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SAINT JOHN, WEDNESDAY MORNING, MARCH 1, 1911

MR. ROBINSON'S TACTICS.

It was a great gathering the local Opposition had at Moncton the other day, when Messrs. Robinson, Copp, Leger and Sweeney enlightened the people of Westmorland as to their attitude on the affairs of the province. A large section of Mr. Robinson's party in the legislature is resident in the county of Westmorland—four of them, the noisy and talkative end of the party, for is not Mr. Copp, the orator of the Opposition, one of them? As usual dead issues only were discussed. There was nothing new brought to light, if we except the statement of that worthy person, Mr. Copp, that the reason Mr. Hazen did not bring on the provincial elections last fall was because of his desire to attend the Coronation as Premier and to return to New Brunswick as Sir Douglas Hazen.

Mr. Copp is no more lacking in imagination than he is in words. What he does not know he can easily imagine and then hurl it forth as if it were fact. Does anyone think for an instant that Mr. Copp's idea is the correct one? What earthly reason could Mr. Hazen have for calling on the elections at the date suggested by Mr. Copp? And again, how in the world could Mr. Copp have conjured up in his mind that local premiers who attend the Coronation of King George will receive knighthood? Governor Tweedie, as Premier of New Brunswick, attended the Coronation of King Edward, but did not return as Sir Lemuel, and still is Hon. L. J. Tweedie. Why should Mr. Copp think that an exception would be made in the case of Premier Hazen?

True we have the somewhat remarkable statement at the same meeting of Mr. Sweeney, who loudly protested to the intelligent electors of Westmorland that his blood was not blue and expressed his thanks to God that he had not been born with a silver spoon in his mouth. His fervor in this matter is probably due to the belief that an iron spoon is more fitting in the mouth of the future wardens of Dorchester Penitentiary than a silver one.

Mr. Robinson's contribution to the feast of reason was an amended reference to the Albert Southern Railway in which his comments on Mr. Hazen were greatly modified as compared with his statements at Hampton a short time before. Mr. Leger, the Acadia representative of the Westmorland Opposition party, was chiefly disturbed about the condition of the roads in the county, and endorsed the attack made on Mr. Morrissey by Mr. Copp, who, he thought, was getting too much salary.

The forgetfulness of the Opposition regarding what they did when in power is amazing. In seven years and five months, Mr. Labilliois, as chief commissioner of public works, drew from the provincial treasury the large sum of \$3,595.79, or about \$1,200 a year, for traveling expenses, double what Mr. Morrissey has drawn for the same purpose. Any chief commissioner has to do a great deal of travelling, and Mr. Morrissey has been about quite as much as Mr. Labilliois was, if not more, for on taking office he visited every section of the province which Mr. Labilliois did not do. There have been no serious increases in hotel rates throughout the province, and railway fares have not been advanced, yet Mr. Morrissey was able to travel for just half what it cost Mr. Labilliois. Yet Mr. Copp has the hardihood to accuse Mr. Morrissey with being overpaid.

Mr. Leger, whose peace of mind is greatly disturbed by the condition of the roads, possibly because it is no longer possible for highway superintendents to divert public money to themselves and their friends as they did when Mr. Robinson was premier and Mr. Labilliois was chief commissioner, is also alarmed because the Hazen Government has been able to collect so much more revenue from the Public Domain than did his colleague Mr. Sweeney. He figured that the Hazen Government has got just three freight car loads of money more from the people, provided the cars were loaded with 25-cent pieces. Although somewhat indefinite, as the tonnage of the car is not specified, Mr. Leger enlightened the people as to what the amount was by stating that the Hazen Government has spent half a million more than any other government of New Brunswick. The statement is false, but it is interesting as going to show the nature of the Opposition's arguments.

If Mr. Leger had been anxious to pursue his silver-laden freight cars further, he might have asked Mr. Sweeney, who was present on the platform with him, to explain what became of the freight car loaded with quarters which he failed to collect from the lumbermen for lumber cut on Crown lands. What became of this carload of quarters? Was it switched at Moncton, or did it get as far as College Bridge? Mr. Leger is fond of making charges regarding the careless expenditure of public money by his political opponents, but up to date it is not on record that he has ever tried to get at the facts of Mr. Sweeney's administration of the Crown land department and why there has been such an enormous increase in the stumpage.

Perhaps, however, the chief folly of the meeting was committed by Mr. Sweeney who tried to identify Mr. Hazen with the telephone monopoly. If Mr. Sweeney had wanted to be entirely honest in this matter he would have told his hearers that no one in the province benefitted more by the telephone monopoly than Mr. C. W. Robinson. That gentleman understood the value of telephone stocks before the amalgamation and was able to straddle a very profitable financial deal by disposing of his interests in the monopoly. Mr. Robinson got in on the ground floor of this deal, and passed out through the parlor door.

