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Our Ottawa Letter.

THE WEEK IN PARLIAMENT.

Had Sir Wilfrid Laurier kept his promise the whole week would have been devoted to the National Transcontinental Railway bill. The Liberals, however, were forced to stop for wind and called for the adjournment of the debate in order to consider several important amendments offered by the opposition. The Prime Minister is becoming alarmed at the antagonism which the government policy has developed in the country, and now seeks a hole for escape.

The contract which the government proposes to enter into with the Grand Trunk Pacific has been shown to be against every national interest. It gives away everything and retains nothing for the government. Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Hon. W. S. Fielding and Hon. Charles Fitzpatrick contradicted one another repeatedly on important questions, showing that the cabinet is divided as to the policy which has been forced upon it.

The gerrymander of Ontario was discussed for several days. The leader of the opposition repudiated much of the work of the special parliamentary committee, the Liberal majority of which refused to accept a single proposition which came from the Conservative minority. The government has simply devised a scheme for robbing Ontario of its legitimate representation, and it does this under the guise of fairness.

Hon. W. S. Fielding introduced a bill to take away from the Auditor General all power to control public expenditure, a prerogative which that officer has exercised during the past twenty-five years.

WILL LAURIER BETRAY CANADA?

The opinions of two of the ablest lawyers in Canada, I. C. Hellmuth, Toronto, and Donald MacMaster, Montreal, support the contention of Mr. E. B. Osler, M. P., West Toronto, that in the construction of the eastern division of the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway, the contractors will have the privilege of importing all their supplies free of duty. This clearly establishes that the position of the Canadian manufacturers will not be much improved by the markets which should be opened up by the construction of the new railway. The enterprise is referred to as a "national" one. This term is far from applicable to a project which will involve the expenditure of millions of dollars of the people's money in foreign countries, while our own factories will be allowed to remain in idleness. The government pretends to be anxious to prevent the importation of supplies for the transcontinental line, but they steadfastly refuse to amend their bill so as to definitely impose upon contractors the obligation of paying duty on all goods manufactured abroad. The administration has bound itself to make the path of its friends easy, but in doing so it has sacrificed the manufacturers and workmen of Canada. Mr. Osler has moved an amendment to protect Canadian industry, and should the government fail to meet his advances, they will deserve the strongest possible censure at the hands of the electorate.

THE PEOPLE'S RIGHTS IGNORED.

The Grand Trunk Pacific Railway Company have a consistent friend in the Laurier government, whose friendship stops at nothing. The rights of Canadians are as nothing compared with the needs of Senator Cox and other financial giants. And so it happens, that under the contract which the government proposes to enter into with the Grand Trunk Pacific, that company is given permission to transfer \$24,900,000 in common stock to the Grand Trunk Railway Company for a nominal sum or empty collateral in the shape of services rendered, etc. On this immense amount of stock, the patrons of the grand national transcontinental railway built by the people's money, will have to pay dividends. This means high freight rates. Now, of all good things that are to result from the construction of a second line from ocean to ocean,

none is to compare with the great concessions which are to be granted to shippers using the Grand Trunk Pacific. At least the government has promised this great boon. Yet they do not hesitate to inflict on the country for fifty years the responsibility for paying interest on \$24,900,000 of watered stock. The opposition endeavored to have a provision, inserted in the contract which will compel the Grand Trunk to pay full value for Grand Trunk Pacific stock, so that if the \$24,900,000 is to be a lien on the pockets of the people they will secure some advantages for assuming the responsibility. Sir Wilfrid Laurier has refused as yet to adopt this suggestion, but has been forced by the opposition to consider the advisability of concurring in it.

LIBERAL PAPER PRAISES MR. BORDEN

The Ottawa Free Press, the government organ at the capital, has this to say of Mr. K. L. Borden, the leader of the opposition: "The return of Mr. R. L. Borden, the leader of the Opposition, to his place in Parliament will be welcomed by men of all shades of political opinion."

"Mr. Borden's many admirable qualities have won for him a warm place in the hearts of people who are not greatly interested in the sword thrusts of the political gladiators, but who can appreciate and estimate at its proper value genuine personal worth."

