

was due to the iron in the hills. If it had not been telegraphed from South Africa, it would hardly be credible that any one should commit himself to such a statement. As a matter of fact, iron would have no more effect than any other metal on the "waves." During the naval manoeuvres signals by means of wireless telegraphy went through a fleet of thirty ironclads, and the apparatus was not affected thereby. However, on getting the kites up, communication was easily established between De Ar and the Orange River over a distance of seventy miles. Poles had now been obtained, and although not quite high enough for conveying messages long distances, yet they were sufficiently high to be useful. Stations were now established at Modder River, Belmont, Orange River and De Ar, and worked well, and would be invaluable in case the field lines should be cut by the enemy. It was also satisfactory to know that the military authorities had arranged to supply small balloons for portable installations on service expeditions.

One of his assistants offered to go through the Boer lines and establish communication with Kimberley, but the military authorities did not grant permission, as it involved too great a risk. What the effect would have been of establishing installations in Ladysmith, Kimberley and Mafeking before the siege he left military strategists to state. It was much to be regretted that the system could not be got into these towns prior to hostilities.

A GLANCE BACKWARD.

No amount of ingenious figuring by opponents of the government can modify in the slightest degree the splendid record of progress made by Canada since the Liberals came into office. We are not so blind nor bigoted as to assert that this result is due wholly, or even chiefly, to the result of the new administration inaugurated. Property seems to have prevailed over the world generally during the past three years. But we do say with out hesitation that the incoming of the Liberals, and the readjustment of the tariff, had very much to do with that spirit of confidence which is essential to aggressive enterprise. The Tories were never done tinkering with the duties, and this bred a general sense of uncertainty and distrust. It could not be otherwise. When they had been set aside public confidence was restored, and with that restoration began a period of unprecedented commercial and industrial activity.

In the light of the prosperity which has prevailed it is both amusing and instructive to look back at the prophecies with which the Tories foreboded the advent of Liberal rule. Conspicuous among these is the jeremiad of Sir Charles Tupper, who, after Mr. Fielding had introduced the new tariff, said on the floor of parliament:

"The result is that this tariff goes into operation, and the honorable gentleman knows that the industries of this country are already paralyzed in consequence, while the honorable members go, vindictively, go, over the destruction of Canadian industries. I was reading the wall, the sorrowful wall, of those industries in the Montreal Gazette, where one manufacturer after another declared that those industries were ruined, that their mills must close, and that they were going to be indicted upon the deplorable state of things that existed when the honorable gentleman who last addressed the House was in charge of the fiscal policy of this country. I say that a deeper wrong was never inflicted upon Canada. I feel that, so far from rejoicing at it from a party standpoint I deplore from the bottom of my heart the ruin that is going to be inflicted upon the great interests of Canada and upon its great industries."

When Sir Charles was out West he found it necessary to explain this thoroughly Tupperian speech, inasmuch as he was taking the ground that the National Policy was still in operation. He said what he had reference to was the fact that a tobacco factory in Montreal had shut down!

Sir Charles was not, however, alone in picturing the terrible disasters which lay in store for Canada. His chief organ, the Montreal Star, took up the prophetic role and delivered itself in startling paragraphs as follows:

"The money in circulation all over Canada will shrink until scarcity of money will be a national cry."

"Employers of labor will be driven to increase the length of the working hours to compensate for loss of trade."

"Americans, Germans and Swiss will immediately invade the Dominion as a slaughter market when the factories and shops have been destroyed and Canadian mechanics driven from the country."

"It will take twenty years, even with the abolition of the confederated revenue tariff, to climb again to the post where Canada stands today, and we believe tens of thousands of families will be pauperized beyond the possibility of recovery."

Scores of similar forecasts could be quoted if there were any object to be served by doing so. These will suffice to show with what dreadful forebodings the Tories saw the control of public affairs pass into other hands. How absurd such hysterical language now seems.

