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C. BLACKETT ROBINSON, Manager and Editor

Ottawa, Wednesday, April 22, 1903.

A NEW ERA FOR IRELAND.

Since our last issue a great convention of representatives of Ireland has endorsed the Irish Land Bill now before the Imperial Parliament. Such a love-feast between all classes of Ireland, landlord and tenant, Protestant and Catholic, has not been paralleled in the Green Isle for centuries. With the passage of this measure will come much good to Ireland, if through nothing else than the substitution of new lines of thought and cleavage for those with which we have been long unhappily familiar. There are those who imagine the passage of the Land Bill will allay all desire for a Local Legislature for Ireland. That is not our view. Let us hope the era of present peace is but the presage of greater happiness for Erin.

CANADA SPEAKING AS A NATION.

Hon. Mr. Fielding gave an interesting budget speech last week at Ottawa. He was able to show a prosperous condition of affairs, as indicated by overflowing public revenues and a surplus beyond precedent. The most interesting feature of the speech was the announcement of a surtax (or additional tax) of one-third over and above the general tariff which is to be imposed on dutiable goods from countries which exclude Canada from the favor of their minimum tariffs. This is aimed, for the present, especially, at Germany.

It is unnecessary for us to discuss the wisdom of this policy. What we have to do with at present is Canada's assertion of her position of practically a nation among nations. Canada no longer regards herself as a colony or a mere collection of colonies, but as a Nation speaking to Nations. A parliament for the whole Dominion assembling once a year, inevitably helps forward this tendency to unity of purpose and assertion of Canada's right to construct her tariffs and transact her general business according to her own good pleasure. Apart from the Dominion Parliament, perhaps we may not be regarded as immodest in thinking one of the most important influences in unifying and broadening this new Nation of the North is the annual Presbyterian legislature representatively constituted from every part of British North America.

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THE LATE SIR OLIVER MOWAT.

Amiel, in his journal somewhere, says: "praise is a moral stimulus, and admiration a strengthening elixer." It is doubtful if any public man in Canada has ever enjoyed a larger share of sincere praise and admiration than the late Sir Oliver Mowat. No doubt it proved to him a moral stimulus and a strengthening elixer. It is something to be solemnly thankful for that praise and admiration were in his case completely justifiable.

When more than eighty years ago, the little Mowat was christened Oliver, the fondest friend could hardly have predicted a future so illustrious. Oliver Mowat seems to have been providentially favored throughout his career. His life was one long success, commanding the respect even of those who in some things were unable to see eye to eye with him. He was an alderman of early Toronto; a faithful and astute practising barrister; a father and framer of Confederation; a member of the old parliament of Upper and Lower Canada; as Vice-Chancellor, a high-minded judge; for twenty-five years Premier of the Chief Province of Canada; Dominion Senator, and Minister of Justice in the Federal Government; dying in harness as Lieutenant Governor of his native Province. An unusual and extraordinary career, every part of which has been marked by unbending integrity and unmistakable ability.

Than Sir Oliver Mowat, no public man in the history of Canada has better exemplified the fruitage of Christian principles. The writer recalls his constant attendance during many years at St. James Square Church, Toronto, and often noted the humble and reverent men with which he listened to the enunciation of those high doctrines which were the animating and steady forces of Sir Oliver's life—a noble life exceptional in usefulness, sweetness and light.

THE CONSTANT NEED.

What we need all the time is living faith in our ever-present Lord. Machinery of the Church we have in plenty, and there is no need to dispense it or speak of it in cynical terms. Institutions are the visible embodiment of the inward life and there are some things that Committees can do. Creeds we have, or if we have them not, we can make them, for the mind of man is active and the truth of God is always coming near. Parliaments also have their place and function, though some keen critics tell us, that they are dead or dying. As a matter of fact, all things will die if faith languishes. Faith in the large sense, we speak of now. Faith, that God rules the world and that he will cause righteousness to prevail and bring to confusion those, who reject it. Faith, that it is noblest and best to cling to righteousness even when it seems not to prevail. Faith, that a divine purpose runs through the life of the individual man, the family and the nation. The man who professes to have accepted Jesus Christ, as Saviour and teacher, ought to have this life in rich measure. If his profession is a real confession of experience he will have it, and will seek to keep it, fresh and strong.

Can we wonder that this faith is dull, when so many people in our time, read only the lightest gossip and seek their entertainment

in foolish shows; when so many young people think that life is for the purpose of having "a good time," and so many older people make the getting of money the whole end and aim of life; when there is so much in political and social life that is crooked and impure.

Faith is nourished by the truth, it cannot live on lies and shams. It is strong where men seek first the Kingdom of God and are prepared to suffer in the search. We are speaking now in glowing terms of the "growing time" in our country; we do well to ask, is our faith in numbers, in money, or money making commodities? Have we faith also in science, literature and art, not simply as means of profit and enjoyment, but as manifestation of truth and beauty. Have we faith in religion not simply as a power to build churches and provide Sunday entertainment, but as an influence to cleanse the life of men and societies? In any age, we may say "When the Son of Man cometh shall he find faith on the earth?" and even in our hopeful moods, we need to cry, "Lord increase our faith!"

RELIGIOUS CONDITIONS IN SWITZERLAND.

The religious conditions which prevail in Switzerland, says the Interior, are but little understood in our country. Just at this time church problems are exciting considerable commotion in Switzerland; and it seems worth while to get the situation clearly fixed in mind. The country is divided into twenty-four civil cantons, of which twelve are mainly Protestant while twelve are chiefly Catholic. But judged by the population and the location of the chief cities, Protestantism is the far greater force. The last census of Switzerland gave us 1,918,191 Protestants, and 1,383,135 Catholics; while the principal cities, such as Geneva and Berne, are predominantly Protestant. The capital and enterprise of the country as represented in the towns are Protestant, while the rural and agricultural districts are Catholic. The Protestant cantons are as a rule the French-speaking ones, while most of the German and Italian peoples are Catholic. Each canton has the right to choose, and, if it will, establish its own form of religion; and it is also permitted to exercise certain repressive measures to restrain citizens from such public acts in the name of religion as tend to endanger the public peace. This is what has rendered the propagandism of the Salvation Army peculiarly difficult. The chosen church of each canton is supported either from the ecclesiastical revenues of the state or by special tax; but no one is compelled to pay any tax for the support of a church if not a member of it. A Protestant living in a Catholic canton is not required to pay for the support of the church established in that canton. The Catholic in a Protestant canton enjoys the same immunity. Special federal laws exclude the Jesuits from the republic and blockade the absolute exercise of papal authority in any of the cantons; indeed the property of the Catholic churches is held, not as elsewhere by the bishops of the church, but by local trustees resident in the parishes. The Protestant churches of Switzerland are divided into three classes: