The Colonist.

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THE LEADER.

Joseph Martin has resigned the leadership of the provincial Liberal party, thus leaving the party free to bend all its energies to electing Liberals in the various constituencies in the country. Of the Liberal candidates those who are elected will choose their parliamentary leader for themselves. If there is a division, no doubt the minority will loyally accept the leader the majority agrees to follow. If the party has portfolios to distribute, we doubt not initial unity at least will be easily attained. Differences might arise afterwards upon questions of practical policy, and might become acute, but on the whole the prospect is good for the Liberal party of forming a stable government provided it is able to elect a majority in the country. If there are no portfolios to distribute unanimity will be still easier because the unanimous desire will be to have the best fighting man in the lead. There is no question at all that Mr. Joseph Martin has taken the course which gives the Liberal party the maximum of opportunity in the country. He has certainly displayed great loyalty, and has taken a step in which political sagacity is not wholly wanting either. It is possible that Mr. Joseph Martin may not reappear in the politics of British Columbia. Presumably he will be one of the candidates in Vancouver. We know of course that wherever else disaster may supervene, the McBride-Wilson-Tatlow combination is certain of victory in Vancouver, otherwise that combination in addition to being one-sided would have too great an element of comedy in it. We therefore feel compelled to take it for granted that in the great Conservative stronghold of Vancouver the Wilson-Tatlow ticket will sweep the city, and retire Mr. Martin from politics. Taking this for granted, we are in the mood to be generous to Mr. Martin, as to a man eliminated. What a tactician the man has shown himself, what a parliamentarian! Returned to the House with a very small following, he has literally disdained the support of that following, and single-handed dominated the legislature of a province. No man of narrow gauge or small brain power could possibly have done that. He has very evidently been shown a man of stupendous ability and unequalled resource, a man of refreshing intellectual contrast to many of his compeers. Mr. Martin is one of these men, who receives his apotheosis from a grateful country after he is dead, but an uncomfortable person for pigmies to get along with while he is still living. Of course he is dead now, and we are not antedating his apotheosis, but, as it is only his political death, which has taken place, we have an uncomfortable feeling that we may at a later date have to deal with his resurrection.

THE TRANSPORTATION QUESTION.

A declaration of importance upon the question of transportation has been extracted from Sir Wilfrid Laurier by the ceaseless and untiring efforts of the opposition to get some indication of the government's policy in regard to it. Sir Wilfrid Laurier divided the issue under three heads, water transportation, the railway requirements of the Northwest, and the necessity for railway communication between the prairie section and the seaboard. Sir Wilfrid Laurier did not say which seaboard, but he undoubtedly meant the Atlantic seaboard. He has never been able to look through the Rocky Mountains, and he positively declines to look over them. The third head was the one upon which the opposition besought information. Canada will be surprised to learn in the Toronto Globe, that "the government were not prepared to say that on this subject they have settled on any policy." He was, however, "prepared to give the House salient ideas, which should be kept in view in carrying out this proposition." His first salient idea was that the new transcontinental line should pass through Canadian territory exclusively from tidal water to tidal water. What could be done by legislation to prevent the diversion of traffic from Canada would be done, but the real way to prevent it was through Canada's taking advantage of her geographical position to make the line the cheapest, shortest, and best line of communication between the Northwest and the Atlantic seaboard. "A line of that character," he said, should run from the city of Quebec north of the mountains, and on West to the prairie. He was not prepared to say how the line should be built. Three propositions had been made, and between them the government would have to choose. It had been suggested that the government should own and operate a railway just as they do the I. C. R. It had been suggested that the government should build a railway and not operate it, but lease it or give it to any lines that would take charge of it. It had also been suggested that the government should subsidize and give assistance to any of the companies now seeking aid. He did say, however, that the government would give no land subsidies, and had not made up its mind as between the Trans-Canada, the Grand Trunk Pacific, and the Canadian Northern schemes. The only possible criticism of Sir Wilfrid Laurier's "salient" ideas is that they are ideas which the country has given to Sir Wilfrid Laurier, not ideas which Sir Wilfrid Laurier has given to the country. They lay down the conditions under which Canada is willing to see the road built, and so far as that goes we are glad to see that Sir Wilfrid Laurier has so clearly recognized and expressed them. But what the country wants to know is how the road is going to be built under these conditions, and as to that Sir Wilfrid Laurier had no declaration of policy to make. All he had to say was that before any decision was arrived at he would consult his supporters. Sir Wilfrid Laurier handled this question very much as he handles most other questions. So far as the clearly expressed sentiment of the country is a guide to him, he is explicit, but further than that he is excessively vague and unsatisfactory.

BRITISH EXPORTERS ANNOYED.