It would not much surprise us, however, to see another such attempt made by the Conservatives to stampede the people. In his speech at Quebec Sir Charles Tupper sounded again the old protection war cry, and Mr. Foster has been throwing out dark hints lately respecting the menace which the preferential tariff presents to the industries of the country. The Tory press is also professing to see a great danger of commercial union with the United States being suddenly arranged by the government, than which nothing is more improbable. It would suit the Tories very well to go to the country on the old cries of 1888 and 1891; but they ought to know by this time that the people of Canada are too wide awake to be caught by chaff.

THE LIBERAL POSITION.

It is persistently asserted by the opposition press that Liberals are opposed to Great Britain giving Canada a preference in her market. The charge is utterly unfounded. Liberals are not opposed to it. They are heartily and unanimously in favor of it. But they do not make it a condition of giving England a preference in our market, and for two or three perfectly valid reasons. In the first place, as was pointed out in these columns recently, England has doubled her imports from Canada within ten years, whereas Canada is now buying little more than half as much from England as she did in 1873.

In the next place, Liberals know something of the desperate competition which England has to fight against from other countries in maintaining her industrial position, and are desirous of affording her help in a practical way. In the third place, the preference is directly in the line of reduced taxation. The government is killing two birds with one stone—assisting the Empire and lightening the burdens on our own people.

The Conservative position is well understood. It is directly against doing anything for the mother country unless the mother country gives us a countervailing advantage in her market. The opposition platform is based on the declaration of Dr. Montague that: "Sentiment is all right in its place; but business is business." In defending their attitude the Tories talk wildly about the probability of England accepting a mutual preference, and assert that the principal obstacle is the opposition of Sir Wilfrid Laurier and the Canadian government. Here again they exhibit a lamentable ignorance of the judgment of British statesmen on this question, and at the same time do a great injustice to Sir Wilfrid Laurier. If anything were needed to clear up the latter point it is found in the recent declaration of Mr. Chamberlain. Alluding to the suggestion that an offer of preferential trade had been made to Canada he said:

"I have never done anything of the sort. It is one of those mistakes of which I am so largely the victim, and which, perhaps, it would hardly be worth while to correct, until the occasion becomes urgent."

Nothing could be clearer than this, and it should forever set the matter at rest.

It is said, however, by the Tories that an offer of preferential trade was made to Sir Wilfrid Laurier by the Duke of Devonshire, and that Sir Wilfrid said it could not be accepted. That foolish fable has long ago been exploded, but it may not be amiss to quote the denial of the Duke of Devonshire on this question:

"While I congratulated Sir Wilfrid Laurier and the Dominion of Canada on the offer which had been made to admit British goods at reduced rates, as compared with those on the goods of other nations, as an important step in the direction of Imperial unity, I had no authority to offer until the offer to Canada a preference in British markets."

This statement is so clear and explicit that it requires no comment whatever. Joined to that made recently by Mr. Chamberlain it completely disposes of the assertion which Sir Charles Tupper has so often made, that Sir Wilfrid Laurier threw away Canada's chance of getting an English preference while he was in England.

There remains, therefore, the single question as to whether England would be disposed to give us a preference in return for the one we have given her. On this point Mr. Chamberlain's latest speech on the subject would seem to be conclusive. He said:

"If there were to be any kind of fiscal arrangement with the colonies I believe the only form that would meet with the slightest favor would be an Imperial Zollverein in which there would be free trade between the portions of the Empire, and duties as against strangers."

This is strong language and definite. The Liberals in Canada are not prepared at present to adopt a policy of free trade within the Empire, and it may be fairly doubted if the Conservatives are. If they were, we should like to see them place themselves on record to that effect. What they have done is to declare quite to the contrary. The motion now before parliament, as moved by Sir Charles Tupper, distinctly asserts that Canada will give nothing to England which is inconsistent with the principle of protection. That policy is as far removed from Mr. Chamberlain's suggestion as it could well be. So that, under existing circumstances, Canada must either continue the Liberal plan or restore the duties against England as they were in 1877.

OUR GRAIN TRADE.

