

The Colonist.

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THE SEMI-WEEKLY COLONIST

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DOMINION DAY

Forty-three years ago the Dominion of Canada came into being. It was largely in the nature of an experiment. Several things contributed to bringing about the union of the four original provinces. Among them was a desire on the part of the Maritime Provinces to strengthen their commercial position, which had been greatly weakened by the expiry of the Reciprocity Treaty of 1854. Another was the wish of those provinces to secure rail connection with the provinces of old Canada. Another was the anxiety of the public men of the Old Canadas and the British Government to provide some sort of a counterbalance between Upper and Lower Canada. A few prophetic souls foresaw in a union of the provinces the foundation of a new nation, which under the British flag might attain great renown. The first step towards union was taken by the provinces of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward's Island, and a conference was held at Charlottetown for the purpose of considering the terms under which the three governments might become one. Before the deliberations were concluded the project of a wider union was launched by what was then the government of Canada, and after a great deal of discussion the confederation was consummated, although Prince Edward's Island held aloof. Within a short time the Hudson Bay Territory was acquired by the newly-formed Dominion; then Prince Edward's Island and British Columbia threw in their lot with it, and we had a Canada stretching from ocean to ocean. Possibly no better idea can be formed of the status of the Dominion than is afforded by the fact that the British Government undertook to guarantee the bonds issued for the construction of the Intercolonial Railway, for it was thought to be doubtful if the credit of the Dominion would be good enough to enable it to raise the money. Nowadays private individuals go to the money centres and raise money freely of all manner of undertakings in Canada, and the Province of British Columbia feels strong enough financially to give its guarantee for a greater sum of money than it was proposed to expend at the outset upon the Intercolonial.

In the forty-three years that have passed the Dominion has grown vastly otherwise than territorially and in wealth and credit. It has grown nationally. It has assumed the functions of a nation. Those who recall the debates in the confederation campaigns will remember that there were some timid people who feared that the establishment of the Dominion would mean the early severance of the ties which bound British North America to the United Kingdom, and there have been times since when well-meaning patriots held the mistaken view that the autonomy of Canada was inconsistent with British connection. But all persons now see how mistaken were such ideas. They have seen the ties between the Dominion and the Empire strengthened, so that today there is more faith in the permanence of the Imperial fabric than there has been at any time.

Canadians have nothing to be ashamed of as they look back over the record of the past forty-three years; that is if they consider the progress of their country and the part it has played in the affairs of the world. We do not say that there have not been some things which we all could wish had been otherwise; but on the whole the progress has been rapid and along lines that make for permanent prosperity. We look forward to the future with a livelier hope than we have ever felt. We all realize that the country has just fairly found itself. It seems as if the season of Dominion Day ought to be that our duty as Canadians is to cultivate the higher patriotism, to learn that there are better things than party success to unite heart and soul in the development of a Canadian spirit, which will be satisfied with nothing short of the elevation of the Dominion as to its proper place within the Empire.

ANOTHER PARK.

We are in sympathy with the proposal that a suitable area shall be purchased and set apart for a park somewhere near the intersection of the Cadboro Bay and Oak Bay roads. The reasons why we take this position are that the citizens need open spaces in the city. What we have in mind, and what those who petitioned for the park have in mind, is not a very large area, but one of moderate size. Every city ought to have such places. For a large part of Victoria and for people in the whole city who can afford the time and can find it otherwise convenient to go there, Beacon Hill park is an excellent institution and no one can place too high a value upon it. The North Ward park is also well placed, is of great present value and will be more valuable in the future. The city park at the Borge will be very valuable by and by, but as yet it is not much used. There is on Pandora avenue a

fine triangular space that could without much expense be converted into a nice little park. Victoria West and the part of the city lying around Oak Bay junction are without these public places. We think in fairness to the citizens of those localities the lack ought to be supplied. If we are to have these open places in the city now is the time to provide them. Land will never be any cheaper than it is now, and is certain to increase in value. If we do not provide the parks now, we will either have to do without them or be prepared to pay a pretty round sum for them.

Such places are needed. They are needed as play grounds for children, so that the little folks can be kept off the streets. They are needed for mothers who wish to take or send out their babies for an airing. They are needed by young people as resorts where they can meet each other and enjoy the benefit of fresh air and pleasant surroundings. Workingmen and men of business need them so that they can have places where they can go alone or with members of their families when the day's work is done and spend a pleasant hour. We hope the City Council will lend a favorable ear to the request of those who have petitioned for the establishment of a park somewhere in the vicinity mentioned in their request.