When the Conservative party in Canada maintained that under the British preference large quantities of goods were coming into this country, which were British only in name, and German in reality, they were met with derision on the part of the Liberal party. Well, of course political parties sometimes exaggerate in order to get a blow at their opponents, and their opponents sometimes belittle in order to defend themselves against the blow. When facts affecting business get into politics they lose their proportions they possess in the business world. They suffer immediately a process of inflation or contraction according to the political purpose they are designed to serve. If we were inclined to be philosophical, we might discuss whether it showed a defect in humanity, or merely a condition, that when a man is wholly caught up and wrapt in a political or religious purpose, facts become important to him only as they seem to further or antagonize that purpose. But we regret to say that the people of British Columbia are not in as philosophic a mood as they should be, so we are obliged to turn away from that interesting psychological discussion, for the philosophy of politics, even if it is edged by the irony of experience, our gentle readers will not stand just now, and as the French proverb puts it pithily, return to our muttons. The Conservative party declared that large quantities of German goods were being imported into Canada under the British tariff preference, while the Liberal party denied the facts and defied those alleging them. The government, however, when it placed the surtax on German goods, took steps to prevent any German goods percolating into Canada via Great Britain. It was decided that the certificate of origin on invoices of British goods entering under the preferential tariff must contain a declaration that the chief value of none of the articles was produced in Germany. It would appear that British exporters are really being hard hit by the new regulations, and by the surtax. From all parts of the country enquiries are pouring into the High Commissioner's office from British manufacturers and merchants who are exporting to Canada under the preferential tariff goods which are largely made up of German raw material, or German manufactures. The new regulations and the surtax are, it is claimed, going to make a serious inroad on the British preference. It appears, therefore, that a good deal of the British trade with Canada under the preference, has really been German trade under a British veneer, and the British merchants who have been foisting German goods on Canada are complaining that the new regulations are going to injure their trade. If that does not justify the criticism of the Conservative party, we do not know any facts by which it could be justified. But just imagine British merchants complaining against Canada because a preference intended to assist inter-Imperial trade has ceased to give them a preference as jobbers of German goods for the Canadian market! Their grievance is ridiculous. The system of German imports via Great Britain, which they represent of itself, negatives the idea of the preference, and the fact that such a system had so developed as to call forth loud protests, shows conclusively that the Conservative party was right in its criticism of, and the Liberal party wrong in its defence of the preference, so far as that preference affected German trade.

GOOD POLITICS.

The Liberal party has acted precisely upon the lines the Conservative party should act upon if it is wise, and we believe on the lines upon which the Conservative party will act, with or without the consent of the present ministry. We do not see how any Conservative candidate can be pledged to support Premier McBride unless his constituents choose to so pledge him. It is quite evident that no shuffle in the administrative cards across James Bay has any binding force upon the electors of the province. If the Conservative party in different constituencies in the province chooses to pledge its candidates to support Premier McBride, these candidates will be so pledged, if the party does not so choose the candidates will not be pledged. Our Liberal friends might be inclined to say that there were many other differences, but of this difference between the Conservative party and the Kingdom of Heaven we are quite certain, namely, that it does not suffer violence, and that the violent to not take it by force. Candidates who are not pledged to support Premier McBride need not for that reason cease to be Conservatives, nor be guilty of any disloyalty to their party. If Premier McBride were to frankly recognize this, a great deal of trouble would be saved. The purely temporary character of the present government would be disclosed. The continuance in office of Mr. McBride is either the issue in the coming campaign, or it is not. If it is, then the issue is not whether the Conservative party shall rule the country or not, but whether Mr. McBride shall rule the Conservative party or not. That is an issue for the Conservative party to decide, not the country. Before the country, the only way of turning Mr. McBride out of office is to return the Liberal party to office. But it can be decided, if Mr. McBride consents to leave his leadership to the majority of Conservatives elected at the polls. A good deal certainly depends upon Mr. McBride. It is entirely an unfair demand to ask that every Conservative vote cast in the elections shall be a vote of confidence in him. If he makes that demand then not only he, but the party, must take the consequences. Colonel Prior made no such demand as that. Why should the Hon. Richard McBride make it? There are many Conservatives, who for conscience and in honor, cannot accede to that demand. Is their only alternative to be a vote for a Liberal, or abstention. It is a radically unfair request, and voters do unpleasant trings to politicians who make unfair requests. A few days ago we heard Premier McBride asseverate with eloquence and force that the opposition party held the confidence of the country. If that is so, and he at least must have believed it, which section of the late opposition party continues to hold the confidence of the country? Or has it been split up evenly between the two sections? Or when Mr. McBride spoke, did he mean that the confidence of the country rested in himself personally? Presumably from his present position that is what Mr. McBride did mean, and what he proposes to present to the country as a political issue.

THE DILEMMA.