It is very satisfactory to know that while the trade of Canada is growing that of St. John is experiencing a great development. The figures as published the other day prove this and show that our winter business is increasing, if not with leaps and bounds, at all events with a steady and progressive growth. We have never had the least doubt in regard to the future of St. John in this respect, and while our people have experienced many disappointments the time seems to have come when we can look forward to the future with confidence. If the ports of Canada are to do the winter business of Canada no other port on the Atlantic coast stands in as favorable a position for trade as St. John. With respect to distance we have a very decided advantage over Halifax, not only with respect to the intercolonial, and with the admirable terminal facilities that this city possesses in connection with the latter line we may expect to do a large share of the business of that great line of railway.

It must be remembered that this western trade which we are endeavoring to obtain is as yet only in its infancy. The development of the grain export trade of Montreal has been slow in comparison with what it would have been if the canal

had been completed to a depth of 14 feet as they would have been long ago but for the neglect of successive Conservative governments. It was not until Mr. Blair became minister of railways and canals that any serious effort was made to complete the necessary work upon them. The Welland canal has been completed to a depth of 14 feet for several years, but this increase of size was of no value so long as the St. Lawrence canals were limited to the old depth. Now with the completion of the St. Lawrence canals which has now been accomplished a large 25 feet long, 40 feet wide and drawing 14 feet of water can come from the Upper Lakes to Montreal. We expect to see a great development of the grain trade of Montreal this year and next, and the winter export trade of St. John is certain to increase at an equal rate. If Montreal becomes the great exporting port of this continent in summer St. John will become the great exporting port in winter, not only for grain but for all the products of the West. Thus the dream of the founders of confederation will at length be realized.

OUR BOYS AT THE FRONT.

When the first Canadian contingent sailed for South Africa there were many good sons of the Dominion who felt some misgivings as to the efficiency of the corps and the manner in which it would be regarded by the regular officers of the British army. We all have been so accustomed to regard the drill book as a true foundation of soldierly training that some feared our soldiers would not be up to the standard of efficiency demanded by the needs of war. We all knew that no better material could be found anywhere than the men of the first contingent; we knew also that in courage and resources under difficulties our men would not be found wanting, but as it is supposed to take three years of drill to make a British soldier, it was clear that our men when judged by such a test must fall in comparison with the trained regulars of the army. It was therefore with no small feelings of relief that our people heard of the admirable conduct of the Canadian regiment at the battle of Paardeberg where they conducted themselves with the coolness of veterans and proved their right to stand in the same line with the best regiments of the British army. Every man who has seen the Canadian regiment in action has been led in its praise, and none of the colonial contingents has won so much glory. Yet many of the men of the Canadian regiment knew very little about the drill book until they enlisted, while others had only been drilled for a few days in each year as a part of the militia force of Canada. The result seems to prove that intelligence and courage are quite as essential to the soldier as perfection in the drill book.

THE SOUTH AFRICAN CLIMATE.

In view of the fact that the war in South Africa has passed the sixth month, and that our soldiers will soon be exposed to the influences of the southern winter, it may not be amiss to describe in a general way to the climatic conditions which prevail in that country. A writer in the Montreal Witness has recently been the chief factor of the climate of South Africa. Its spring months are September, October and November, its summer months December, January and February, its fall months March, April and May, and its winter months June, July and August. It is in subtropical latitude from 20 to 35 south latitude, corresponding with northern Mexico and California in the northern hemisphere, and with climates not altogether dissimilar. The peninsula is curiously divided in the matter of the season of rains, which are very heavy on the coasts and are lighter toward the interior. The rainy season depends apparently upon the ocean winds. In that part of South Africa over which the Atlantic winds mainly blow from about Port Elizabeth, extending 150 to 300 miles inland from the coast, the rainy season is during the winter months. Cape Town's rainy months are June, July and August. For all the rest of South Africa the Indian Ocean winds seem to be chiefly influential, and the rainy months are the summer ones, those of December, January and February, or January, February and March.

