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Parliament Prorogued.

The first session of the eleventh Parliament of Canada closed on Wednesday last 19th inst. The session opened on January 20th, so that it occupied precisely four months. Referring to the developments of the session, the Ottawa correspondent of the St. John Standard furnishes the following commentary: First of all Sir Wilfrid Laurier brought down the correspondence with regard to the coming conference on Imperial defence. A perusal of it will show that the Government made an extremely grudging and ungracious reply to the Imperial invitation, and that the colonial office with skillful suavity converted a semi-refusal into an acceptance.

Further developments were that the Franco-Canadian amended treaty is further held up, the French Chamber of Deputies having withheld ratification and that the wheels of the All-Red Route chariot are driving heavily. Early in the hours at the close of last night's protracted sitting, the Government was compelled virtually to apologize for having appointed Mr. J. S. Ewart as legal representative on the Hague Fisheries Arbitration. The correspondence over the subsidiary defence conference is as follows:—

"On March 30th, Earl Grey forwarded to Lord Crewe particulars of the debate on Imperial defence of March 29. On April 28, Lord Crewe acknowledged the despatch and stated that the Imperial Government noted with much satisfaction the action of the Canadian House.

On April 30, Mr. Asquith as president of the Imperial conference sent a message to Sir Wilfrid Laurier. After once more expressing satisfaction he continued: "I understand the Dominion Government proposes that its defence minister should come here at an early date to confer with the Imperial and naval authorities upon technical matters arising upon that resolution. H. M. H. Government have also before them recent patriotic proposals made by Australia and New Zealand demanding very cordial and careful consideration, both as to the principle and detail. I desire, therefore, to commend to you the following important suggestion, namely, that a conference of representatives of the self governing dominions convened under the terms of resolution one, of the conference of 1907, which provides for such subsidiary conferences, should be held in London early in July. The object of the conference would be to discuss the general questions of naval and military defence of the Empire with special reference to the Canadian resolution and to the proposals from Australia and New Zealand to which I have referred. The conference would, of course, be merely consultative in character, private, and its deliberations would be assisted by the presence of the members of the committee of Imperial defence, or of other advisers of His Majesty's Government. I am addressing a similar message to the other members of the Imperial conference. I am intimating to the other Prime Ministers that I assume that as the consultation will be generally upon technical or quasi technical, military matters the

other Dominions would elect to be represented as in the case of Canada by their ministers of defence or failing them, by some other members of the Government assisted by expert advice.

In transmitting this message Lord Crewe added: "I am strongly of opinion that an early confidential exchange of views between H. M. H. Government and the Governments of H. M. self-governing dominions beyond the seas would be of great mutual advantage, and I therefore trust that your Prime Minister and his colleagues will see their way to adopt the proposal."

On May 3 Lord Grey replied:—"My Ministers have not sufficient information to warrant them in advising as to the necessity of such a conference of 1911. The views of the Canadian House of Commons on the question of naval defence have already been expressed. In pursuance of the resolution of that body, two of the Ministers as already announced will shortly go to London to discuss with the Admiralty the best method of carrying out that resolution. Their visit will probably take place in June, but there will be no object to postponing it until July if the Imperial authorities prefer such delay."

On May 12 Lord Crewe telegraphed to Lord Grey: "Your telegram of 5th of May, I desire in the name of the Prime Minister and of H. M. Government to express their gratification at the readiness of the Dominion Government to take part in the conference. I hope as a result of communications now proceeding it will be shortly to fix a definite date for its meeting convenient to all Governments."

Mr Foster asked if Sir Wilfrid Laurier had anything to say beyond laying the correspondence on the table. Sir Wilfrid said the invitation had been received and would be accepted. Two Ministers would be ready to go over when it suited the convenience of the Imperial authorities. Later during the passage of the supply bill Mr Foster pressed for a statement of the Government's policy in connection with the Imperial defence resolution. Has any thing been laid down he asked, as a principle on which the July conference will proceed? There was nothing in the estimates to indicate immediate action. There was a large number of people in the country, of whom he was one, who did not think the expression of sympathy and the promise of aid in emergency sufficient.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier said that he was aware that the resolution passed earlier in the session had not given satisfaction, he would not say a large, but to a certain section of Canadian public opinion. The more advanced section would require a money contribution to the United Kingdom to strengthen the navy. With what he did not agree. He realized that Canada should act fairly and squarely and as far as possible provide for her own defence. He was not prepared to say to what extent they should go. After the passing of the resolution the Government thought that it should confer with the naval authorities of Great Britain. It did not regard it as wise to proceed to isolated action. Mr Foster—The resolution forbade that.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier went on to say that it would be unwise to have our navy a part of the Imperial navy. Their action, however, had been in accordance with the views of the Admiralty. At this stage the Premier went on to say that a despatch was received from Great Britain suggesting a subsidiary conference. On receipt of this