The political crisis has been followed by a political dilemma. The gentleman who is in the dilemma is the Honorable Richard McBride, and the dilemma is occasioned by the fact that the country desires a dissolution and a general election upon party lines. At the Revelstoke convention Colonel Prior, John Houston and Richard McBride took exactly the same position. They took the position that as members and leaders they were under obligations to fellow members, colleagues, and voters, and that until these obligations expired when parliament dissolved, their relations with the Conservative party were complicated by the fact of their existence. They all were explicit in their adherence to the proposition that when parliament was dissolved they would not appear before the country in any capacity save as candidates endorsed by the Conservative party. Colonel Prior's position all the way through was entirely consistent with his pledge. As soon as a dissolution took place he was, if he wished to remain a man of honor, in the hands of the Conservative party. In no way whatever did he conceal his position. So well was it understood that his colleague, W. W. B. McInnes resigned in order to facilitate an election upon party lines. But that is not at all the apparent position of the Hon. Richard McBride. Has he taken office to facilitate a general election upon party lines? He has taken office in the expectation of going to the country no doubt. Is he going to form a Conservative cabinet for that purpose? Is he in fact Premier free from his support in the present legislature or not? If so, then Messrs. Munro, T. W. Paterson, Oliver, Curtis and others in supporting him, have acted in the same way as Mr. Joseph Martin acted in relation to Colonel Prior. They have taken the ground they have, to put a Conservative in power pledged to appeal to the country on party lines, not because they love a Conservative in office, but because they desire a fair field and no favors for the trial of the issues between them and the Conservative party. That they are in this position we have very little doubt, but we have some doubt as to whether they are in it with their knowledge and consent. Joseph Martin knew his position, and consented to it. But he had a leader, an able and a skilful leader, whose banner he desired nothing better than to unfurl in the country. These gentlemen are leaderless. They have lost even the poor apology for a leader they have hitherto enjoyed. They are sheep without a shepherd, and as is well known, the end of such sheep is usually mutton. They will have the Conservative party assailing them, they will have the Liberal party assailing them. Whatever else happens, they are predestined mutton chops. The question is not what position they are in, but whether they know the position they are in or not. If they know it, they are magnificent examples of voluntary self sacrifice, if they do not know it, then they have been supporting not the opposition to Colonel Prior's government, but the opposition of the Honorable Richard McBride to Colonel Prior, without being in the confidence of their leader as to what he designed to do. That is entirely their affair. That is a question between them and Mr. McBride. It concerns the internal organization of the late opposition, something of which we know nothing, and desire to know nothing. Our dealings are with Mr. McBride himself. We have a right to know what his relations with the Conservative party are going to be, and we insist upon knowing. If he has to take the disagreeable alternative of playing fast and loose with his Liberal supporters in the legislature, as against playing fast and loose with the Conservative party, we have certainly no advice to give him upon the ethical aspects of such a choice, but we can tell him this, that if he plays fast and loose with the Conservative party, that party will drown him a thousand fathoms deep. Every politician must be loyal to his party. What we want to know is whether Mr. McBride's party upon a dissolution is the opposition party in the present legislature, or the Conservative party in the country. It cannot possibly be both, it must certainly be one or the other. His Liberal supporters have a right to know which, the Conservative party has a right to know which. This is a point on which there can be no concealment and no evasion. We have been told upon authority we cannot question, that of the men who were approached, that votes were solicited yesterday by Mr. McBride's lieutenants on the ground that Mr. McBride's would be a Conservative cabinet. Do the Liberals who were so much in evidence in the lobbies yesterday know this. If they did not know it before, they know it now. Mr. McBride's attitude in forming a government entirely of Conservatives is perfectly right, perfectly consistent, but it is not an attitude he should adopt without the full knowledge of his Liberal supporters. Mr. McBride is at the parting of the ways. As soon as the legislature is dissolved, it is Conservative or Liberal for good and all in this province. To vote supply to Mr. McBride, and leave him to be the arbiter of whether he will appeal to the country on party lines or not, would be an astonishing attitude for his Liberal supporters to take, because he is pledged to party government on the dissolution of the House. If his Liberal supporters take it they will serve the country and serve Mr. McBride. Whether they will serve themselves is their business, and not ours. We do not desire to see Mr. McBride placed in the position of appearing to deceive some of his own supporters. Of course he is not doing so, but he has no right to remain silent and permit them to deceive themselves.

THE CAUCUS.