"Mr. Borden's illness came at a time when his presence could be spared from the parliamentary arena, and his return will be hailed with not less satisfaction in that it will lead to greater facility in the despatch of public business."

"Mr. Borden is influenced by ideals that are in every respect creditable to himself, and his personal influence on his own side of the House stands immeasurably higher than that of any other member of the party with whom he has identified himself."

GOVERNMENT IS CRAWLING.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier is at last beginning to realize that the National Transcontinental Railway scheme is not finding favor in the country, when the Prime Minister undertook singlehandedly to arrange a deal by which Senator Cox and others would be enriched to the extent of \$100,000,000 of the people's money, he made a fatal mistake. The opposition have successfully demonstrated that the government's policy is all in favor of the grafter and against the people. The members of the cabinet have not been able to satisfactorily explain features of the bill, which seek to create a monopoly for the Grand Trunk Railway Company. Neither will they offer hasty opposition to amendments introduced by Conservative members, which, if passed, will make the National Transcontinental railway venture more of a business proposition. Despite Sir Wilfrid's declaration that "time cannot wait" the government has decided to consider suggestions made by their opponents and endeavor to get out of the hole into which they tumbled. This is somewhat remarkable, considering that a half a hundred Liberal speakers including eight ministers pronounced the deal perfect. The result is the result of want of deliberation on the part of those responsible for the direction of Canadian affairs. Without competent advice to guide them, the ministry plunged into the dark, from which they are now ignominiously compelled to crawl in and effort to save their political scalps.

OPENING THE WAY FOR BOODLES.

The government has resumed responsibility for a bill, despite a vigorous protest from the Auditor-General, which it is passed by Parliament, means the destruction of the usefulness of that officer. For over twenty-five years this official has rendered excellent service to the country by refusing to endorse payments of a doubtful nature. When the Liberals were in opposition they had nothing but good words for the Auditor-General, whom they now intend to convert into a mere machine. Under the terms of the proposed legislation the treasury board will be empowered to over-ride their Auditor. That this is a most dangerous move will be appreciated when it is explained, that in future the treasury board will be able to suspend investigation of an account by the Auditor-General on the pretext that he has unduly delayed his report. Under such a system the treasury board will be in a position to sanction the disbursements of immense sums of money by the government without a certificate as to their propriety. In this way there will be

endless opportunities for boodling, which are now impossible under existing laws. In following this course Sir Wilfrid Laurier undertakes to wipe out one of the most desirable safeguards to public outlays under our fiscal system. No previous government ever suggested such a move knowing that the public would not tolerate it. Has public opinion degenerated so much that it is now ripe for the change?

MINISTERS CANNOT AGREE.

According to the Hon. Clifford Sifton, the eastern section of the Grand Trunk Pacific will open up a country so rich in timber, minerals, and agricultural possibilities that it must of necessity become a paying property from its inception. The road will labor under none of the disadvantages which confronted the Canadian Pacific Railway. It will command the respect of the financial world and there will be a mad rush to furnish funds for its construction.

Hon. W. S. Fielding, the financial expert of the government, is not so sanguine of success as his conferee. With Sir Wilfrid Laurier he holds the opinion that the stock of the Grand Trunk Pacific cannot be sold at par. The project will be surrounded by doubt and the money markets will not pay fancy prices for its certificates. This is wholly opposed to the views of the Minister of the Interior. The cabinet are quite unable to agree on other points of their railway policy.

This is because the ministers were never consulted by Sir Wilfrid Laurier, before he bargained with Mr. Hays to spend \$100,000,000. If the government are unable to agree as to their policy, how can the people be expected to accept it?

THE MOUNTAINS OF INFORMATION.