Mr. Hazen has never had any speculative interest in the telephone business. He was an investor years

ago in the New Brunswick Telephone Company, acquiring his stock in the public market. The attempt of Mr. Sweeney to make it appear that Mr. Hazen was engaged in franchise grabbing is as contemptible as it is untrue. When Mr. Sweeney coupled the name of the Premier with the men who are developing oil shales in Albert and the Grand Falls water power, he knew better than any man in New Brunswick that Mr. Hazen had no financial interest in either. As Surveyor General he knew the names of every man identified with either of these propositions, and had the knowledge that Mr. Hazen had nothing whatever to do with their promotion.

In reading the speeches of these gentlemen of the Opposition, every person will be struck with the fact that while according to them, individually and collectively, everything is wrong, yet they have no remedy to suggest. No plan by which a change in the interests of the province will be better guarded. For a quarter of a century the political godfathers of the Westmorland Aggregation ruled New Brunswick. At the end of that period the Government had become so corrupt and inefficient, and was in such inefficient hands, that the party was swept from power and has not recovered consciousness since. Mistaking tolerance for appreciation the Opposition under Mr. Robinson has fondly imagined that the people favor their return to office. In this, they mistake public opinion. The people of New Brunswick are now convinced that the Hazen Government is giving them more for their money than they ever received from Mr. Robinson and his predecessors.

Then again why should Mr. Robinson expect the people to change their sentiments towards him so quickly? Three years ago they weighed him in the balance and found him wanting. What has he done since? Merely threw mud at the Hazen administration. He has not made even a single suggestion in the House that would lead people to believe him capable of government. He and his party are devoid of a policy except slander, misrepresentation and untruth. These are not the kind of men the people want to govern them. New Brunswick must progress, and to do this must be governed by active and energetic men who have the interests of the whole country at heart, and are willing at times to sacrifice self for country. Mr. Robinson is not of these; neither is Mr. Copp, nor Mr. Sweeney, nor Mr. Leger. They have all evinced a desire to get as close to the public crib as possible.

POTATO GROWERS AND RECIPROCITY.

The Times, which daily inflicts upon its readers a short—commendably short—instalment of alleged humor, in singing the praises of Reciprocity, sarcastically remarks, "Shall the rich potato warmed in New Brunswick soil, and nourished by the balmy airs and golden sunlight of New Brunswick be saved from the potato bug to make French-fried for a Yankee glutton? Perish the thought!" We must infer from the foregoing that the Times is laboring to convey the impression that Reciprocity in farm products would open up a wider and better market in the States for New Brunswick potatoes. An instance of what is actually happening in the potato market, and what will happen to a much greater extent if the duty is removed, occurred in Charlotte County only last week, and is referred to in the St. Croix Courier.

It is worth noting, "Some Charlotte County people," says the Courier, "have been shipping potatoes to the Montreal market. The tubers have been shipped in bags containing ninety pounds, or a bushel and a half, and last week the price received was \$1.10. But Aroostook County in the neighboring state of Maine, also grows 'some potatoes,' for which 'the market of ninety millions' has failed to form a complete outlet. With more potatoes on hand than they could dispose of in all the United States, the Aroostook County dealers had to seek a market elsewhere, and Montreal looked good to them.

"They sent potatoes there, with the result that the market was glutted and the price dropped at once to 90 cents per bag. Reciprocity is not yet in effect and the Aroostook dealers first paid the customs duty of 25 cents per bushel or 37½ cents per bag. This, with other charges deducted, brought the margin of the Maine dealers down to about 25 cents per bushel and the returns to the Maine farmer even below that figure. With the duty removed where would the Charlotte County farmer sell his surplus tubers and how much would he get for them at home or abroad?"

The potato is the largest root crop grown in the province. Protected as at present the farmer reaps the advantage of inter-provincial trade and higher prices. With the duty removed he will discover that the cry of "larger markets" works in favor of growers across the border and to his own very material disadvantage. Instead of providing "French-fried for the Yankee glutton," he will wake up to find that his foreign competitor, with Reciprocity to help him, can serve up an equally tempting dish to New Brunswick's own particular customers.

THE LARGER VIEWPOINT.

(Toronto News.)

In discussing Reciprocity The St. John Standard appeals to the better sense, the higher intelligence and the less selfish instincts of Canadians. One of its editorialists in particular should be read from one end of the country to the other. Under the Washington bargain some expect to gain and some to lose. From the purely personal standpoint the former will incline to approve and the latter to denounce the agreement. The tendency will be for those who stand to benefit to forget that others must surely suffer injury.

Selfishness has force and will count largely in the ultimate decision, but it does not represent the highest attitude, and in the end it should not prevail. Society and nationality would be impossible under such conditions. The general good is what must be considered. So that, keeping still to the purely trade consideration, the ultimate judgment should be based on what appears upon the whole to be either a net average gain or a net average loss for all the various interests concerned.