Yesterday the House adjourned at an early hour. Shortly after the adjournment, Messrs. E. V. Bodwell, L. P. Duff, Robert F. Green, Richard McBride, A. E. McPhillips and George Powell went into a secret conclave to determine what was to be done. The determination arrived at was to form a composite government composed of some Conservatives and some Liberals, with a view to carrying on the government of the country, and, sooner or later, when the time came, of appealing to the constituencies. Messrs. R. G. Tatlow, James Garden, F. Fulton and T. Taylor are stated to be solidly in favor of party lines, and an immediate appeal to the country upon these lines. The decision of the inner conclave mentioned above was submitted to a caucus of the whole party last night. At the time of writing the result of the caucus was not known to us. It may appear in some other portion of the paper. But it would appear that Mr. McBride's attitude to the question of party lines, and an immediate election depends entirely upon whether he can get most support by forming a composite cabinet, or by forming a Conservative cabinet. About dinner time last night Mr. McBride was seeking anxiously for Conservative support, it having been made tolerably clear to him that the Mugwump mixture he had swallowed as an appetiser, would go down upon the throats of neither his Conservative following, nor that of the country. It is stated that Messrs. E. C. Smith, Kidd, Munro and Neill would support a Conservative government although they are Liberals, provided an immediate appeal to the country is avoided. On the other hand, it is said that Messrs. Oliver and Smith Curtis insist upon a composite government, and that their view of the case is supported by strong supporters of the opposition. What we fail to understand is why if Messrs. McBride, Green and Mr. Taylor are sincere in desiring to facilitate an appeal to the country on party lines, they should accept the advice and assistance of prominent Liberals to carry out their policy, particularly of Liberals who are seeking to embarrass and defeat the Conservatives with their own party over the issue. A number of Mr. McBride's lieutenants are perfectly positive that he will form a Conservative cabinet, and that an appeal to the country will be taken upon party lines. But here is fairly good evidence that he will only resort to this as an expedient by which to keep himself in power, and only if it is necessary for that purpose. At the caucus held last night it may be taken for certain that Messrs. E. C. Smith, Oliver, Neill, Gifford, Curtis, Munro, Semlin, Kidd, Paterson and Wells would vote for a government containing Liberals as well as Conservatives. The Conservative end of the fight would be taken up by Messrs. Garden, Fulton, Tatlow, Green, McBride, A. E. McPhillips and T. Taylor. Of these seven, four will not hear of anything else, and will leave the party if anything else is carried. Mr. McBride will then have exactly twelve supporters in the House. The House, we hope, will never be induced to grant supply to anyone except upon a pledge of an appeal to the country upon party lines. If a composite government is formed at this time of day that will be an indication that its leader and members do not intend to appeal to the country upon party lines.

THE LABOR COMMISSION.

The proceedings before the labor commission at Cumberland, of which we publish a full account this morning, verge upon the extraordinary, in fact they do more than verge upon the extraordinary, they cross the verge, they show amazing duplicity upon the part of Mr. Baker, the organizer of the Western Federation of Miners, and amazing simplicity on the part of men to whom he appealed in the name of unionism. We have been told ad nauseam, that Mr. Baker, like the apostle Paul, came over to British Columbia in response to the appeal, "Come over and help us." Well, he came over, and he immediately helped the town and population of Ladysmith to practical extinction. We have nothing to say to that at present. It is when he turned his attentions to Cumberland that the evolutions of this gentleman become interesting. While there, he communicated with headquarters at Denver, Colorado, that he approved of a sympathetic strike at Cumberland. He received orders apparently to call the men out. That was all right. But why should he have tried to deceive the men in order to get them to come out, and the public in order to keep them out? Then he received an injunction to organize the Chinese and Japanese. This injunction shows conclusively that the Western Federation of Miners is now controlled by a set of abject fools. Does it expect to elevate Chinese and Japanese to the level of white men by trade union organization? What an absurdity! There are millions of Chinese and Japanese willing and ready to take the places of displaced fellow countrymen, and nobody knows it better than the Chinaman himself. Our policy in this country towards the Mongolian races is a policy of exclusion and imitation. The Western Federation of Miners evidently did not know what it was talking about. But the two things, the deception as to the sympathetic nature of the Cumberland strike, and the extraordinary injunction to organize Mongolians, show that the real object of Mr. Baker's effort was to stop the mines from working, and to elevate neither white nor Chinese labor. Imagine a federated union, in the face of the facts in British Columbia, preaching the doctrine of affiliation with Chinese and the social elevation of the Chinese! It is an obvious pretence in order to embarrass the coal mining industry. But, if it is an obvious pretence when applied to Chinese, is it not at least a fair argument that the same doctrine may also be a pretence as applied to white labor. The situation both at Ladysmith and at Cumberland shows that it is a pretence. The miners there had absolutely no grievances that were not redressable by themselves. There was nothing in their condition for the Western Federation of Miners to elevate. Surely a body of that kind, if it possesses a mission to elevate labor, might begin with places and employments where there was some necessity for elevation, and not with places where conditions were such as no men working in coal mines anywhere else in the world enjoyed. It was not as if there was a steady depreciation in the conditions under which the men worked. On the contrary, there was no respect in which they did not share in the general advance in comfort among workingmen, and many respects in which they were far above their fellows in other parts of the continent. But no! The Western Federation of Miners for reasons known to itself, must destroy and cripple industry, by unionizing the mine workers, without advancing their interests one iota, either to the individual or in the mass. This gospel of social advancement has been propagated with amazing chicanery and deceit, making it perfectly clear that the glory of a socialistic organization, and not the welfare of its converts was in view from the beginning, if indeed that socialistic organization is not controlled by men who sway the lives and well-being of their fellow men, to suit the competitive designs of opposing capitalists. If the Western Federation of Miners were what it purports to be, its officials would not be guilty of chicanery and falsehood in manipulating the masses under their control.

