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Comments on the Case.



THE LAWYER AND THE STATESMAN.—At this writing the judges of the Supreme Court of Canada have not rendered their decision in the case of the C.P.R. Co. against the Province of Manitoba, which was recently argued before them by the four greatest lawyers of the Dominion—Hon. Edward Blake and Christopher Robinson for the plaintiff, and Hon. Oliver Mowat and Dalton McCarthy for the defendant. The impression seems to prevail almost universally that the judgment must go in favor of the railway company, if it is rendered—as of course it will be—in accordance with law rather than sentiment. Hon. Edward Blake has been smartly criticized by some of the Government organs for accepting a brief

from the Syndicate, which he has always regarded, in his capacity of statesman, as an extortionate and rapacious monster. These jeers might have had some weight if Mr. Blake had found it necessary, in arguing the case, to take a position at variance with any of his statements in the House—though even in that case, it is an open question whether a lawyer has not a right to argue in behalf of a claim which personally he may not believe in. In this case, Mr. Blake simply repeated what he had contended for in Parliament, when the General Railway Act was under discussion—that certain clauses in that Act would have the practical effect of depriving the Provinces of the right to build local lines, because it was provided in these clauses that any such line as crossed a railway which had been declared "for the general advantage of Canada,"

would thereby come under the legislative control of the Dominion Government. As nearly all the railway lines in the country have been so "declared," any local line which succeeds in avoiding a crossing will have to run from nowhere to nowhere. At all events, the Red River Valley line must cross the C.P.R., and the latter has been (with some unconscious irony on the part of the Government) declared to be "for the general benefit." These clauses were put in the Act notwithstanding Mr. Blake's warning at the time, and his attitude in the Supreme Court was simply that of the man who says, "I told you so." The one thing the authorities of Manitoba wish to avoid is that their new line should fall under the control of the Federal Government, *alias* the C.P.R., but there is no help for it if the crossing is made—unless these clauses are repealed at the next session of Parliament. It is only now a question of how many millions the C.P.R. will take to allow this to be done.

A PROGRAMME OF OUR OWN.—The President elect of the United States is credited with possessing some great ideas in the direction of a "spirited foreign policy." One item of his new programme is the annexation of Canada, which is to be easily and expeditiously brought about by Congress offering to pay off our public debt. We cannot but acknowledge our sense of President Harrison's kindly regard in being willing to admit us into the Republic, though it is all clearly inconsistent with his teachings during the late campaign, when he made it as clear as mud to many audiences that the American workingman would be ruined if free trade relations were established with any outside communities. Of course if Canada gets into the Union all tariffs and customs houses between us will be wiped out, and Canadian "cheap labor" will proceed to get in its awful work of woe. But while it is kind of Mr. Harrison to be willing thus to ruin his own country for our sakes, he is evidently not aware that we have a notion of trying our hands at the Republic business on our own account. Yes; before long we propose to put a prohibitory tariff on imported Governors-General, cut our present European connection kindly but firmly, and start out on a career of independence. As a preliminary we have given our beloved Parent-land a filial slap on the eye in the shape of iron duties, though as yet we are a trifle hysterical about the "old flag." We are also discriminating about ten per cent. against the dear mother-country in our general tariff, and by-and-by we will cut her off, as already stated, altogether. Let General Harrison just wait and see how the great Canadian Republic "pans out" before he makes himself ridiculous with annexation proposals. Let him be content in the meantime with the knowledge that the best blood of our population is flowing in a steady stream into his territories, driven from Canada by the pressure of taxation. We are going to have a great and independent nation here—if we have enough folks left to do it with.



ONE of the best scholars in this city has been reading up the tariff literature of the world back as far as the seventeenth century. He declares, as the result of his researches, that there is nothing to be found anywhere analogous to the power possessed by the Canadian Minister of Customs to arbitrarily and dogmatically put a higher valuation upon imports, regardless of the easily ascertained foreign market price of the goods, and then clap his duty on the higher valuation. By the exercise of this outrageous power, Mr. Bowell has secured for some of his pets a protection of eighty-five per cent. where the tariff places the duty at twenty-five or thirty.

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WE don't expect that our mention of this scandalous matter, which may be new to most of our readers, will do any good, however. The man of honest instinct will denounce it as a species of robbery more infamous