the Government said that it was not prepared to say whether it was advisable or not to accept the proposal; but it had agreed to postpone the visit of the Canadian Ministers to London until July. That was where the matter rested. Mr. Foster observed that the last despatch of the Imperial Government and the acquiescence of the Canadian Government, constituted an acceptance. Sir Wilfrid Laurier—Yes. Mr Foster asked if in view of the wider range which the affair was assuming any other Minister would be sent. Sir Wilfrid Laurier—That has not been considered yet. Mr Monk asked if the ministers would make a blinding arrangement. Sir Wilfrid Laurier replied that the resolution of the conference of 1907 forbade that.

In reply to Mr Foster, a statement as to the status of the French treaty was made by Mr Fielding. The Finance Minister said that he had asked the French Minister of Commerce for an assurance that the treaty would be ratified by the French Chamber of Deputies at an early date. No such assurance had been received. The French Consul General at Montreal had expressed a hope that the treaty would soon be ratified. But in the absence of a reply from the Minister of Commerce the Government did not think it wise to ask Parliament to ratify the amended treaty. It was hoped, however, that the French Chamber of Deputies would ratify the amended treaty at an early date and that when Parliament reassembled in November the Government would be able to ask Parliament to ratify the treaty.

Mr Foster asked further concerning the All-Red route and the Premier replied that Dr. Coulter, who had been sent to the Antipodes to consult with the Colonial Governments was now on his way home. No report had, however, yet been made, but a statement would be presented at the next session of Parliament. At an early hour this morning the House passed a vote of \$50,000 for the expense of the arbitration before the Hague Tribunal with regard to the Newfoundland fisheries. Mr Foster brought up the fact that the Canadian Government had retained the services of Mr. J. S. Ewart, K. C. Mr. Foster observed that Mr. Ewart in that case would be supposed to represent Canadian opinion, and went on to quote at length from a letter recently contributed by Mr. Ewart to a newspaper attacking British diplomacy in regard to Canada with intense bitterness.

Mr. Foster continued—"Mr. Ewart has a perfect right to have his own opinions as he pleases, but that does not particularly point him out as a person who had better be associated as a representative of Canada and of the Dominion Government in these matters, when he comes in contact with British people; he even may have to meet Lord Alverstone, and his presence might lead to some almost international break, such as the aversion that Mr. Ewart seems to have to Lord Alverstone. For my own part as a taxpayer I do not feel that any part of my taxes ought to be paid out to such a representative of the Dominion Government. I am taking no exception to what he says at the present time. I believe it to be historically untrue, to be most unfair, and to be altogether un-British."

Mr. Aylesworth said in reply: "I think I can assure the hon. gentleman that Mr. Ewart was at all events not selected by reason of his writing or saying the things to which the hon. gentleman referred. Mr. Ewart was engaged for this work by reason of his legal attainments, of the position he occupies in the legal profession and of his well known industry and ability in precisely that kind of research which he was wanted to do. There certainly was not in mind in that connection any thought of the opinions which he may or may not hold on such matters as have been adverted to if it had been in my mind at all it is possible they would have influenced me. Certainly I can say that I do not in the least degree share the opinions which have been referred to and which

as I understand from newspaper reports, expressed on more than one occasion with reference to the relations between Canada and Great Britain. So far from sharing these opinions myself, I think I am credited among my friends with being almost, if not quite, as violent a jingo as the hon. member for Victoria and Haliburton (Mr. Hughes). I personally entertain exactly opposite opinions to those expressed by Mr. Ewart." Sir Robert Findlay will be the leading counsel for Canada and Newfoundland.

Lord Strathcona's gift of \$300,000 for military instruction and drill in Canadian schools has been paid over to the trustees. They are to invest the principal and use the interest for the purposes designated. The investment was an easy proposition. Mr. Fielding, as Minister of Finance, borrowed the money for the Government at four per cent.

Parliament being now prorogued, Mr. Fielding will lose no time in scurrying for London to get another \$50,000,000 more. This may keep the Government going until the Grand Trunk Pacific comes for another loan.

What is to be done with a Senate, says the St. John Standard, which solemnly takes up and considers plans of Senate reform, and ends them all unanimously, adjourning the debate to Thursday, when Parliament is to prorogue on Wednesday?