THE FINANCIAL OUTLOOK.

Unless previous experience is a liar, the financial outlook in the United States is bad. For a year we have been preaching the purest pessimism as to the possibility of the continuance of the booming prices there. All we have been able to see for the last year has been the possibility of an early recognition of the inflation and the substitution of a gradual liquidation for a sudden catastrophe. Since the beginning of this year an extraordinary decline in the prices of securities has taken place, and we do not refer by any means to speculative securities alone. Shares of the Pennsylvania Railroad have fallen 32 points; of the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul, 35½; of the New York Central 21¼; of the Union Pacific, 20⅞. The decline from last year's highest quotations is ten to sixteen points greater still; in a number of the market's standard investment securities one-fourth of the valuation, as rated by the market eight or nine months ago, has been cut off. The process has been one of continual liquidation, which has not apparently relieved the situation yet. There seems to be an actual inability to buy, coupled with a positive necessity to sell. When that is the case, it is impossible to say to what depth prices may fall before the process is permanently arrested. If such a condition exists, the United States has been creating fixed capital in excess of its productive power to pay dividends on that capital, just as in a historical instance Great Britain built more railways than she could immediately pay for. Similarly, if the United States has been creating more fixed capital than the productive resources of the country can find dividends for, the United States has also been diverting too large a proportion of the labor of the country to this kind of employment. We should therefore expect to see disturbance in the industrial labor market accompanying the disturbance in prices. And we do see it. In Greater New York alone there are two hundred thousand men out of work directly through labor trouble, indirectly through much deeper economic causes. Two hundred thousand men means a population of one million souls deprived of sustenance through industry. When we consider that all over the country similar symptoms are being manifested, we realize how rapidly and how inevitably a crisis is approaching. There are those who admit the facts, but declare with more or less assurance of certainty that the critical features of the situation are already here and that they will not manifest themselves with any greater severity than they are now doing. We sincerely hope they are correct. It is possible that they are. Some thunderstorms, with their electrical accumulations, dissolve as it were upon the earth in refreshing rain. Others do not, but rend the heavens and such portions of the earth as the bolts strike. In the condition of the stock market and the labor market in the United States there is electricity enough and to spare, and it is yet too early to feel secure.

THE DISMISSAL.

We present the letter in which Sir Henri Joly dismissed Colonel Prior. It reads as follows:

Government House, Victoria, B.C., 1st June, 1903.

Lieut.-Colonel the Honorable E. G. Prior, Prime Minister, Victoria.

Dear Colonel Prior: I have read with care and attention the report of the committee appointed to enquire into the charges preferred against you, in connection with the Chimney Creek tender.

The views which you expressed, in explanation and justification of your action, in your answers to the committee, especially those found on pages 36 and 37 of the official type-written report, are so incompatible with, and so completely at variance with what I have always understood to be the true principles of Parliamentary Independence of Members, and, above all of Ministers of the Crown, that, while admitting that you must have honestly considered that you were doing no wrong, I am to my sincere regret, unable to continue feeling that confidence in your judgment which would justify me in acting, any longer, on your advice.

I remain, yours truly,

HENRI G. JOLY de LOTBINIERE,
Lieut.-Governor.

The evidence referred to in the Lieutenant-Governor's letter reads as follows:

Q. Do you think it was quite the correct thing to do? A. I do.

Q. I understood you to say in the House, and it is referred to in that resolution, that during the time you were a member of the House of Commons at Ottawa, quite a number of years ago, you formed your business into a limited liability so that you would have the opportunity of selling goods to the government, notwithstanding that you were a member of the House? A. When I went into politics we were in the habit of supplying the government with supplies—the Dominion government and the Provincial government, and one session—I think it was a session or two after I got there—after I was in the House—I forget the year, it was 1887, '88 or '89—there was a sum of $4 or $5 down on the Auditor-General's report for E. G. Prior, or Fellows and Prior. I think it was E. G. Prior & Co., but it was not Limited Liability then, I owned it all. Well, the opposition got on to it, and they were going to try and make me lose my seat, but fortunately we found an opposition man, a doctor, who had been paid $5 for attending some Indians or other, so it was a set off.

Q. I think yours was the first case? A. It might have been one way or the other, but I think it was the opposition. They told me then in the House, Why don't you form your company into a joint stock company? and I said, Oh, I suppose it would be better, and then they said, "You can supply any government that you like. After looking into the matter, I found that there were some in my employ then who knew the business, and who would like to get in too; so I sold them some of my stock and formed it into a limited liability company.