THE CONFERENCE OF 1911

Some attention is being paid in England to the Imperial Conference to be held in 1911. Mr. L. S. Emery recently read a paper before the Royal Colonial Institute in which he took the position that this Conference ought to be presided over by the King and that it ought to provide for the separation of "the office of Minister of Imperial Affairs from the administration of the Crown Colonies and Dependencies." For the King to preside at such a conference would be a departure of the most novel kind, although we expect it would be very much to the taste of His Majesty George V., who is nothing if not an ardent Imperialist. Mr. Emery's second suggestion is tantamount to a proposal that a new department of state shall be created, and we look upon this with a good deal of favor, but principally as a means to an end. We should regard it as a preliminary step to an Imperial Administration, charged with subjects of such a nature as made them of importance to Affairs, and apparently would have each self-governing Dominion appoint a Minister for Imperial and External Affairs, and apparently would have them in constant consultation with the British Minister of Imperial Affairs and with each other. We quote the following from the summary of Mr. Emery's paper published in the London Times:

He had more than once laid stress on the importance of any body which deliberated on Imperial affairs being in close touch with the citizens of the Empire and in a position to give effect to their recommendations, and it was for that reason that he believed the development of the Conference system was likely to lead to far better results than the creation of any specially nominated or elected advisory council. The prime ministers attending the full Imperial Conference should each be accompanied by a deputation or delegation of members of parliament, who would meet together, with a similar delegation from the United Kingdom Parliament, to discuss the resolutions arrived at by the Conference which would then be submitted to them for their approval. Once committed to those views by speech and vote, the delegates would not so easily be tempted to turn round under the influence of local prejudices, or of considerations of personal or party advantage, when they returned. The introduction of parliamentary delegations would, of course, be a very distinct departure from anything that had been done so far. Experience had shown that such departures were often best made where there was some other reason for making them, besides the actual business which it might be desired to forward. Why should not the Coronation of King George be made the occasion for calling together representatives of all the free Parliaments of the Empire to attend the formal inauguration of a reign destined, they all believed, to be of such momentous significance for the whole future of the Empire? Once such an assembly of parliamentary delegations had met, its usefulness as an adjunct to the Conference would immediately be recognized and before long the Conference and the assembly would constitute a deliberative body not very far removed from a true Parliament of the Empire.

Lord Milner spoke after the paper had been read. He urged the common control of all matters that were common to all parts of the Empire, and pleaded for the establishment of the best Intelligence Department in the world. The opening part of Mr. Emery's paper is thus summarized:—Mr. Emery, assuming that Imperial unity and not disruption was desired,

laid down, as the first and most essential condition, equality of constitutional status. The partnership must be a true partnership, not an arrangement based on subordination. That arrangement, whether embodied in a written Constitution or in the general consent of the partners, must find expression through some common organ for consultation and decision. A single foreign policy for the Empire and a single Administration for the conduct of that policy were indispensable. There must also be a common policy of defence by sea and land. Centralization under a single Admiralty or War Office was not indispensable, a single organization—Imperial Defence Committee, Imperial General Staff, Imperial Admiralty—was. It followed that there must be some body representative of the citizens of each partner State to which the Foreign Minister and his subordinates should be responsible, which should exercise control over the Imperial Defence Committee and the General Staff dependent on it, and which, last but not least, should decide the extent to which each partner should contribute to the upkeep of the whole.

Lord Milner says that the British Empire has nearly reached the limit of expansion, and that its duty now is one of organization. This is very well put.

The people of Kamloops are somewhat agitated over a report that the Canadian Northern is going to abandon the Fraser river route for one over the Hope Mountains.

A "dirigible" is said to be under construction in England for the purpose of making a trans-Atlantic voyage. John Bull, "he ain't been sayin' much, but he has been a doin' things jest the same."

Even the worst prophets of evil have had to keep silent now that a splendid rainfall has "decided" all over the parts of the Prairie Provinces where they have been saying the heat had destroyed the wheat.

The people of St. John, N.S., say one of the newspapers of that city, are very hopeful that they will have the post office open on Sunday. As mails are to arrive on that day, why, they ask, should we not get out letters out of the office? Why not indeed?

We are sorry to read of "knocking" on the part of some of the new towns in the Central Interior against each other. There is plenty of room on the map for them all and plenty of development in sight to make them all prosperous centres. Necessarily some of them will be more important than others, but neither of them is benefited by decrying any of the other places.

The practice of "the third degree" by the police in Ottawa having been brought to the notice of one of the judges, he took occasion during the course of a trial to say "those charged with administering the high duty of criminal justice should refrain from plying prisoners with questions, visiting them, in various and subtle and unfair advantages, as was the case with the prisoner."

The charges of sleeping cars are under discussion. The railway people say that they lose on the cars. That seems an extraordinary contention. Possibly the cars do not pay their own way, but neither does a locomotive. On the other hand the railways could not do business without the cars any more than without locomotives. The maintenance of Pullman cars should be charged up to the general disbursements of the lines, and not set apart as a service by itself. An ordinary sleeping car is a pretty poor sort of thing anyway, and the companies ought to be thankful that the traveling public has not long ago demanded something better.

We have seen it stated in a New Brunswick paper that four life-sized full-length portraits, that are hung in the Legislative Building in Fredericton, have been discovered to be of great value. The portraits are of King George and his Queen, Lord Sheffield and Lord Glenelg. The two first named are the work of Sir Joshua Reynolds, and the others are by famous artists. They are splendid productions, and are said to be priceless. This is hardly a "discovery," for it has been known for a long time that these portraits were exceedingly valuable. It may interest New Brunswick readers to know that the portrait of Lord Sheffield was found in an attic in Government House some years ago, and that it bore marks showing that it has been used as a target. The story told at the time was that the sons of Lieut.-Governor Manners-Sutton were the youths who tried their skill in shooting on his lordship's portraits.

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