The Ottawa Evening Journal, independent, devotes part of its editorial survey of the session to "What the Government has failed to do. It has specifically declined to conduct, in the spending department generally, the same form of inquiry which revealed corruption in the Marine Department. It has repudiated its responsibility to demand restitution of the \$35,000 of the people's money sworn to have been obtained improperly by Mr. George McAvity, political bed-fellow of Hon. William Pugsley, Minister of Public Works. It has denied the right of Parliament to discuss the charges made against Mr. Pugsley by a Royal Commission in New Brunswick. It has allowed the session to close with this matter unsettled. A Minister of the Crown, one of the ablest, permits himself to stand under the charge of three Commissioners that under his management of the Central Railway \$134,000 of the money of the people of New Brunswick invested in that project went away and can't be found. The Minister's answer to the charges is a personal denial only, but the Government takes no action."

On the closing day of the session of the Dominion Parliament, Mr. Borden, Leader of the Opposition, gave out the following interview:

"It was better than I anticipated," he said, "but we have a brave, splendid and fearless Opposition." "The government has been upon the defensive throughout the session. Their policy of refusing investigation and defying public opinion has been not only maintained but carried to a more extreme limit than ever before. The house-cleaning demanded by the important Liberal journals immediately after the general election has not even been commenced."

"In Great Britain" said Mr. Borden, "upon the publication of a report such as that of the New Brunswick Central Railway Commission public opinion would have compelled the immediate retirement of the Minister concerned. Here the government and its organs consider that virulent but ineffectual abuse of the commissioners is a sufficient answer to the charges. They do not even promise an investigation."

While clinging to degenerate and unworthy methods of administration the government has made no advance in policy. Rather it has sought to repair its tattered policies of the past. For example, by taking power to borrow money for the purpose of loaning it to the Grand Trunk Pacific, and in the speech from the throne it gravely congratulates the country upon being graciously permitted to enjoy the privilege of making that loan.

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Caught In Heavy Ice.

The Allan Line steamer Mongolian, bound from Glasgow and Liverpool for St. John's, Nfld., Halifax, N. S., and Philadelphia, with hundreds of passengers on board was caught in a dangerous ice jam one mile off the harbor of St. John's, Nfld., on the 19th, and was in a hazardous position. It was feared that if the wind increased before daylight, the Mongolian will be driven ashore and become a total wreck. Should such an accident occur, it is thought that the passengers could escape by walking over the densely packed ice floes.

Just returned from the ice-packed waters of Belleisle Strait, where she had been abandoned by her crew and later recovered, the coasting steamer Prospero also lay wedged in the ice between the Mongolian and the shore. The Prospero had been despatched by the agents of the Allan line to St. John's to attempt to reach the Mongolian and take on board the passengers and mails. The little steamer had but just passed the harbor mouth when the ice barrier became impenetrable and further passage was arrested. There she kept company during the night with the greater steamer Mongolian which was equally helpless in the unrelenting grip of the surrounding sea.

The Mongolian left Glasgow on May 5 and Liverpool a few days later with nearly 500 passengers for St. John's, Halifax and Philadelphia. She met the first of the great fields of ice on the 18th but up to Wednesday morning her progress was fairly steady. With the approach to shore the Mongolian met more strenuous resistance when the narrow harbor of St. John's was sighted, the great steamer forced its way through the ice floes until a position about a mile off the harbor opening had been gained. There she stopped, the power of the engines and the stout hull unable longer to successfully cope with the great irregular stretches of ice.

The steamer Mongolian was built at Glasgow by D. and W. Anderson and Company. Since that time the steamer has been in the service of the Allan Line S. S. Company, Limited, of Glasgow, plying between various ports of Europe and North America. She flies the white flag. The steamer has a gross tonnage of 4,838 and a net capacity of 3,088 tons. She is 298.2 feet long; she has a breadth of 45 feet and a depth of 34.4 feet. She is a screw steamer of eight compartments and has two decks. Water is carried on ballast when necessary. Her engines, which are triple expansion generate a nominal horsepower of 600.

Never in the history of St. John's, so far as has been recorded has the harbor been blocked by ice as late as the present. The steamer Rosalind was unable to leave today on her regular trip to New York. Although assured that they were in no immediate danger, the passengers on board the Mongolian crowded the decks and gazed wistfully at the harbor lights. There the two great frowning sides of the ice wall appeared as sentinels to the harbor where the passengers were held. Soon some of the anxious eyes discerned a little steamer which was headed for them. The officers of the Mongolian explained that it was the coasting steamer Prospero which had been sent out by the agents of the line to take off passengers and mails and the hopes of the passengers grew only to be dashed again as the Prospero came to a stop just at the mouth of the harbor where the crush of the ice had packed the varied-shaped cakes in a conglomerate impossible of penetration. There the little steamer lay during the night with her lights set, an ever present reminder of the situation in which both steamers were held in common.

The hardy fisher-folk undaunted by the fate of the two steamers traversed the ice floes and reached the side of the Mongolian where they held converse with officers and passengers, the latter carrying them their adaptability to the treacherous and shacking ice. With the thought before them that it might be only a few hours before they would be forced to find their way to shore over the same insecure path, the passengers followed closely the little movements of the fishermen as they passed from cake to cake and successfully reached the harbor mouth. All imagined that should they have recourse to that means of escape it would be an experience such as would probably never be repeated during their lifetime.