Q. Although you were a majority owner of the stock in the firm of E. G. Prior & Co., and you don't think there is anything inappropriate in your government, or the government of which you are a member, buying from your firm? A. Certainly not, any more than a member who is a lawyer, or is attorney-general, and his partner in charge of looking after a private bill for anybody and lobbying it through the House.

Q. You say that Mr. Gamble told you he thought it was a mistake for your firm to tender on account of you being a member of the goverment? A. Yes; he said so.

Q. You don't agree with Mr. Gamble? A. No; I don't.

So far as the letter contains any stricture upon Colonel Prior, the stricture is simply upon his judgment, not his honesty. The Lieutenant-Governor appears to have referred to the evidence he have quoted in order to make perfectly clear that no imputation whatever rested upon Colonel Prior of any evil motive. What he did, Colonel Prior did openly, conscientiously, believing that what he did was perfectly legitimate. The limit of his interference was to see that E. G. Prior, Ltd., got the same opportunity to tender as anybody else. That firm had a perfect right to tender. Nobody doubts that. It has been established in a score of instances. The error of judgment lay in Colonel Prior's insisting on the rights of that particular firm. That question we do not wish to discuss, but we wish to emphasize is that there can be nothing corrupt in insisting upon the rights of anyone, and that the Lieutenant-Governor neither says nor hints that there was anything corrupt in Colonel Prior's conduct. That has been left to the prurient tongues which, inspired by political malignity, gabble on the street corners.

THE SITUATION.

It is quite evident that the condition of the Conservative party calls for very careful handling, and for loyalty to the party. The man from whom loyalty to the party is most required is the Honorable Richard McBride. If he is under the impression that what is required is for the Conservative party to show loyalty to him, he is putting the cart before the horse. So far, he has made claims upon the party. They have been met out of considerations of party loyalty, not out of consideration for him. The party has some, it has many, claims upon him. Are these going to be met? Does he propose to put himself in the hands of the Conservative party, or does he propose that the Conservative party shall put itself in his hands? Between those two propositions there is a great gulf fixed, and the question is just this, whether Mr. McBride is going to precipitate the Conservative party into that gulf, or himself to bridge it over? We regret exceedingly that it is in his power to choose between those two alternatives. Because he lacks the essential qualities of determinateness and decisiveness which a leader in critical times requires. We have only to hope that what we could not owe to his astuteness and political sagacity, we may receive from the deep sense of party loyalty which pervades his person. Now having said that we expect party loyalty from Mr. McBride, it is certainly a fair question to ask in what manner we think he should exhibit it. In the first place, there is no possible combination of circumstances which could have caused more deep-seated bitterness in loyal and influential Conservative circles than the coup d etat which involves his holding power through the votes of his late opponents. It is his duty to allay that bitterness. It is a fact that every action of Mr. McBride may be explained by the motive that he desired to put himself in office, and not the Conservative party. Such a motive would explain, and to many does explain, his whole action from beginning to end. He must show that it was not the true motive, that his loyalty to the party transcends his ambition for himself. Every day that passes shows him making that appeal to others, a circumstance calculated to embitter, if he does not also show that it is not effectless upon himself. The Conservative party in this province is a party of which different groups are widely separated in instincts and surroundings, and also by long actual distances of location. Only a union on political principles cemented by a deep sense of party loyalty can overcome these sectional and other distinctions. This union, however, must be accompanied by a frank and free recognition of all sections and elements in the party. This is a matter requiring skill and delicacy, and the only alternative to the obliteration of the party is the obliteration of personal ambition. It is the privilege, and should be the endeavor of Mr. McBride to make the catholicity of the party the whole object of his present actions. It is certainly the duty of Mr. Charles Wilson for instance, to realize, with great searchings of heart, the extent to which that portion of the Conservative party represented at the Revelstoke convention is recognized and embraced in the government, which proposes to appeal to the country. If he is prepared without a due understanding to throw his lot in with the present government, he should remember that Mr. John Houston of Nelson, and Colonel E. G. Prior of Victoria, were at least as zealous at Revelstoke in the cause of party lines to which he owes his political importance, as Mr. R. F. Green of Kaslo, Mr. McBride of Dewdney, or Mr. A. E. McPhillips of Victoria. It must further be remembered that the position of Mr. McBride in reference to a very large section of the Conservative party is complicated by the series of political events leading up to Bill No. 16. There are a number of Conservatives who will ask with a difference in reality exists between Mr. D. M. Eberts and Mr. R. McBride, that the one should be brought low, and the other elevated, as the result of matters to which it is needless to refer. Some of these queries will be put from a point of view sympathetic to Mr. Eberts, and some from a hostile point of view. But from whichever point of view they are asked, the different positions now occupied by the two gentlemen will cause comment in the Conservative party, and if it causes any portion of the party to distrust Mr. McBride, it will certainly cause another portion to resent him. Here is another direction in which party loyalty calls loudly to Mr. McBride. Mr. John Oliver of Delta is furbishing up his weapons on this question, and is about to stalk his old leader. So far as it is a personal matter, we believe Mr. McBride is amply able to care for himself, as is Mr. Eberts. But we have a strong objection, an objection we know to be shared by a very large and influential section of the Conservative party, to have Mr. Oliver, or anyone else, going gunning after the leader of the party upon any such issue. There is another consideration affecting the constitution of the government which is to appeal to the country, and one which we regret to say is causing unholy merriment and joy in the Liberal ranks, and that is the general anticipation that there will be four lawyers in a cabinet of six members. We hear no one word to say against the patriotism and public spirit of the legal profession in general, and those members of it who are politicians in particular, but a cabinet dominated by lawyers is something that this country will not for one moment stand. Such a government would be judged by the professon of its members, and not by the principles of the party it represented; and it would be condemned. That may be made for very illogical attitude of people to take, but it is an attitude which the Conservative party cannot afford to neglect. That party is entering upon a severe rough and tumble fight in a country where its reputation as a provincial party has yet to be made. That two-thirds of its leaders were lawyers would be a handle to the enemy, which the enemy would grasp with joy. Some of our politicians may be unacquainted with the extent of the feeling in the country about lawyers in public life. If it is made one of the main issues in the forthcoming campaign, they will realize how strong the feeling is. We do not wish the Conservative party to find it out too late. This has been a tolerably frank and free discussion of the situation. If it has not minimized, it certainly has not exaggerated the difficulties in the way of the Conservative party. Yet these we have not presented with the idea that they are insuperable. If Mr. McBride desires to show his loyalty he can do so by making clear to us all that he does not pose as a leader, but merely as an expedient to facilitate an election upon party lines, and that he will leave it to the Conservative members elected to the next legislature to choose the leader of the party. That means in other words, that candidates of the Conservative party would be pledged not to follow him, but to follow the choice of the elected members of the party, and meantime to stand upon the platform of the party. The present government would then appear in its real light as a temporary and makeshift government, to be reorganized as soon as the country has declared its verdict. If that course is followed, the success of the party at the polls is practically certain. If it is not followed, the success of the party is doubtful in the extreme.

