

ONCE MORE AN ELECTION

FOR the first time since the Commercial Union agitation of 1887-1891, a Canadian election is to be fought on the issue of reciprocity. The pact which has been passed by both Houses of Congress and signed by President Taft will be made the basis of an appeal to the people; which many Conservatives and some Liberals claimed it should have been in the first place. Side issues will be the Canadian navy, true vs. "ultra" Imperialism, and majority vs. minority rule—with the Grand Trunk Pacific as an



In Fighting Trim.

entree. The Conservative party will oppose reciprocity, condemn the Grand Trunk Pacific, belittle the Canadian navy, and put a premium on what the Liberals call "ultra" Imperialism. Both parties claim to be Imperialistic. Sir Wilfrid Laurier's taciturnity at the Imperial Conference has been offset by his eloquent Ottawa eulogy of a Royal Gubernatorial Family. Mr. Borden and his party behold in the reciprocity pact a standing menace to the cause of Empire. Seriously, perhaps, neither party believes that ultimate annexation is the sting in reciprocity's tail. And it will be difficult for the Conservatives, even with the revival of "separatism" from the navy debate of last session and the insistence on "continentalism" as suggested by reciprocity, to brand the Liberal party with anti-Imperialism. A retired Liberal Cabinet Minister, himself a strong Imperialist, argues that the reciprocity pact is a contribution to Imperialism, and that a turn-down of reciprocity by the people would be a black eye to the British connection. The basis of his argument is wheat. He assumes that the West is able to produce 500,000,000 bushels of wheat. The expectation for 1911 is 200,000,000. But Great Britain, our present chief customer for export wheat, cannot consume half of that amount, even with a preference on Canadian wheat as against Russia and Argentina. The population of Great Britain cannot economically increase. It may decrease. If Canada is to get British and foreign population on to her unoccupied wheat lands, she must guarantee a reasonable market. The best market is the United States, whose wheat

production has reached a maximum and whose consumption is heavily increasing. Therefore, reciprocity in natural products is a straight contribution to the building up of Canada on Imperialistic lines.

A counter argument contends that in all Britain there are only half a million farmers, and that it is flatly impossible to teach a British townsman how to raise Canadian wheat.

At all events an election based upon this many-headed propaganda is sure to contribute more to the enlightenment and the patriotism of Canada, than either of the recent Free Trade vs. Unionism elections in Great Britain—with the reformation of the Lords thrown in.

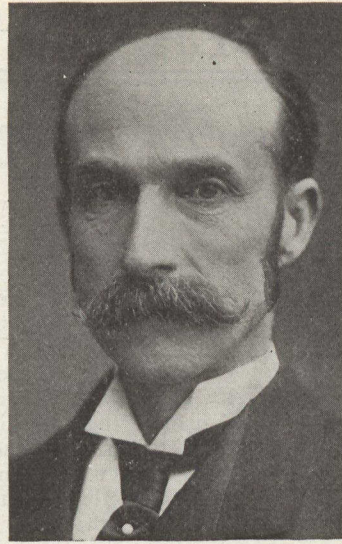
The stock familiar argument against reciprocity is—"We are prosperous now; why try to paint the lily?" The inference being that the pact is more in the interests of lowering prices to the United States consumer than in benefiting any



PRESIDENT TAFT

Who does not expect Annexation.

class of people in Canada. A still further deduction is that the whole business has been engineered from Washington by President Taft, who had to do something more effective than imitate his predecessor by threatening to curb the trusts. Out of that again you have the argument that Ottawa is manipulated from Washington for the sake of United States politics; and that reciprocity was snatched up by the Liberal party because it looked like a good, safe play in the interests of the West, a very large element of which have been clamouring for reciprocity as a matter of business letting sentiment severely alone. Now according to the shift of the political wind it looks as though there has been some Western reaction against the pact, which obviously makes it better policy to bring on the election before the redistribution that will give a largely increased membership to the West.

LORD LANSDOWNE
Unionist Leader in the Lords.VISCOUNT MORLEY
A Rational Reformer.

Lords
who
Agree

REFORMING THE LORDS

REFORMING the Lords has become the recognized business of Government in Great Britain. For the first time in the history of British Parliaments the House has refused to listen to a Prime Minister. Mr. Asquith intended to say, "You live under an unchecked and undiluted single-Chamber government. With a Liberal government in power you would have a House of Commons fettered beyond all its predecessors

in regard to finance; and in all cases where an irresponsible and non-representative body independent of both Houses should so determine, every deadlock will be settled only by referendum."

