

THE MEN WHO WON THE WAR.

Mr. Lloyd George's View.

IMPORTANCE OF THE POLITICIAN.

Advice to Aspiring M.P.'s.

Mr. Lloyd George yesterday delivered his address as Lord Rector of Edinburgh University, and took as his subject what he described as "A Few Random Thoughts of Politicians and Their Difficulties." The Lord Rector, who was the guest overnight of the Principal, Sir Alfred Ewing, was waited upon outside the Principal's residence in the morning by forty University Blues, and one or two students attended in the Welsh national dress. He was dragged in an open carriage by his admirers from Moray-place to the McLewan Hall.

Meanwhile scenes of great liveliness, and, indeed, rowdiness, were taking place outside the Hall. For this students who had been disappointed at not obtaining tickets of admission to the Hall were responsible. As holders of tickets entered the Hall they were pelted with eggs, oranges, powder, and tomatoes. Inside the Hall pandemonium reigned. The chief missile from the undergraduates in the gallery were rolls of toilet paper, of which they had an inexhaustible supply. The atmosphere was thick with powder, peas, and meat.

Many of the women students took a prominent part in the proceedings by scattering confetti. The entry of the ex-Prime Minister was enlivened by the display of a dummy figure of the Kaiser suspended from the top gallery, while a huge bunch of leeks was also hung aloft.

REQUISITES OF A POLITICIAN.

Mr. LLOYD GEORGE described at the outset of his address the training politicians underwent in their earlier years, likening it to peace manoeuvres of armies. He continued: "When, therefore, great issues arise you have a body of men trained to instruct, to appeal, to organise, and to carry through a great purpose of a great cause to victory. Questions are arising which involve the very foundations of our social and economic system. It is well that they should be settled by a highly-trained political people. What happens in the absence of this education and discipline is seen in the state of Russia to-day."

You can find no better illustration of the value of the political training for which our partisan warfare is responsible than the use to which politicians were put during the Great War. It will give you an idea of the importance, in a grave national emergency, of political training which the institutions of this country afford. When men had to be raised for our armies the campaign was conducted largely by our great political organisations; when money had to be raised to pay the expenses of the

war the politician with his gifts of appeal to the masses was invaluable; when the zeal of the nation flagged owing to losses and deferred hope the politician, with his trained gift of rousing tired zeal and rekindling exhausted emotions, was indispensable; when employers had to be persuaded to convert their factories into arsenals, and workmen had to be persuaded to work overtime, the politicians had to be mobilised.

WHERE GERMAN FAILED.

It is interesting from this point of view alone to read the remarkable books written by the Germans to explain their defeat. The facts themselves drive you to the conclusion that there is much to be said for the criticism put forward by the great German military leaders that the completeness of the disaster was due largely to the fact that the German politician did not do his duty in organising and keeping up the spirit of the nation behind the lines. Conscripts were mobilised, but not consciences. There was no one in Germany to arouse the patriotism of the people, to raise their spirits, to infuse iron into their blood, to inspire them to endure hardships, to face anxieties, to bear growing burdens. For the work of free democracy the politician is essential.

QUALITIES FOR SUCCESS.

What qualities do you require to achieve success in politics? Like any other great career, politics demand intelligence, insight, imagination, concentration, industry, uprightness in life and conduct. You may win popularity with meretricious gifts, but you can never retain it without real quality. But if I were to choose the gifts which you specially need more in politics than any other pursuit or profession I would begin with courage. There is no vocation which makes a more constant draft on courage of every kind, moral courage, prompt courage, but most of all the courage that lasts. A political career is full of disappointments and hurts. Politicians work in an atmosphere of criticism and censure. There are men engaged and organisations maintained for the purpose of disparaging, finding fault, and condemning politicians. Their principles, their words, their actions, every deed and phrase is scrutinised by trained eyes with microscopic minuteness, and blemishes, if not exaggerated, are at least presented in the dimensions in which they appear through the microscope. There are some men who attract more criticism than others. Everything they say, everything they do, or everything they fail to say or neglect to do, is promptly fastened upon. Some could not walk across a golf course on Sunday without incessant reproach; others might see their ball on the church steeple with hardly a murmur. I have seen men who had faced death and torture in every form quail and shrink before ridicule, for the corrosive shafts of ridicule burn and gnaw into our very tissues. The poor politician has to endure it through life, and when he reads of his mistake and of the use which is made of it he knows he will never hear the end of it. There is no profession which is carried on under such exacting, irritating, and mortifying conditions.