ROOSEVELT TRIUMPHANT.

There can be no question that certain influences in the Republican party have been opposed to the re-nomination of Theodore Roosevelt for the office of president. Mark Hanna is the acknowledged leader of these influences. He had managed McKinley, and he proposed to manage Roosevelt, or rather, as he knew he could not manage Roosevelt, he proposed, if possible, to get rid of him. Naturally no Republican in the United States is sufficiently stupid to make any direct attack on Roosevelt at the present time. It appears, however, that the endorsement of Roosevelt by the Ohio convention this year would have the effect of killing off the chances of every other candidate. We do not profess to know how or why, but that is the fact. As Hanna is "boss" of the Republican party in the State of Ohio, it seemed rather unlikely that Roosevelt would secure that endorsement. The position taken by Hanna was that Ohio's action would prevent the general Republican convention from expressing the wishes of the party, lead to a factional fight, with the triumphant faction a foregone conclusion. This attitude would probably have been successful so far as Ohio is concerned, but for two things, one that Roosevelt has made it quite clear that anyone who is not a friend of his is his enemy, and the other, that Senator Hanna had dealt with a "boss" whom he had dethroned in Senator Foraker. Foraker took hold of the Roosevent "boom" in Ohio and was prepared to use it in accomplishing the downfall of Hanna. Whereupon the strong man of the Republican party became weak and intimated that he would not oppose endorsement. The fact that Ohio will endorse Roosevelt has made his nomination a certainty, the fact that he has shown himself a stronger man than Senator Hanna has made his election a matter of some importance.

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EGYPTIAN LENTILS, Pound ..... 15c.

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BORN.

BOYLE—On the 28th inst., at 1076 Robson street, the wife of R. C. Boyle, M. D., of a son.

DICKENSON—On the 27th inst., the wife of Thomas Dickenson, 631 Dunlevy avenue, Vancouver, B. C., of a son.

HANBURY—At Revelstoke, on May 24th, the wife of Mr. H. J. Hanbury, of a daughter.

OLDS—At Revelstoke, on May 25th, to the wife of Geo. R. Olds, of Fire Valley, of a son.

MARRIED.

STINSON—SNYDER—At the parsonage, Duncans, B. C., on May 23rd, by the Rev. W. C. Schlichter, cousin of the bride, Geo. R. Stinson, of Vancouver, to Miss Sadie Snyder, of Wardsville, Ont.

KEATING—BURNES—At Santa Monica, by the Rev. Father Hennessy, Alfred Vincent Keating of Los Angeles, to Katharine, only daughter of T. J. Burnes, of Victoria, B. C. No cards.

