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REFLECTIONS

By THE EDITOR

SIR JAMES WHITNEY will celebrate, on January 25th, the fifth anniversary of the battle by which he won a premiership, fame and knighthood. He has chosen that date as the day on which Ontario's Legislature will assemble for its annual business session. What more fitting way in which to recall to the minds of men and politicians that the famous victory—the first Conservative victory in Ontario in thirty-three years.

Speaking seriously, it is an open question if any man in Canada has made greater progress during this half decade in the estimation of his fellowmen than Sir James. Before he became Premier many of his own followers doubted his ability to play the role of Big Chief. The Liberals were quite sure that he would never rank with Mowat, Hardy and Ross. Nevertheless, to-day Sir James is as supreme in Ontario as Sir Wilfrid is in the Dominion. His policy of "cheap power for the people," if not wholly successful, has touched the imagination of the people. He has been a modern and improved Robin Hood, taking from the rich and giving to the poor. He played much the same role in the school book question, and has given Ontario a set of school books unequalled in the world for meritorious cheapness. In the management of the Crown domain, he has shown an acute appreciation of business methods, somewhat unusual in Ontario political leaders.

In dealing with the relations of the Province to the Dominion and in considering the principles which underlie provincial legislation, Sir James has shown a considerable breadth of view. His neighbour, Sir Lomer Gouin, Premier of Quebec, is a Liberal, but this does not prevent Sir James and Sir Lomer from working together—along certain lines. There must always be a certain amount of conflict between the Provinces and the Federal Government as to their respective powers under the Constitution of 1867. New conditions are continually arising. All such conflicts have been settled in a friendly manner, but not without each side stoutly insisting upon its rights. Sir James has secured Sir Lomer's aid in certain matters. It is also said that Sir James will imitate some of Quebec's legislation concerning corporation and stock exchange taxation.

MR. ROBERT MEIGHEN, president of the Lake of the Woods Milling Company, has come out in favour of the Government owning the wheat elevators at Fort William and Port Arthur. The Roblin administration in Manitoba has declared for Provincial Government ownership of elevators in that Province. These facts indicate that there is possibility of a revolution in the elevator situation.

The wheat grower of the West has received free lands. He has also been given free railways and low transportation rates. Then he got free loading platforms. Now he is to have free elevators. His interests are certainly being well looked after. No doubt it is important that this further reform should be considered. It seems strange, however, that the Dominion and Provincial Governments cannot get together and make such regulations as would ensure a fair deal to the farmers from the elevator interests and the grain exchanges. Surely it is not necessary to buy out this great elevator industry, at a cost of fifteen or twenty million dollars, just to ensure fair treatment for the grain grower. It must be a serious situation if such a radical remedy is necessary. Are the elevator men robbers and thieves? Then prove it and confiscate their property. Are they honest men demanding a fair price for honest service? Then pass regulations which will ensure that fair price and that honest service.

Canada is spending two hundred million dollars on a transcontinental railway which is intended, in part at least, to carry wheat to the seaboard and goods to the inland farmer. Canada has spent millions of dollars on her canal system and on her Atlantic harbour, partly for the benefit of the wheat grower. Canada is now face to face with a capital expenditure of at least twenty-five million dollars

on further canal improvements. Surely it is not necessary, in the face of such expenditures, for either the Dominion or Provincial Governments to embark on elevator ownership. We are all too busy just now telling the Dominion Government how to spend its great revenues. Let us be careful.

MR. HAMAR GREENWOOD is a hero. The other night, in the City of York, England, where he is a parliamentary candidate, he was called a "foreigner." Then "amid ringing cheers" he said he was proud to be a Canadian. (What guff to send over a cable!)

Mr. Hamar Greenwood should indeed be proud to be a Canadian. It is his chief asset—though he is not a "Canadian barrister" as the cable asserts. Probably it was one of Mr. Greenwood's political friends who shouted "foreigner" in order to give our hero a chance to declare that "he was proud to be a Canadian." Mr. Greenwood always was a good actor, since the days when he reorganised a small dramatic company that had "gone broke" in a lake town in Western Ontario. His ability as a stump-speaker and his genius for keeping along the straight path to fame have transformed a penniless Canadian youth into a semi-imperial figure—a man destined to show to the ignorant voters of the City of York that "the people of Canada are as good Britishers as if they had been born within sight of Westminster Abbey." Our historians should record this heroic deed. Let us not forget that there are heroes in these days as there were in the Age of Chivalry—men who will never sacrifice their birth-right for a mess of pottage.

EQUAL in its supreme foolishness was the cable sent from Toronto to London by a number of enthusiasts in favour of Richard Jebb, parliamentary candidate in one of the London constituencies. Mr. Jebb is a member of the *Morning Post* staff, and is a Tariff-Reform Unionist. He is opposed by a Liberal, and also by a Free Trade Unionist. His friends on the *Post* have been doing their utmost to have the Free Trade Unionist candidate retired, but Mr. Balfour and Lord Hugh Cecil were not agreeable. As Mr. Jebb has written much on colonial affairs, and has paid us many compliments, it occurred to his friends in London that Imperialist Toronto might be stirred up on his behalf. Accordingly a petition was circulated in this city and three hundred odd signatures secured, including senators and cabinet ministers. This petition was sent in the form of a cablegram to the *Morning Post*, asking that Mr. Balfour help Mr. Jebb. Apparently Mr. Balfour heard of the possibility of such a cable and twenty-four hours before it arrived he publicly endorsed the Cecil candidate, Mr. J. Boyton.

It seems surprising that these Toronto imperialists should so far forget themselves as to commit such an impertinence. There has been far too much interference by prominent Canadians in this British election. If each portion of the Empire begins to meddle in the purely domestic affairs of the other portions, then the beginning of the end will be in sight. It is natural that the Tories of Canada should sympathise with the Tories of Great Britain and that the Liberals on each side of the ocean should feel for each other, but this sympathy is something which should be severely restrained. It is not real patriotism. It is in fact a partisan sympathy which, though possibly excusable under our present system of political government, is not ideal and not in the best interests of an Empire which can only rest on the highest form of patriotism.

WHEN Mr. W. K. McNaught, Conservative member of the Ontario Legislature, proposed the health of Sir Wilfrid Laurier at the National Club banquet last week, he made a strange comment. He said that though Sir Wilfrid Laurier had been in the limelight of