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The announcement of the death of Arthur Orton, otherwise known as the Tichborne Claimant, recalls the very general interest which the Tichborne case excited some twenty-five years ago. Sir Roger Charles Tichborne, who was the eldest son of a wealthy Hampshire family and heir to an estate of about £2,000,000, had led a wild life and was finally sent away by his family to South America. In 1854 he sailed from Rio Janeiro to New York, and as the ship on which he sailed was subsequently reported lost with all on board, Sir Roger's brother Alfred succeeded to the estate. His mother, however, could never be convinced that her son was dead. She advertised for him for years, and in 1865 received a letter from Wagga Wagga, Australia, purporting to be from the missing Sir Roger. She sent the writer money, and soon after the famous "Claimant" appeared. In spite of the fact that the man bore little or no resemblance either physically or intellectually to the real Sir Roger, Lady Tichborne welcomed him as her son and the pretensions of the "Claimant" were credited by many. The possessor of the estate, however, declared that the claimant was Arthur Orton, a butcher of Wapping, East London. Orton brought suit in the Court of Common Pleas for the possession of the estate, but lost his case, the jury returning a verdict of "Not proved." In this suit he swore that he was Sir Roger Tichborne, and he was subsequently prosecuted for perjury in the Court of Queen's Bench. After a prolonged trial he was convicted and sentenced to fourteen years imprisonment. After his release he came to this country on a lecturing tour, which proved unsuccessful. He returned to England, and in 1895 he published a sworn statement, in which he confessed he was Arthur Orton, the youngest son of a Wapping butcher. He told how he met in Australia one Dick Slade, who had lived near the Tichborne estate in Hampshire. Slade had seen in an Australian paper one of the advertisements of Lady Tichborne regarding her son. He called Orton's attention to this advertisement, and incidentally gave him a great deal of information about the Tichborne family. It was this meeting with Slade that laid the foundation of the famous Tichborne claimant case.

Great Britain and China. Mr. Balfour's speech delivered in the Imperial House of Commons on Tuesday last, dealing with the situation in China, had been anticipated with much interest. In enumerating the concessions obtained by Great Britain Mr. Balfour said that assurance had been received that the region of the Yang-Tse-Kiang should not be alienated by any foreign power, that the successor of Sir Robert Hart, as the director of the Chinese imperial maritime customs, is to be an Englishman and that the ships of all nations are to have access to the inland waters of China. In addition a fourth concession had but recently been obtained, namely, the opening of three new treaty ports, Funing, Yochau and Chin-Wang. Mr. Balfour expressed the belief that neither Russia nor Germany had any intention of depriving Great Britain of any of her treaty rights in China, and in reference to railroads projected by Germany in Chinese territory, Mr. Balfour said that, wherever they were constructed the result must be beneficial to British commerce. As an offset to the acquisition of Port Arthur by Russia, Great Britain has secured Wei-Hai-Wei. Mr. Balfour intimated that an offer had been made to the Russians, that, if they would abstain from taking Port Arthur, Great Britain would give a pledge to take no port on the Gulf of Pe-Chi-Li. But that offer was not accepted, and accordingly, on March 29, Russia was informed

that Great Britain would hold herself free to safeguard her interests, and since that time a lease has been obtained of Wei-Hai-Wei on the same terms as those on which Russia secured Port Arthur. Wei-Hai-Wei, it will be remembered, is the strongly fortified port now held by Japan as a guarantee of the payment of the war indemnity by China. It is to be presumed that Japan would much prefer to surrender the port into British hands than to permit its occupation by any other power. Relative to the security of the future, Mr. Balfour said it could not be denied that the indications were that China might collapse, and with further decay, fragments might be snapped up by various powers. But it would be a mistake to allow Great Britain's policy to be governed by remote contingencies, adding: "We desire to maintain the integrity of China as far as possible, but it must be recollected that the future will probably have strange surprises in store. I believe the time may come when the great commercial powers will join in an alliance to prevent China falling a prey to any exclusive influence, and I am convinced that Great Britain, by continuing her present unselfish policy of opening to all what she secures for herself, will build up in Europe, and not the least in America, a body of public international opinion which will be more powerful than any hasty action Great Britain might take at the present moment."