He was talking on the amendments made by the largely Unionist House of Lords to the third reading of the Veto Bill, which seeks to delimit the power of the Lords. In a previous letter to Mr. Balfour, the Prime Minister, said: "In the circumstances, should the necessity arise, the Government will advise the King to exercise his prerogative to secure the passing into law of the bill in substantially the same form in which it left the House of Commons, and his Majesty has been pleased to signify that he will consider it his duty to accept and act on that advice."

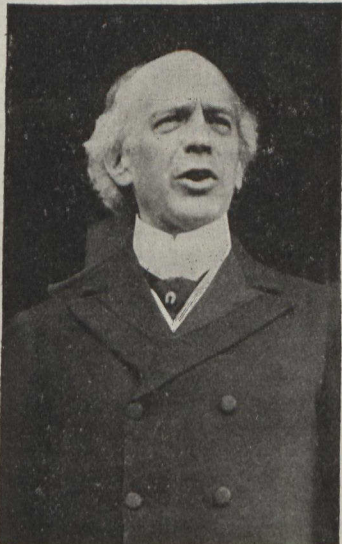
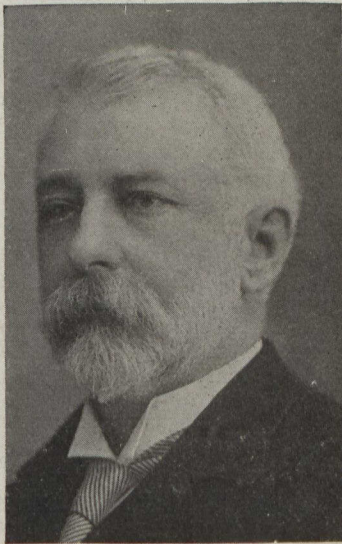
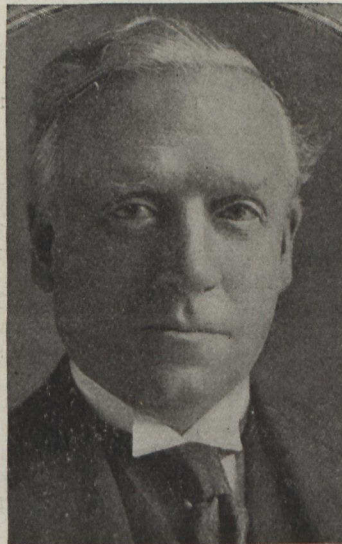
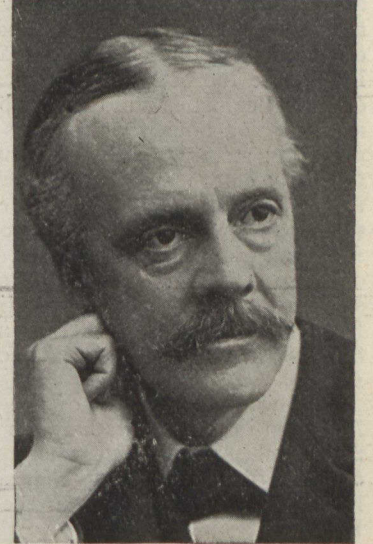
Which, of course, means that the King might create new Peers enough to carry the Bill. This Mr. Balfour stigmatizes as "dragging the Crown in the dust." The moderate element in the Lords represented by Lord Lansdowne, and Lord Morley, stand for the acceptance of the Bill shorn of the Lords' amendments. The Extremist section, represented by hot-headed Lord Hugh Cecil and the veteran Lord Halsbury, "stand to the last ditch" against the measure. "The people do not know," said Lord Halsbury, with the vehemence of 86 years, "that the constitution and the Court are in peril as well as the lives of His Majesty's subjects. It is an attempt of one House to abolish the other."

Liberals claim that the creation of fifty new Peers would no more than restore the balance of Liberals in the Upper House—so far rather neglected by the Government. But as annexation of Canada to the United States is not seriously considered as a logical outcome of the reciprocity pact, neither is the abolition of the House of Lords a necessary sequel to the action of the Asquith Government in their attempt at reforming the House of Lords. The Peers will be reformed; because the most cosmopolitan government and people in the world demand it.

But the reform of the Lords has nothing to do with any basic revolution in the British people, and nothing to do with any sign of democracy more than has been inherent in the race since the days of Magna Charta.



A "Last Ditcher."

SIR WILFRID LAURIER
Happy in the Turnoil.HON. W. S. FIELDING
Likes to be Interrupted.PREMIER ASQUITH
No Orator, but a Fighter.HON. ARTHUR J. BALFOUR
Writer and Unionist Leader.

Canadian
Colleagues

British
Rivals