A BARRISTER OR A DOCTOR.

Imagine what would happen if a barrister or a clergyman, or a doctor had to discharge the duties attached to their exalted professions under the conditions which afflict the life of the politician. Let us take the case first of all of the barrister. He has to conduct a very difficult and complicated case in Court. He does his best for his client; puts the whole of his strength and ability into the presentation of his case. Nevertheless, the following morning this is the kind of comment which would, if he were treated like politicians, appear in the Press which happened to be hostile to him and to his cause:

"The opening of the case of Brown v. Robinson by Mr. Earnest Pleadar, K.C., yesterday was, by universal consent, to say the least disappointing. As we have repeatedly pointed out in these columns, the plaintiff's case at best is a bad one, but Mr. Pleadar made the worst of a bad case. We are aware that a knowledge of law and its principles is not his strong point, but we credited him with the possession of a vein of crude emotionalism, which appeals to a certain type of petty juror. Yesterday, however, even that resource failed him completely. He emptied galleries attracted by the interest of the case, the jury looked with curious eyes at those who were free to depart, his

cross-examination was hectoring without being effective. Ruzfuz at least won his case. Pleadar lost his. We are not surprised that the popularity of this well-known advocate, which was always confined to a certain class of client and case, not by any means the highest, is waning in that quarter."

That is not an unfair parallel to the criticism to which politicians are subjected. May I dare to imagine the kind of paragraph that would be written about great surgeons:

"We are loth to dwell on the horrible scenes that were enacted yesterday at the operating theatre of St. Blank's, when Sir Ruthless Cutter performed what ought to have been a perfectly simple operation in a manner which would have disgraced a mere novice. We hate using the word 'butchery,' but the English language, in all its opulence, can furnish us with no other equally appropriate."

Then come the clergy. Here I will quote headlines, for whole articles would be too long for quotation. These are the headings in a popular paper in reference to the minister of a church whose doctrines and traditions are obnoxious to the paper in which these comments appear. The first is a report of the Sunday morning sermon: "Even the deacons yawn. Why sleep at home?" The next is: "An emptying church. Moral condition of parish deteriorating under new regime." Then comes the turn of the missionary, and these

are the headlines: "Appalling waste on cannibals." These methods are not exactly encouraging, not very nerveing, certainly not agreeable, and I doubt whether they are very helpful, but they are all fairly good samples of the kind of criticism which is inflicted on the politician in every act he does and every phrase which he uses.

I am not going to pretend that all the public comments take the form of censure and attack. There are compensations, for the politician who invites onslaught, on the other hand, never lacks appreciation.

If you're wise you will discount both excessive praise and captious blame, and arrive at a working balance. Thus alone can a politician preserve his sanity of mind. There are not many that get right through.

THICK SKINS MEAN THICK HEADS.

If you are thinking of a political career do not imagine that it is a life of comfort and ease and enjoyment. There are those who will tell you that if you go into politics you must have a thick skin. They are quite wrong. Thick skins generally go with thick heads. Sensitiveness and susceptibility, if kept under control and properly directed, are a source of power. It is not a thick head that is required, but a stout heart. What else do you need? You ought to have the gift of speech. You often hear that "politicians are all talk, talk, talk, and nothing done." Judging from the specimens I have seen great doers are also great talkers. Some of the greatest business men I have ever met talk like the Gulf Stream. You cannot always tell where their story begins or how it ends, but all the same it sweeps you along its restless current. The strong, silent man may have rounded the earth in prehistoric days, but I have never met him, nor have I heard of anyone else who has, and I feel sure he must now be as extinct as the mastodon. But with politicians speaking is an essential part of their business. The most exalted function of the politician is to teach the people what government is best for them. In a free government you must talk your way to good government. In the conflict between the merely written and the spoken word the latter has hitherto been more powerful. I remember Mr. Gladstone telling us that in every conflict between the platform and the Press the platform invariably won. If I may presume to vary an expression used by so great an authority, the better platform invariably beats the stronger Press. It is no use adding to the circulation of the daily and weekly Press and drawing conclusions from that as to the influence of the newspaper in forming the political judgment of the people.

