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THE TIMES.

THE BANQUET.

The banquet to Sir John A. Macdonald at Ottawa was, of course, a great success; got up as it was, regardless of expense, and supported as it was by all the faithful henchmen of the Right Honourable Premier—to say nothing of the contractors who are temporarily resident at Ottawa, and to whom this bit of excitement was the next best thing, in the way of pleasure, to getting tenders accepted. But it seems to me that the affair was badly managed as to the matter of speeches in reply to toasts. Sir John should have been allowed the opportunity of making a great speech—that is, he should have had the whole field of politics, past and present, to roam through at will—whereas, owing to the fact that Sir Leonard Tilley was to follow him on the National Policy, and Sir Charles Tupper was to speak of matters that come within his official domain, and Sir A. T. Galt was to play the part of general laudator, and a host of others, who need not be mentioned, were to speak of anything or nothing, just as it might happen, the chief was confined by the necessities of the case to a review of his proud past and prouder present, which was a general, though well warmed rehash of what has been served up many times and in many forms during the last twelve months. If the gentlemen who prepared the programme had given their distinguished guest more scope, we should undoubtedly have had a better speech. As it was, he was so confined that only the exercise of a marvellous ingenuity could have made so telling and able a speech out of such limited materials. It was really too bad to shut Sir John out from speaking of anything that is really practical in the N. P., by giving that tit bit to Sir Leonard Tilley; and again, it was too bad to compel him to be merely vague and discursive about the North-West, its agriculture and railways, because Sir Charles Tupper was told off to handle that interesting topic. But, I suppose, those who got up the banquet wished to give every big gun a chance of making a great noise, and what could they do, poor souls?

SIR A. T. GALT.

Quite incidentally, as it appears, Sir A. T. Galt made reference to his late mission to France and Spain, which at the time was so mysterious. He said: "The Government will not be satisfied with merely protecting native industries, but will use their influence in order to obtain foreign markets for the manufacturers of the Dominion. Circumstances up to this time had never permitted any colony to negotiate with foreign countries. It was true, however, that last winter, by special permission of the Imperial Government, he was delegated as agent for the Dominion to conduct certain commercial negotiations with both France and Spain." It would have been a little more satisfactory if Sir Alexander had told his audience something about the nature of those "commercial negotiations," and what success had attended his labours. It was hardly to be expected that he should say how distinctly and decisively he was snubbed in "both France and Spain" when he attempted to open "negotiations"

about light wines for Canada, but he might have had the candour to tell his hearers and the general public that the results of his mission were absolutely *nil*.

Again, quite incidentally, Sir Alexander told us a little about the why and wherefore of his appointment to London. He said: Changes might be made such as would have a disastrous effect upon the commercial interests of the Dominion, as was instanced in the case of a treaty made by England with France, when the duty on Canadian ships was suddenly increased from two to forty francs per ton. If Canada had had an agent in England, it was unlikely that this thing would have happened. This instance showed it was requisite that the eye of the Dominion should be kept upon the interests of Canada in the great markets of the world." So we have at last the meaning of Sir Alexander's agency in England. He is to be our "eye" on the great markets of the world, and to work for our interests generally. But does Sir A. T. Galt really think that if a change in the tariff between England and France should be contemplated, in which Canada might be remotely concerned, the Prime Minister or Chancellor of the Exchequer, or anybody else, would consult him, because he happens to be on the spot as representative of Canada? Such negotiations are not opened and closed in a day; and if the home authorities felt disposed to consult a colony, they could always find time and means for doing it. And as to knowing the condition of the great "markets of the world," the newspapers give us that. On the whole we are likely to have an expensive and unprofitable "eye" in London.

Sir Alexander waxed eloquent in speaking of the "great trust the Mother Country has imposed upon us—that of developing the boundless North-West." Will some one explain when, and how, and in what terms this solemn trust was imposed? We got money upon an Imperial guarantee, but it was hardly enough to assume the proportions of a "trust"—it was about all spent in preliminary surveys; and when we asked for another guarantee, that we might really develop the boundless North-West, it was refused.

THE COTEAU BRIDGE.

At the time the Bill was before Parliament last session I drew attention to the impolicy of granting powers for a Railway Company to construct a bridge across the river St. Lawrence at Coteau, which will enable the business of the Ottawa district now, hereafter of Central Canada, later of the Upper Canadian country, and finally perhaps of the Northwest Territory, to pass off into the States, leaving the city of Montreal depleted of its natural traffic, which it has the best facilities to handle. Montreal has directly subscribed a considerable sum for the Railways in the Province of Quebec—it is a large contributor to the taxes of the Province which maintains and works them—and should the Dominion Government sanction the construction of this bridge, it will be a fatal blow to these Provincial Railways, the Grand Trunk and the Intercolonial Railway, promote the interests of American railways, American commerce, and be a great feeder to the ports of New York and Boston, as opposed to Montreal. It could only have been possible for such a measure to have passed the Dominion Parliament by the inertness of the people of Montreal, and the want of energy on the part of representatives of the city and district in Parliament. If the interests of Montreal are not now to be sacrificed to those who have sought this legislation for other than the Canadian people's benefit, it is necessary that there should be an immediate outspoken demand on the Government to refuse their sanction to further proceedings, which will imperil the prosperity of Lower Canadian Rail-