The mountains of information in regard to the Grand Trunk Pacific scheme which were promised by Sir Wilfrid Laurier, have been condensed into 176 pages of a blue book which has been handed to parliament. The report is the work of Dr. Ami, one of the cleverest members of the Geological Survey. With a splendid grasp of the physical characteristics of Canada, so far as they have been investigated, Dr. Ami has made out the best possible case for the government. That is saying everything that can be offered in commendation of the "mountains of information" in their condensed form. The reports of those who are accepted as authorities on the splendid character of the country through which the eastern section of the new transcontinental railway will pass, are not to be considered seriously from a railway standpoint. There is not a single statement to show that the government knows anything about the country through which it proposes to construct a new railway for the benefit of private individuals. The territory through which the Quebec division will run is described as typical Laurentian country with rounded hills, valleys and lakes and rivers everywhere. In regard to balance of the route the knowledge had of the country is little more than hearsay. Yet the government declines first to fully investigate the physical conditions of the route, before binding Canada to an expenditure of \$100,000,000. When Dr. Ami finds it impossible to gather data, it is no wonder that Sir Wilfrid Laurier and his conferees are unable to furnish any information as to the exact nature of the proposed deal.

The Provincial Exhibition.

The Provincial Exhibition was formally opened yesterday afternoon, by his Honor, the Lieutenant Governor. In his speech his Honor recommended the holding of annual exhibitions and said he thought it would be in the interest of the agricultural progress in this Province if the Dominion Government would take over the stock farm. Short speeches were made by the Premier, Hon. Mr. Rogers, Judge Fitzgerald and others. The live stock exhibits are fine and the inside exhibits on the whole are very good. Trotting takes place this afternoon and tomorrow afternoon. The city is thronged with visitors, and everything points to the success of the undertaking. We will give the prize list next week.

The Renewal a Strain.

Vacation is over. Again the school bell rings at morning and at noon, again with tens of thousands the hardest kind of work has begun, the renewal of which is mental and physical strain to all except the most rugged. The little girl that a few days ago had roses in her cheeks, and the little boy whose lips were then so red you would have insisted that they had been kissed by strawberries, have already lost something of the appearance of health. Now is a time when many children should be given a tonic, which may avert much serious trouble, and we know of no other so highly to be recommended as Hood's Sarsaparilla, which strengthens the nerves, perfects digestion and assimilation, and aids mental development by building up the whole system.

British Politics Agitated.

CHAMBERLAIN RESIGNS WITH TWO OF HIS COLLEAGUES.

London advices of the 17th, contain the following announcements: "The following ministers have tendered their resignations, which have been accepted by the King: Right Hon. Joseph Chamberlain, Secretary for the Colonies; Right Hon. C. T. Ritchie, Chancellor of the exchequer, and Lord George Hamilton, Secretary for India."

Following this announcement was the correspondence that passed between the Premier, Right Hon. A. J. Balfour, and Mr. Chamberlain.

Mr. Chamberlain's letter is dated Birmingham, Sept. 9th, and sets forth his reasons for resigning. A most interesting portion of the letter is the following statement concerning a preferential tariff: "For the present at any rate, a preferential agreement with our colonies involving a new duty, however small, on articles of food hitherto untaxed, even if accompanied by a reduction of taxation on other articles of food equally universal in their consumption, would be unacceptable to the majority of the constituencies. However much we may regret the decision, however mistaken we may think it, no good government in a democratic country can ignore it. I feel, therefore, that as an immediate practical policy, the question of preference to the colonies cannot be passed with any hope of success at the present time, although there is a very strong feeling in favor of the other branch of fiscal reform which would give a fuller discretion to the government in negotiating with foreign countries for a freer exchange of commodities and which would enable our representative to retaliate if a concession was made to our just demands."

"If, as I believe, you share these views, it seems to me that you will be absolutely justified in adopting them as the policy of your government, although it will necessarily involve some changes in its constitution. As secretary for the colonies during the last eight years, I have been in a special sense the representative of the policy of a closer union, which I firmly believe to be equally necessary in the interests of the colonies and ourselves. I believe it is possible today and may be possible tomorrow to make arrangements for such a union. I had unexampled opportunities of watching events and appreciating the feelings of our kinsmen beyond the seas. I stand, therefore, in a different position to any of my colleagues, and I think I should justly be blamed if I remained in office and thus formally accepted the exclusion from my political programme of so important a part thereof.