WHEN A PROGRAMME IS SUCCESSFUL.

A programme is successful when a truth becomes a tag. It has then survived criticism, argument, examination, amendment. In the end we are governed by the winning tag. That is the result of talk. It is the only method ever known of running a free government. The only alternative is an autocracy, and that

only limits the circle of talk. It substitutes the boudoir for the assembly room. The men, therefore, who despise talk themselves talk nonsense, and mischievous nonsense at that. There are two delusions about public speaking that are still accepted by shallow observers. The first is that if a man speaks with ease, charm, and force he is not much of a thinker, and that he is still less of a doer. The other is that a man who hesitates in his speech and finds difficulty in expressing his thoughts possesses thoughts too deep for expression.

Thirty years in the House of Commons ought to cure any man of these delusions. The level of speaking in the House of Commons is high. I am not going to pretend that from three o'clock in the afternoon of Monday until four o'clock on Friday the wooden panels of the House of Commons resound with peals of Demosthenic eloquence. It is not Demosthenic, neither is it drivel. Most of the speeches are excellent expositions of the point of view which the speaker seeks to enforce.

HOW TO SUCCEED AS AN M.P.

Let me give this bit of advice to any man who has an ambition to enter upon a Parliamentary career. To be a successful member of Parliament you must not only be a good speaker, but also a good listener. Good speaking is not absolutely indispensable to political success. "Trusting to the inspiration of the moment" is a fatal phrase, upon which many promising careers have been wrecked. The surest road to inspiration is preparation. The more voluble you are naturally, the harder you ought to labour. A natural gift is a fatal snare for the indolent. I have seen many brilliant men caught and arrested by their own talents. I have seen many men of undoubted courage and capacity fail for lack of industry. On the other hand, I have seen many a clumsy but persevering tortoise waddle successfully to the goal. The mastery in speech can only be reached by mastery in your subject.

A WORD AGAINST SELFISHNESS.

May I utter another caution? Do not play a selfish game. Don't calculate too closely whether, from your personal point of view, a job is worth doing. Don't be always reckoning the attractiveness of a duty by the amount of publicity it brings you. If you always weigh effort from the point of view of its advertising value you will soon find that the general public will in the end discover what is only advertisement. What is the test of success in politics? Office, position, or decorations? No. The only test of high success in a political life is service. In office or out of office your motto should be not "I get on" but "I serve."

To sum it all up he who feels a call to serve his country and generation in politics is seeking a hard but a high vocation. There is no other career except one in which a man who is fitted for it and devotes his energies to its tasks can do more for mankind.

GUEST OF THE STUDENTS.

University's Contribution to the War

In the afternoon Mr. Lloyd George was the guest at luncheon in the Students' Union. There was a company of about 200, presided over by Mr. A. J. M. Butler, President of the Union.

Mr. Lloyd George, in responding to the toast of his health, spoke of the great part the University had played in the war, not only by the contribution of her sons, but in the realms of science. In the end the brains of Britain's Universities beat those of the Germans. Their Principal's discoveries, the organisation which he set up, what he discovered by means of that organisation, brought to their knowledge things without which the Fleet could not have operated successfully; without which it would have been difficult for the anti-submarine campaign to be carried out. "I say more than that" (continued the speaker). "It is his work that gave us the information which ultimately brought America into the war. (Cheers.) That story will one day be told."