal, it presented a truly remarkable appearance, clad in a suit of burlap that would have afforded complete protection, save that the legs of the "trousers" had been slit down, as the animal could hardly have been induced to put them on. So the flaps hung dangling about the legs, the ears projected above, and the calm eyes gazed out through the loopholes, surveying the swarm of flies and the stranger. We left him tied to a palm tree for the day. At dusk when we returned the legs of the poor beast were dripping with blood, and he was fairly frantic with pain. We had a stormy experience in harnessing him, having to be very spry to avoid being killed by the flying hoofs.

How It Affected Him.

Mrs. Brownovich—I understand your husband is seriously ill.
Mrs. Smithinsky—Yes. He's too ill to do anything except make good resolutions.—Cincinnati Enquirer.

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