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GENERAL ELECTION PREPARATIONS.

A Maritime Province Tory contemporary

says it has good authority for stating that

there will be no Dominion general election

until after the census is taken in April next,

and when the present Parliament has died

a natural death.

Perhaps so; but we happen to know that

prominent supporters of the Dominion Gov-

ernment have more than hinted that the

question of holding a general election be-

fore another year elapses has been con-

sidered in the inner chambers of the Ot-

tawa wirepullers, and that no settlement

has been arrived at.

The Tory leaders are between his Satanic

Majesty and the deep sea, and they are in

a state of hesitancy as to what they

should do. They know what they

deserve, and they fear the results

flowing from their policy of high taxation,

restrictionism and extravagance. This is

made apparent in the hedging which is now

going on in Government circles. Were

the fact not notorious, it would be hard

to believe that the servants of the combines,

now expressing themselves so anxious to

have reciprocity, have persistently opposed

the taking of steps to secure all-round

reciprocity with our neighbors—the only

kind of reciprocity which we can hope to

obtain. The electors cannot be gulled by

any such pretenses.

THE NEW MINISTER SPEAKS.

Hon. Mr. Dryden, the new Minister of

Agriculture, yesterday began his official

career as a Minister of the Province with

an able speech to a gathering of farmers

and leading citizens of Toronto. His ad-

dress magnified his calling as a farmer.

He said he expected to live among the

agricultural community as a plain, prac-

tical farmer, and to live so near to them

that he might be able to help them in their

work and voice their needs in the

Legislature. They had a right to

exalt their calling, for it was of immense

importance to the country, and it was their

duty to come together, as often as possible,

and try and get the best ideas of what is

necessary to secure success. In this con-

nection he impressed on the farmers the

importance of the Experimental Farm at

Guelph, the farmers' institutes and—evi-

dently having in his mind's eye the

Western Fair—the great agricultural ex-

hibitions.

A point which Mr. Dryden especially

brought before his hearers cannot be too

earnestly laid to heart by the farming com-

munity, and might well be thought over by

other branches of business. It was that the

best results cannot be obtained without co-

operation. Farmers cannot afford to be

selfish, or to keep knowledge from their

neighbors which they possess. Here is how

Mr. Dryden put it:

Once in a while we come across men who

seem to think it is their duty to be selfish

in their calling, and if they have more knowl-

edge than their neighbors, to keep that knowl-

edge to themselves. He thinks I must not tell

my neighbor how I feed my steers, how I grow

such good fruit, how I manage with my wheat

and so on, and perhaps better. I think that

is a false doctrine. I can do better by tell-

ing him what I do, than by keeping it to my-

self. I believe that, as a farmer, I am interest-

ed not merely in what is done on my own farm,

but in what is done on every other. It is foolish

to have my neighbor grow wheat of equal

quality. A gentleman interested in the ex-

perimental farm said to me: "I could give

you more for your sheep if your neighbors had

others of low quality. I have to sell at an

average price. Your help to raise the aver-

age, but I could give you better prices if all

had more sheep to produce the same

quantity of sheep that I do myself. And it is so

with every department.

The intelligent and progressive citizens

of Ontario will agree with Mr. Dryden on

this point. He asserts that he has no

fear for the success of the farmers of

Ontario if they are given a fair chance.

They are, he asserts, as enterprising and as

energetic as can be found in any land.

They have a good climate, a good soil and a

good country. All they need is to be re-

lieved of every shackles that holds

them back—in other words, they

should be relieved of every unnecessary tax,

and prosperity would be theirs. With the

agricultural interests prosperous, every other

industry would prosper, for it is a truism

that the land supports us all.

—Probably no man in England has ac-

quired by habit such complete control

over his natural inclinations as Mr. Glad-

stone. He leaves politics, as he expresses

it, outside his bedroom door; it might

almost be said outside his home, as a visitor

to Hawarden may spend days with his

illustrious host without hearing a word

about party politics. Mr. Gladstone is an

early riser and walks to church and back

before breakfast. After this meal, with

the single interruption of luncheon, he re-

mains in his library till 4 o'clock. The

rest of the day is given up to his family

and guests.

A RECIPROCITY LEAGUE.

The seriousness of the situation between

Canada and the United States is only be-

ginning to be realized, now that the Mc-

Kinley Tariff Bill has passed through the

Senate.

We in Canada had our own tariff bill of

last session, when the duties on many goods

which we import from the United States

were largely increased. There were many

Canadians who thought that the conduct of

our Government in framing that measure

was exceedingly foolish, as they believed

its effect would be to provoke a retaliatory

measure at Washington. This view of the

situation was forcibly presented to the

Government in and out of Parliament, and

a moderate course was advised. It was

known at that time that a revision of the

United States tariff was contemplated, and

among all who are friendly to the main-

tenance of commercial intercourse between

the two countries it was felt that nothing

should be done by the Canadian Parlia-

ment to give the Congress of the United

States an excuse to make the protective

policy of that country more formidable

than it was.