Near the coast the rainfall varies greatly locally, but on the average is very heavy, while in the interior the rainfall is light. At Cape Town, for instance, rain fell during 80 days, and the rainfall is placed at 25.01 inches during five years. At Bloemfontein rain fell on 60 days, and the annual average was 21.29 inches. On the coast the heat of summer is of course very much greater and more oppressive than in the interior, the absolute maximum at Cape Town in January being 101.5, while at Bloemfontein it was 94.7. At Kimberley, however, and throughout the northwestern portion of Griqualand, bordering on the Kalahari desert, the heat is intense, at times reaching 102 in January. As the altitude is high, however, the heat is not so oppressive at the same temperature as at the coast. But the climate of South Africa, except along the coast belt, is really one of the most healthful in the world. That country has become the great resort of people troubled with chest complaints who have little means, and have to earn their own living. Its altitude, the dryness of its climate, and the evenness of its temperature render it a health resort, and except in the

coast region and in Bechuanaland and Griqualand and Rhodesia, it is very free from malaria or malarial influences.

In Natal, which is the garden of South Africa, the coast region is very narrow and the climate is much more equable than in the west, but it is moister. At Pietermaritzburg, 70 miles from the coast, the altitude is 2,225 feet; at Ladysmith, 180 miles, it is 3,284; at Glencairn, 231 miles, 4,303 feet, and at Charles town, at the Transvaal frontier, 5,386 feet, which is about the level of the plateau extending along the Witwatersrand to Johannesburg. The rainy season is not the unhealthy season in the high karoo and plateaus, where alone our soldiers are now fighting. In the regions of the low-lying plateau or tablelands there is more moisture than in the lower regions, and there is grassy turf or veld during the wet season, which is burned during the dry season of winter.

The sickly season is that which follows just after the rainy season, not the dry season, but the "drying season." In the Free State and the Transvaal this drying season is really the beginning of winter, for there is practically no spring or fall weather. The days are not so hot as in the preceding seasons, but are still very warm, and the nights become suddenly quite cold. Both men and animals suffer from the cold, and are in great danger of pneumonia and of malaria in the low and malarial districts, though such are easily avoided. There is great need of warm woollen clothing and abundant supplies of nourishing, warm-giving food for men, who have to undergo great physical exertion in this season. Doubtless Lord Roberts has delayed his advance somewhat in order to accumulate sufficient supplies and stores for the preservation of the health of his men. The sand storms seem, owing to the absence of heavy winds, to be less frequent and troublesome in the winter season, but in the Witwatersrand district they are always too frequent, and make it one of great discomfort and even danger to people who have not sound lungs. There is nothing, however, in these climatic conditions which suggest a special danger to the hardy fellows who have gone from Canada.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

A short time ago the Conservatives were doing a great deal of blustering over the result of the coming elections, but we do not hear that kind of talk any more since Mr. Fielding's great budget speech. The people of this country do not propose to place themselves in the hands of the "blue ruin" Conservatives.

More interesting and startling than the speech itself will probably be Sir Charles Tupper's explanation of what he really meant to say at Quebec. We know something already of his ability to swallow himself, as evidenced by his change of base on the Yukon Railway Bill; but an attempt to eat up what he said at Quebec would be the greatest feat of his long and active life. Thus far he has not made an effort in that direction.

"All the unrestricted reciprocity organs and campaign organs are now busy in the proposal that there shall be a British preference for the Empire. The arrangement is too British by half."—[Mail and Empire.]

There are just two things wrong in this paragraph: There are no unrestricted reciprocity organs in Canada, and no one is combating a British preference for Canadian products. We would take the preference if England could see her way to give it; but we are not insisting on it.

An opposition exchange makes a point out of the fact that England purchased more butter from Australia last year than from Canada. Possibly she did. But Australia pays a large bounty on exported butter, and has been in the business for years. The important fact still remains that Canada now sells four times as much butter to Great Britain as she did in 1896, and the trade is going ahead enormously faster than that of any other country.

The budget debate is not yet ended and probably will not be ended before the close of the present month. As it involves the whole conduct of the government in their management of the affairs of the country, which is now so prosperous, every member will desire to say something in regard to it for the purpose of putting himself on record before his constituents. It is probably the last chance that a good many Conservatives will have of distributing their speeches at the expense of the country.