Mr. Fielding's Budget Speech. The Finance Minister of Canada delivered his budget speech in the House of Commons on Wednesday last. The delivery of the budget speech is always one of the grand occasions of a parliamentary session, and Mr. Fielding's exposition of the Dominion's financial situation had been anticipated with at least the usual interest. The present Finance Minister stands well with his own party and with the country generally. He has a good record and is generally regarded as a man whose ability and political virtue qualify him to rank with the best men who have preceded him in the important office which he now occupies. Fortune has been kind to Mr. Fielding this year. The crops have been good, the prices of the country's chief exports have been better than for some time past, the volume of trade has increased, and, in consequence, the Finance Minister's hopes and optimistic predictions have been somewhat more than realized. As a matter of fact neither Mr. Fielding nor his Government can do much in the way of controlling the weather, making the harvest bounteous or in determining the prices of exports. On the other hand, if the harvest had been poor, the volume of exports small and the prices low, all this might happen with the best Government in the world, and it would be most unfair to hold the Finance Minister responsible for the results. But governments are apt to be judged largely by results, without much discrimination as to determining causes, and as Mr. Fielding intimated in his speech, if the year had proved to be an unfavorable one, his political opponents would not have been disposed to make much allowance for that fact, when they come to consider the financial situation as revealed by the budget speech. The accounts for the year ending June 30, 1897, showed a deficit of \$519,000, which was much less than had been predicted by the late Finance Minister. The financial operations for the current fiscal year ending June 30, 1898, will result in Mr. Fielding's estimate in a total customs revenue of \$21,000,000, compared with \$19,478,000 last year, excise, \$8,000,000, compared with \$9,170,000 last year. From miscellaneous sources he estimates a revenue of \$10,300,000, or a total revenue of \$39,300,000. The expenditure he estimates at \$38,750,000, a

surplus for the current year of \$550,000. In this estimate he allows for the extra Yukon expenditure, for account of a vigorous policy by the Department of Agriculture, for additional interest on the public debt, and for additional outlay for extension of the Intercolonial Railway to Montreal. A statement of the position of the national debt showed that last year it had been increased by \$3,041,000, and on June 30 last stood at \$260,568,000. The estimated capital expenditure for the current year, ending June 30, 1898, was \$7,506,000. Deducting from this \$2,300,000 for sinking fund and the estimated surplus of \$550,000, it left the estimated increase in the debt for the current fiscal year at \$4,500,000. For the fiscal year beginning June 30, 1898, and ending June 30, 1899, Mr. Fielding estimated the receipts on account of consolidated fund at \$40,500,000, and the expenditure at \$39,124,000, an estimated surplus of \$1,376,000. The expenditure included two new items of \$396,000 for Yukon and \$660,000 for operating the extension of the Intercolonial Railway to Montreal. Without these the expenditure would be \$38,068,000, or about the same as for the current year. In proof of the increasing prosperity of the country, Mr. Fielding referred to the increased amount of deposits in the chartered banks and the Government savings bank, the increase in the earnings of the great railway lines of Canada, the advance of stocks and securities and the increase in the volume of trade. The trade returns for the last fiscal year show an increase in imports of over \$8,000,000 and in exports of \$16,000,000, the largest volume of exports in the history of the country. The returns for the eight months, ending Feb. 28, of the current year, show an increase over the same period of the previous year of over \$12,000,000 in imports and \$26,500,000 in exports. Few changes in the tariff are proposed in the resolutions submitted with the speech. The more important of these have reference to tobacco duties—which it is proposed to make more equable by levying the duties according to a standard of weight which makes allowance for moisture—and to sugar duties, which it is proposed to amend so as to discriminate in favor of the product of the West Indies. This proposal, if carried out, will give the West Indian article, produced from sugar cane, considerable advantage over the sugar beet product of Europe.

The Chinese are said to be complaining that European Governments have appropriated the best harbors of the country to such an extent that for a number of warships which China is having built for herself, abroad, no harbor is to be found. However that may be, it appears doubtful whether the integrity of the Chinese Empire can longer be preserved. The nations of Europe are beginning to assert their claims to "spheres of influence" in that part of the world as they have done in Africa. The policy of Great Britain has been to keep China intact and have the country freely opened up to the trade of the world. To Russia, Germany and France, who are not in a position to compete commercially with Great Britain on equal terms, this policy is not acceptable. At present these nations appear to be complying with the demands of the British Government that Chinese ports occupied by European nations shall be opened to the trade of the world, but it is highly improbable that they will be content with this. If they do not parcel out China among themselves, it will be because of the interference of equal or superior power setting bounds to their ambition. If Great Britain, the United States and Japan shall unite in saying that the integrity of China must be respected, it is likely that it will be respected by the most ambitious nations. However, the power of Russia keeps advancing like a glacier from the north, and it would appear to be the certain destiny of much of northern China at least to be absorbed into the great Russian empire.