

## THE MASSEY HALL MEETING.

In Toronto, as in nearly all large cities, there are groups and circles frankly revolutionary in their views and aims. They are not "parlor Socialists" with a vision of a Utopia they seek to realize by education, and by using existing political machinery to transform gradually the social order and the industrial system. They are Communists who openly glorify Bolshevism and its methods, and would reproduce the Russian Saturnalia in this country if they had the power. They have only scorn and ridicule for the ideas associated with such words and phrases as Parliament, the will of the majority, democracy, the franchise, freedom of speech, and the liberty of the Press.

It is a matter for regret that men who are not in this category are being unwittingly used for revolutionary propaganda. Some of the speakers at the Massey Hall meeting on Saturday night, who would disclaim any sympathy with Bolshevism, ought to have been warned by the roars of approval that greeted every mention of the Russian Terror, every sneer at the British Throne, and every suggestion of revolutionary action. Ostensibly called to protest against "obnoxious government by orders in Council," the meeting heard very little of the particular orders in Council which were described as the sum of iniquity. The principal object of attack was a measure which was not an order in Council at all, but an amendment to the Immigration Act, adopted unanimously by Parliament in June of the present year. The amendment puts in the prohibited and undesirable classes, liable to deportation, any person who by word or act seeks to overthrow by force or violence constituted law and authority; to create any riot or public disorder; to assume any powers of government without lawful authority; or "who by common repute belongs to or is suspected of belonging to any secret society or organization which extorts money from or in any way attempts to control any resident of Canada by force or by threat of bodily harm, or by blackmail, or who is a member of or affiliated with any organization entertaining or teaching belief in or opposition to organized government." A second clause provides that "proof that any person belonged to or was within the description of any of the prohibited or undesirable classes within the meaning of this section at any time since May 4, 1910, shall be deemed to establish prima facie that he still belongs to the prohibited and undesirable classes." The legislation does not apply to any person who is a British subject either by reason of birth in Canada "or by reason of naturalization in Canada." It is held that this is aimed at residents of Canada born in the British Isles, few of whom have been formally naturalized in this country.

These amendments to the Immigration Act were passed at a time when Winnipeg was in the throes of a sympathetic strike believed to have been fomented mainly by aliens or British immigrants with the object of usurping the reins of government. It was an emergency measure, under which a number of men, foreigners and British-born, were arrested and imprisoned. In The Globe's opinion a statute under which either aliens or British subjects can be thrust into jail on suspicion and expelled from the country without a regular and open trial merits some of the harsh things said of it at Saturday night's meeting. As a matter of fact no one has been deported under the amendment, and the Government has given assurances that the accused persons will have the protection of the civil courts; but the legislation is arbitrary and un-British and should be expunged from the statute book.

It may be very much doubted, however, whether many in the crowd at Massey Hall cared greatly about liberal principles. The majority were plainly extremists, and reserved their enthusiasm for extreme statements. One of the speakers complained that he had not been told the resolutions and addresses would take so wide a scope. He had innocently supposed that the meeting had been called to discuss orders in Council, but these seem to have been the pretext for a revolutionary pow-wow. At least the audience so regarded it. If every Canadian order in Council passed during the war were rescinded this week and an amnesty granted to all political offenders, a new excuse would be found next week by the irreconcilables for calling another mass meeting to blow the embers of class strife.

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