The Montreal Gazette editorially says that the attack on Mr. Lloyd George, M. P., will be vigorously resented by the defenders of free speech because a member of parliament addressing his own constituents has a right to protection from the violence of the mob. It adds that "If Mr. Lloyd George disapproves of the war it is his duty to say so and to give his constituents his reasons." This sounds very fine, but what about those French members of parliament whose offence was that they thought a vote of censure was necessary to justify the sending of a contingent to South Africa. Did the Gazette defend them and say that they had a right to state their constitutional objections to the sending of a contingent? Did it attempt to calm the ferocity of the Montreal Star, Toronto Mail, and St. John Sun which denounced these men as traitors? If the Gazette took any such course we have not observed it, and yet if its rule is good for an English member of parliament it ought to apply equally well to a Canadian representative.

ST. JOHN MARKETS.

WHEAT, No. 1, 100 lbs.	1.10	1.10
WHEAT, No. 2, 100 lbs.	1.05	1.05
WHEAT, No. 3, 100 lbs.	1.00	1.00
WHEAT, No. 4, 100 lbs.	0.95	0.95
WHEAT, No. 5, 100 lbs.	0.90	0.90
WHEAT, No. 6, 100 lbs.	0.85	0.85
WHEAT, No. 7, 100 lbs.	0.80	0.80
WHEAT, No. 8, 100 lbs.	0.75	0.75
WHEAT, No. 9, 100 lbs.	0.70	0.70
WHEAT, No. 10, 100 lbs.	0.65	0.65
WHEAT, No. 11, 100 lbs.	0.60	0.60
WHEAT, No. 12, 100 lbs.	0.55	0.55
WHEAT, No. 13, 100 lbs.	0.50	0.50
WHEAT, No. 14, 100 lbs.	0.45	0.45
WHEAT, No. 15, 100 lbs.	0.40	0.40
WHEAT, No. 16, 100 lbs.	0.35	0.35
WHEAT, No. 17, 100 lbs.	0.30	0.30
WHEAT, No. 18, 100 lbs.	0.25	0.25
WHEAT, No. 19, 100 lbs.	0.20	0.20
WHEAT, No. 20, 100 lbs.	0.15	0.15
WHEAT, No. 21, 100 lbs.	0.10	0.10
WHEAT, No. 22, 100 lbs.	0.05	0.05
WHEAT, No. 23, 100 lbs.	0.00	0.00
WHEAT, No. 24, 100 lbs.	0.00	0.00
WHEAT, No. 25, 100 lbs.	0.00	0.00
WHEAT, No. 26, 100 lbs.	0.00	0.00
WHEAT, No. 27, 100 lbs.	0.00	0.00
WHEAT, No. 28, 100 lbs.	0.00	0.00
WHEAT, No. 29, 100 lbs.	0.00	0.00
WHEAT, No. 30, 100 lbs.	0.00	0.00

WHEAT, No. 31, 100 lbs.	0.00	0.00
WHEAT, No. 32, 100 lbs.	0.00	0.00
WHEAT, No. 33, 100 lbs.	0.00	0.00
WHEAT, No. 34, 100 lbs.	0.00	0.00
WHEAT, No. 35, 100 lbs.	0.00	0.00
WHEAT, No. 36, 100 lbs.	0.00	0.00
WHEAT, No. 37, 100 lbs.	0.00	0.00
WHEAT, No. 38, 100 lbs.	0.00	0.00
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WHEAT, No. 41, 100 lbs.	0.00	0.00
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WHEAT, No. 45, 100 lbs.	0.00	0.00
WHEAT, No. 46, 100 lbs.	0.00	0.00
WHEAT, No. 47, 100 lbs.	0.00	0.00
WHEAT, No. 48, 100 lbs.	0.00	0.00
WHEAT, No. 49, 100 lbs.	0.00	0.00
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WHEAT, No. 85, 100 lbs.	0.00	0.00
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WHEAT, No. 135, 100 lbs.	0.00	0.00
WHEAT, No. 136, 100 lbs.	0.00	0.00
WHEAT, No. 137, 100 lbs.	0.00	0.00