Current Comment

(Toronto World.)

President Taft is bound to jam the Reciprocity deal through—because he made it. Sir Wilfrid Laurier the same. Is it a crime that either Canadians or Americans should ask for time to consider it? These two autocrats say, Yes. Well, is that government by the people for the people? Hardly.

(Hamilton Spectator.)

The Manitoba Free Press, Laurier Government organ, has come out in opposition to the Government on the Reciprocity pact. Before this business is over Sir Wilfrid will know more about loyal Canadian and British sentiment than he ever imagined before.

(Montreal Star.)

The price of lobsters is going up, and there certainly are indications that there are fewer "lobsters" in Canada than President Taft calculated.

(Washington Post.)

For an imaginary line our northern frontier is putting up a pretty good imitation of a stone wall.

(London Free Press.)

"We want no other flag."

PROTECTIONIST FARMERS.

(From the Canadian Century.)

That E. C. Drury, of the Dominion Grange, and the leaders of the Grain Growers' Association are wrong in saying that the farmers of Canada are unitedly in favor of reciprocity with the United States, has been positively proven by a canvass recently made in North Monaghan, Peterborough county, Ontario. The canvass was begun by the present editor of The Canadian Century and continued by Bruce Johnston, a farmer living three miles from Peterborough, who is an enthusiastic protectionist. The Peterborough Review gave valuable support at the inception of the canvass. Every farmer living in the township, excepting nine or ten who were absent from home, was questioned as to his opinion, and 189 out of 218, that is over 86 per cent, signed the following declaration:

"The undersigned farmers of North Monaghan Township, in the County of Peterborough, believe that no reciprocity treaty should be agreed upon which will allow American farm products or American manufactured goods to come into Canada more freely than they do at present. We believe that the home market for farm products is better than any foreign market, for the following reasons:

"1. The farther the consumers are from the farmers the more it costs to carry farm products to them, and the more middlemen there are to share the profits.
"2. Many kinds of farm products command the best prices when they are fresh. If they are shipped to distant markets, they lose their freshness before they reach the consumers, and consequently the farmer gets a lower price for them than he would get if he could sell them while fresh in a market near at hand. Some kinds of farm products are so perishable that they cannot be profitably shipped to distant markets.

"3. A workman employed in a city of the United States, or any other foreign country, consumes only a few cents worth of Canadian farm products in a year. Workmen employed in British factories consume much more of Canadian farm products than those of any foreign country do, but even British workmen buy a very small proportion of what they eat from Canadian farmers. Workmen employed in Canadian towns and cities, will, under a proper system of tariff protection, buy nearly everything they eat from Canadian farmers. At present, owing to the low Canadian tariff on farm products, large quantities of American farm products come into Canada.

"The undersigned farmers believe that the Canadian tariff should be raised high enough to shut out such American farm products and preserve the home market for Canadian farmers.

"Great quantities of manufactured goods also come into Canada from the United States because the Canadian tariff is not high enough to keep them out. The working men employed in making those goods are fed by American farmers. The undersigned farmers of Peterborough County believe that the Canadian tariff should be so framed as to cause the manufacture of goods in Canadian towns and cities by workmen who will be fed by Canadian farmers.

"We believe that the principle expressed in the following motto is a good one: 'Keep your money in circulation at home by buying goods made in Canada. When you can't get what you want in Canada, buy it from British Empire.'

"If American manufacturers wish to sell their goods to the Canadian people they should build branch factories in Canada. The Canadian tariff should be high enough to make them do so.

"The undersigned farmers favour a policy of thorough protection for the products of Canadian farms, mines, and factories, with reciprocal preference arrangements between Canada and the other countries of the British Empire."

Every farmer was asked to read the declaration carefully, and was told that if he did not entirely agree with it he did not want his signature. It was found that a large proportion of the farmers of both political parties were hotly opposed to reciprocity with the United States. Even among the Conservative party, the approval of the declaration against reciprocity, but said they made it a rule never to sign anything.

One farmer said: "I agree with every word on that paper, but I won't sign it because I believe you are a Conservative and working for the Conservative party."

He was assured that the canvass was not being made in the interest of any political party. Both political parties were well represented on the list of signatures.

On January 19 Mr. Bruce Johnston met at Ottawa the deputation of protectionist farmers led by Mr. David Jackson, and read the declaration to Sir Wilfrid Laurier.

There was not time to canvass the farmers in a large area, but we think that if a similar canvass were made throughout Eastern Canada it would be found that a majority of the farmers are protectionists and opposed to reciprocity with the United States.

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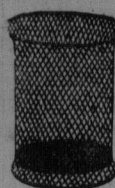
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