HOPKINS—NUTTALL—On the 3rd inst., at St. James' church, Victoria, B. C., by Rev. J. S. S. Sweet, assisted by the Rev. Canon Paddon, Charles Harold Hopkins, second son of J. Castell Hopkins, Esq., of Victoria, B. C., to Elizabeth Mary Nuttall (Bessie), eldest daughter of Thomas Chancey Nuttall, Esq., of Victoria, B. C.

DIED.

BOAK—At Vancouver, B. C., May 20th, Albert Edward Harris, infant son of Mr. and Mrs. A. A. Boak.

BOOTH—In this city, on the 31st ult., Cornelius Booth, a native of Ireland, aged 73 years.

GRIMSTONE—At Panillo, Hawaii, on May 7, 1903, Mrs. H. Grimstone.

LYONS—At North Bend, on May 26th, 1903, Eliza Lyons, beloved wife of John Lyons, in her 63rd year.

LYONS—At North Bend, on May 26th, 1903, Eliza Lyons, beloved wife of John Lyons, in her 63rd year.

MACKENZIE — At Friday Harbor, San Juan, on the 26th ult., Mrs. Ann Mackenzie, late of this city, aged 81 years.

MITCHELL—At Bradford, Yorkshire, on the 28th inst., Olive Mary Mitchell, late of Seaton street, Vancouver.

O'CONNOR—At the family residence, 7 Cobur street, Victoria, B. C., on the 2nd instant, John Roderick O'Connor, a native of Mayness, County Kerry, Ireland, aged 78 years.

TWAY—In this city, on the 26th inst., Theophilus Tway, a native of Quebec, aged 42 years and 5 months.

LOST OR STRAYED—Dark bay horse, white on nose, black points; a reward to finder. Victoria Transfer Co. j4

B. C. STEAM DYE WORKS, 141 Yates Street, Victoria, Ladies, and Gentlemen's Garments and Household Furnishings cleaned dyed or pressed equal to new.

WANTED—Faithful person to travel for well established house in a few counties calling on retail merchants and agents. Local territory. Salary $1024 a year and expenses, payable $10.70 a week in cash and expenses advanced. Position permanent. Business successful and rushing. Enclose self-addressed envelope. Standard House, 315 Caxton Bldg., Chicago.

WANTED.—Small improved farm on river, lake, or sea coast of Vancouver Island. Apply W., care of C. F. Walker Esq., Saanichton. M26

PRESS COMMENT.

Trade unionists have played so terribly into the hands of their enemies in the last few years that it might have been thought they would have learnt caution. Not a bit of it. When their leaders do not advise a course which is admirably calculated to end in disaster, the rank and file take matters into their own hands. The Glasgow engineers' strike, arising out of the refusal of the men to accept, in bad times, a reduction of wages, which they never fail to demand, shall be increased in good times, was in flat repudiation of official views.—Public Opinion.

Some idea of the vast magnitude of the electric light manufacture and allied industries may be gained from the fact that over 900 representatives of the various departments of the business are in attendance at the Auditorium convention. At the present time it is estimated that there are in the neighborhood of 3,500 central stations throughout the country, supplying current for lighting and power purposes, aggregating nearly 2,000,000 horse power. More than 600,000 arc lamps and fully 3,500,000 incandescents are in regular service. Some idea of the vast capital involved in the business may be gained from the financial report of the General Electric Company, which shows total sales for the year ending January 31, 1903, amounting to $36,685,508.—Chicago Herald.

Southern Rhodesia, not content with increasing importance as a gold-producer, seemingly aspires to rivalry with Manitoba as a granary of the Empire. Hitherto its prospects in that way have not been particularly assuring, for though its abundant sunshine should be favorable, liability to blight, as in other sub-tropical countries, has been apprehended.—London Financier.

THE CRISIS.

To the Editor.

Sir,—The present crisis brought about by the recent investigations has aroused a commendable desire in every true man and woman in the province for a clean-up, and a new start under better and safer conditions. Without casting reflection on those of our public servants who are faithful, the time has come when nothing short of a sweeping investigation of all departments of the service will satisfy the electors. Until this has been done and done thoroughly, and the work of the departments placed on a systematic and economical basis, and all land and other records made plain and complete, we shall remain in the eyes of the world an unknown and untrusted quantity.

As to the personal of government the electors will and must have an opportunity of passing judgment, and if through the blinding of party bias and political entanglements they find themselves in the same old ship with a pack of wily lawyers for a crew, well, they will have lost the golden opportunity for better government and of placing the province on a prosperous commercial basis.

Three changes are absolutely necessary to this end.

1. The abolition of gift of office for election purposes, must be filled by qualified men through open competition.

2. Limit of executive powers of council to minor matters.

3. Abolition of campaigning for