Watchers on shore could notice no change in the steamer's condition at midnight. The steamer cannot possibly escape while conditions remain as at present. If the ice slackens she may be able to work her way past here but if the wind freshens it would be but a short time before the steamer would be grinding against the bleak rocky coast, where destruction is almost certain to overtake her. That fate, however, does not seem imminent. On indications point to a continuance of existing conditions of wind and sea.

Advise of the 20th from St. John's say: The plight of the Allan Line steamer Mongolian, which has been wedged in the ice pack off the mouth of this harbor since yesterday, was believed to-night to be more precarious than ever, owing to a heavy swell. It was believed, however, that the efforts of the stout sailing steamer Diana to open up a line between the Mongolian and the narrow harbor opening would be successful by to-morrow morning. That this will be possible was apparently indicated in the release of the coasting steamer Prospero which today managed, amidst, to extricate herself. In case the Mongolian's sides should give any indication of yielding before the tremendous crush of the ice pack, the experience of the five passengers who to-day successfully crossed the uneven ice field between the steamer and the harbor mouth, assured the passengers that a ready and fairly safe escape lay open to them. To-night they were able to see the lights of the steamer Diana, which had reached to within a mile of the Mongolian, bringing nearer with each revolution of her engine the clear water that would release the Mongolian.

Under the impulse of the steady southward trend of the Labrador current, the Mongolian to-night had drifted a considerable distance farther from the entrance to

the harbor. The Diana suspended the relief operations at sundown. On all sides of the steamer stretched an almost compact, although irregular covering of ice, which to the east in the direction of the sea, was almost twenty-five miles off shore. To persons who had mounted either of the two promontories which mark the harbor opening this field appeared to stretch interminably before them. Even the aid of glasses failed to locate the fringe of clear water.

To-day five passengers from the Mongolian, among them two women walked across the ice. They were Dr. McPherson and wife, Dr. Hunt and Miss McPherson and a Mr. Stephenson. So far as Dr. McPherson had observed, the steamer sustained no serious damages up to to-day.

British Budget Comments.

The following opinions on the British Budget have been expressed by some of the best-known financiers in the City of London: Lord Swaythling (Liberal), head of the firm of Samuel Montagu & Co., bankers.

"Mr. Lloyd-George has attempted to do much in one year. If he had moderated this Budget to the extent of two or three millions, he might have taken off some of the rough edges, which are at present somewhat plentiful. No other nation would attempt to meet its expenditure in the manner which the Budget proposes."

"The Lords will pass this Budget. They have no alternative. If they were to attempt to throw it out it could only be on the ground of their personal interests being affected, and the House of Lords will never throw out a Budget on a personal matter."

The Hon. Herbert Gibbs, of the firm of Mr. Antony Gibbs & Son. "This is the last flicker of free trade finance. It is remarkably vague and complex, but in general, it seems to me that the revenue expected from certain sources, notably contract stamps, is much underestimated."

"I do not know how many people are liable for the super-tax, but I do know that many of the chief financial people of the city of London are Germans and Jews. Such charges as are proposed may have the effect of driving them elsewhere. This Liberal legislation is doing its best to discourage everybody, whereas the first thing that a government should do is to encourage all to do their best."

Sir John R. Ellerman, Chairman of the Ellerman Lines, said the Government proposals will tend to depreciate the value of English securities and force further capital out of this country to other countries for investment.

New Income Tax Passed.

The British House of Commons by a vote of 299 to 96 has passed the budget's imposition of a 28 cent tax on unearned incomes and on incomes exceeding \$15,000; also the super-tax of 12 cents upon incomes exceeding \$25,000 levied on the amount by which they exceed \$15,000.

In the course of the debate, Premier Asquith referred to the protest made by bankers against the budget. He pointed out that the bankers admitted the necessity of the increased taxation to meet the increased expenditures. He challenged them to find a way that would be more equitable or less injurious to the country's trade.

The Premier estimated the average income tax in Great Britain, including the super-tax, at 22 cents, which, he said, he regarded as extremely moderate and less than that imposed in Germany and France. He foreshadowed a further increase in the income tax, which he now regarded as a permanent part of Great Britain's fiscal machinery. He declared that with proper legislation and wise administration it would come to be considered the fairest of all taxes and capable of very wide expansion in time of public emergency.

The Prime Minister said the people must be prepared to give a large definition to the term "emergency" as not only applying to an outbreak of war, but also to preparation for war, while it would not be a wholly illegitimate expansion of the term to include therein pressing needs of social reform.

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