But our rulers at Ottawa were deaf to

every protest, and with few exceptions

their followers in the House of Commons

voted steadily for the increased duties

which the Foster Bill proposed. And now

we see that what was feared by members of

the Liberal party has come to pass.

McKinley has followed the example set

by Foster, and improved upon it. The

provisions of his bill in so far as relates to

agricultural products are bound to be

severely felt by the Canadian farmer,

especially in such articles as barley, oats,

peas, beans, hay, potatoes, horses, cattle,

sheep and eggs, almost all of which are well

nigh prohibitory. It is no doubt true that in

the case of some of those articles a portion

at least of the duties will be paid by the con-

sumers; but the natural effect of the tariff

will be to restrict trade, and very largely

to cut down its volume. Instead of send-

ing 10,000,000 bushels of barley to the

United States under a toll of 10 cents per

bushel, it is almost certain that we shall

not send 1,000,000 bushels under a toll of

30 cents. And so with everything else

which has heretofore found a market in that

country; the tariff wall will shut out a very

large proportion of what under the old

rates found a natural market there, and it

does not appear that openings are readily

to be found elsewhere.

The two countries have been led by the

natural jealousy to believe that they can

grow in strength and vigor by the childish

and foolish resort of thumping heads,

and like foolish boys they will be provoked

to keep on thumping heads until both are

badly hurt unless the counsels of wise and

sober men can influence them to adopt a

sane policy. It is hard to believe that the

70,000,000 people inhabiting the United

States and Canada are simple enough to be

betrayed into doing each other grievous

wrong under the guidance of two such men

as McKinley and Foster, neither of whom

appears to know the A, B, C of inter-

national commerce.

There are signs already visible of a

strong reaction against the policy of non-

intercourse, and if some recent suggestions

are followed up we need not fear what the

restrictionists can do. One of the best of

these suggestions has come from Mr. John

Hallam, of Toronto, a gentleman who until

recently viewed with disfavor a scheme

of reciprocity as has been proposed by Sir

Richard Cartwright in the Canadian Parlia-

ment. Mr. Hallam sees clearly the gravity

of the situation, and he not only favors a

policy of reciprocity now, but he strongly

advises the formation of a reciprocity

league for the express purpose of educat-

ing the citizens of both countries into

the acceptance of free trade between them.

The suggestion is an excellent one,

and if as Mr. Hallam proposes, a fund of

\$100,000 be raised to employ lecturers and

print and distribute literature, we feel con-

fident that in so far as Canada is concerned

a favorable decision will speedily be ob-

tained. The idea is not novel, and its

scheme is eminently proper. The Free

Trade League of England is a worthy

predecessor for us to follow, and if success

is attained and the policy of restriction

overturned we should not hesitate to adopt

reasonable methods for the shaping of pub-

lic opinion.

A war of tariffs, such as Foster and Mc-

Kinley have done their utmost to declare,

means industrial disaster in which both

sides must suffer. Let us avoid it if yet

possible, and let us organize a Reciprocity

League to send the schoolmaster abroad.

We want free trade with the United States,

the Central American States and all the

States of South America.

PERSONAL AND GENERAL.

—Fruit growers are always ready to blame

the weather when any shortage of yield is

experienced, but a veteran peach grower

asserts that climatic drawbacks are not

alone responsible for the troubles that have

of late years been so frequent. Proprietors

of orchards, he says, are too apt to starve

the soil, just as wheat growers in many of

the older settled regions have done, and the

result is certain: crops will fail or greatly

diminish in yield. The earth must be

liberally replenished, or it cannot supply

the necessary nourishment for fruit trees,

or for anything else.

—The arguments in favor of vegetarian-

ism as set forth in the Canada Health Jour-

nal are mixed (stated that it is cheaper

than a bread diet (a given acreage of wheat

supporting ten times as many men as the

same acreage devoted to the growth of beef

and mutton); that there is no painful

self-denial involved in it (an unstimu-

lated palate enjoying plain food more

than the epicure loves highly-seasoned

fare); and that the cereals contain

much more nourishment pound for

pound than does "flesh meat." But the

force of life-long habit cannot be overcome

by even the most convincing statements.

All that vegetarians can hope to achieve is

to make men less carnivorous, to reduce

the amount of "flesh meat" eaten at our tables,

and increase the number of vegetable

potatoes, and vegetable beans, as well as

fruit apples, fruit pears, and fruit grapes.

Better health would be the result, and also

more wealth, for we could then export our

superfluous cattle and hogs to other

countries.

—Hon. G. W. Ross was unable to be

present at the annual reception of the To-

ronto Gaelic Society, but he sent the fol-

lowing letter:

Mo charaid ionmhuint—Am bi sibh cho

math a' fàin' do ar cairdean aig a' chòineas

chaidreach air oidhche Dimairt cho duilich a

leat mi air na blacked le guidheachas arach

ele cho nach eil do ar dhomh. He mo mhin

a' chaidreach air oidhche Dimairt cho duilich

a' chaidreach air oidhche Dimairt cho duilich

a' chaidreach air oidhche Dimairt cho duilich

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