"I think that with absolute loyalty to your government and with no fear of embarrassing it in any way I can best promote the cause I have at heart from the outside, and I cannot but hope that in a perfectly independent position my arguments may be received with less prejudice than would attach to those of a party leader. Accordingly I would suggest that you limit the present policy of the government to an assertion of our freedom in the case of all commercial relations with foreign countries, and that you should agree to my tendering my resignation of my present office to his Majesty, and devoting myself to the work of explaining and popularizing these principles of imperial union which experience has convinced me are essential to our future welfare and prosperity."

"Yours very sincerely,  
JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN."

Mr. Balfour in a letter to Mr. Chamberlain, dated Sept. 16, explains that he did not reply earlier because he knew he would soon have an opportunity of talking over the important issues which the letter dealt with. Therefore this reply is rather an embodiment of the results of their conversations that adds anything new to them. Mr. Balfour continues:

"Agreeing as I do with you that the time has come when a change should be made in the fiscal canons by which we bound ourselves in our commercial dealings with other governments, it seems paradoxical indeed that you should leave the cabinet at the same time that other members of my colleagues are leaving it who disagree on the very point with us both. Yet I cannot but admit that there is some force in your arguments in support of that course, based as they are upon your special and personal relation with that portion of the controversy which deals with colonial duties. You have done more than any man living or dead to bring home to the citizens of the empire that consciousness of imperial obligation and interdependence between the various fragments into which the empire is geographically divided.

"I believe you to be right in holding that this interdependence should find expression in our commercial as well as our political and military relations. I believe with you that a closer fiscal union between the mother country and the colonies would benefit the trade of both and that if such closer union could be established on fitting terms its advantages to both parties would increase with years and as the colonies grew in wealth and population."

"If there has ever been any difference between us in connection with this matter it has been with regard to the practicability of the proposal which would seem to require on the part of the colonies a limitation in the all-round development of a protective policy and on the part of this country the establishment of a preference in favor of important colonial products. On the first of these requirements I say nothing; but if the second involves as it most certainly does, taxation however light upon food-stuffs, I am convinced with you that public opinion is not yet ripe for such an arrangement. The reasons may easily be found in past political battles and present political misrepresentations. If then this branch of fiscal reform is not at present within the limits of practical policy, you are surely right in your advice not to treat it as indissolubly connected with that other branch of fiscal reform to which we both attach importance and which we believe the country is prepared to consider without prejudice. I feel, however,

deeply concerned that you should regard this conclusion however, well founded, as one making it difficult in your very special circumstances for you to remain a member of the government. Yet, I do not venture in a matter so strictly personal, to raise any objection if you think you can best serve the interests of imperial unity, for which you have done so much by pressing your views on colonial preferences, with the freedom which is possible in an independent position, but hardly compatible with office.

"How can I criticize your determination? The loss to the government is great indeed, but gain to the cause you have at heart may be greater still. If so what can I do but acquiesce?"

"Yours very sincerely,  
A. J. BALFOUR."

P. S.—May I say with what gratification, both on personal and public grounds I learn that Anstun Chamberlain is ready to remain a member of

the government. There could be no more conclusive evidence that in your judgment as in mine, the exclusion of the taxation of food from the party programme is in the existing circumstances a course best fitted practically to further the cause of fiscal reform."

London advices of the 21st, report the following additional resignations from the Cabinet: Lord Balfour of Burleigh, Secretary for Scotland, and Arthur Ralph Douglas Elliott, Financial Secretary to the Treasury, and that their resignations have been accepted by the King. Additional intelligence of the same date furnishes the information that the King has approved of the following appointments to fill the vacancies first declared: Anstun Chamberlain to be Chancellor of the Exchequer, Arnold Foster, Secretary of the Admiralty, to be Secretary for War; Mr. B. B. C. Secretary for India to be Secretary for India in place of Lord George Hamilton. It is also stated that Lord Milner, has been offered the Colonial Secretaryship in succession to Joseph Chamberlain.

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