

REFLECTIONS

By THE EDITOR

The Expected Was Unexpected.

GUARDED well was the date of the general election. Of course it may not have been decided upon until the morning of the day it was announced. There was a long Council meeting that morning and the decision may have been arrived at suddenly. This is not likely. The date was probably as good as decided several days ago, but no newspaper reporter got a chance to make even a "shrewd guess."

Yet the secret could not have been more than a week old. The United States Senate approved of reciprocity on July 22nd. That event was necessary, before the Canadian Government could make a decision. There was no necessity for arranging for a general election on reciprocity in Canada until the United States decision had been made clear. The United States decision was made on the 22nd; the Canadian Government made its announcement on the 29th. Only a week elapsed between the two events.

Emphasis is laid on these facts because they explain in a general way why the Canadian Parliament could not have been sooner dissolved and why an earlier announcement was not made. It would have been foolish to announce a general election here, with all that such an event means in human effort and in monetary expenditure, until the decision of the United States was clearly given. That Sir Wilfrid delayed only one week before giving notice of an appeal to the country is extremely satisfactory. He could scarcely have taken less time on account of the formalities to be arranged. Had he taken more he would have laid himself open to a charge of unnecessary delay.

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Both Parties Were Right.

SPEAKING purely personally, I am one of those who believe that both political parties have acted fairly in regard to this question of reciprocity with the United States. Considering the record of the Liberal party and the opportunity which came to it a few months ago, it was bound to accept the United States reciprocity offer. As a party, the Liberals are free-traders. There may be more theory than practice in their free-trade notions, but their opportunities have been limited. They embraced eagerly the first opportunity to get more practice into their theoretical record. The manufacturers and other protectionists have no right to be angry with the Liberal leaders. Sir Wilfrid has been polite to the manufacturers always, but politeness is one of Sir Wilfrid's characteristics. The Liberals gave the manufacturers justice and always will—but nothing more.

Similarly the Conservatives were quite within their rights in opposing reciprocity. All this talk about preventing the majority from ruling, such as has appeared in the leading Liberal newspapers, is pure buncombe. The Conservative minority in the House of Commons had a perfect right to block reciprocity and to demand an appeal to the country. It is the very essence of our parliamentary system that no broad national policy shall be modified or changed until after the opinion of the people shall have been ascertained at a general election. There have been times in Canada when that principle has been overlooked by both parties. An extra general election involves much trouble and expense, but that is a small price to pay for the education of the public on a measure which makes the second important change in our fiscal policy since 1878. That the Government has yielded so promptly to the demand of the Opposition indicates that the Liberal leaders are not prepared to exercise the rights of the majority in the House beyond a reasonable point.

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Some Analogous Criticism.

DEALING further with the question of the right of the Opposition to demand an appeal to the people in such a situation, it is interesting to notice the criticism of those who, in the United States, are opposed to reciprocity. For example, *Paper*, a trade journal published in New York, in the interests of the paper manufacturers, complains that Canadian reciprocity originated in the Executive, a branch of the United States Government which is supposed only to enforce laws and make recom-

mendations to the Legislative branch. This journal says:

"Reciprocity, however, did not come to Congress as a recommendation. It was reduced to concrete form and accompanied by what was in effect a command that it should be enacted into law. Then when the regular session of Congress failed to approve it, an extra session was called and the demand renewed, with a still more emphatic declaration of authority.

"The President was not content to give his orders directly, but took the stump and urged the people to apply the lash, practically charging that every member of Congress who refused to vote as the President dictated was untrue to his trust.

"If we are to accept the doctrine that Congress is loyal and useful only when it obeys the President, then why burden the people with the cost of maintaining the institution at all? Why not abolish Congress and permit all laws to be made and unmade by the imperial edict of His Majesty?"

In the United States Constitution there is no provision for a general election whenever it may be deemed necessary, as there is in Great Britain and Canada. Those opposed to reciprocity could not ask for a general election, but the quotation given shows that they came as near as possible to taking the same attitude as the Opposition in Canada. Moreover, Sir Wilfrid Laurier is using his majority and his influence in a less czarlike way than did President Taft.

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The Duty of the Citizen.

THOUGH this is the holiday season and though the weather is somewhat warm, there is laid upon the intelligent and patriotic citizen a duty which he should not shirk. Whether he be Conservative or Liberal, opposed to or in favour of reciprocity, he should do his share in the organization work in his constituency. He should have

The Standing

PARLIAMENT is dissolved and a general election takes place on September 21st. The present standing of the parties in the House of Commons at present is as follows:

	Con.	Lib.
Ontario	50	36
Quebec	12	53
Nova Scotia	6	12
New Brunswick	2	11
Prince Edward Island	1	3
Manitoba	8	2
Saskatchewan	1	9
Alberta	3	4
British Columbia	5	2
Yukon	0	1
Total	88	133

his part in the selection of the candidate, should take an interest in the scanning of the voters' lists and in the general campaign work which precedes an election. If the reputable citizen shirks this duty it falls upon those who are less reputable and there is more danger of an indulgence in corrupt practices.

Too many of us consider it beneath our dignity to help in a campaign and in constituency organization. We want the candidate to be a man above suspicion, to be so elected by the free and independent voter that he may go to Ottawa filled only with the highest ideals. Yet too often we compel him to depend for his organization upon men who work because they are paid to work, men who make a practice of "bleeding" the candidates, and men whose delight it is to spend money illegally and to frustrate the will of the electorate whenever it is possible to do so.

Especially in constituencies where there is a large percentage of ignorant or "foreign" voters, it is necessary that influences which make against corruption should be active. During the next two months more than a million dollars of campaign funds will be spent and the duty lies upon the best

citizens in both parties to see that the money is spent legitimately.

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Campaign Funds.

THERE have been numerous rumours that the tariff reformers of Great Britain are sending funds to help in the fight against reciprocity. Personally, I do not believe those rumours. I believe that the tariff reformers have more sense. They should recognize that interference on their part will do more harm than good. Every dollar they spend here will mean another ballot in favour of reciprocity. Canada will not tolerate partisan interference by British politicians.

It has also been rumoured that there will be funds supplied by the opponents of reciprocity in the United States. The doubtfulness of this is even more manifest. In the first place, the "interests" of the United States have had plenty of opportunity of spending their money at home if they desired to defeat reciprocity. They have spent very little. They have not been accused of maintaining an unusual or extravagant lobby. They are too shrewd not to realize that any interference on their part would arouse Canadian suspicion and would accelerate the advance of free trade sentiment in both countries.

Each side will have its campaign fund, but these will come from the usual sources. Just whence they come few of us will know with any degree of definiteness. Until we follow the United States new law and force the parties to publish the names of the contributors, we can but make shrewd guesses. Campaign funds are necessary. They only do harm when they are illegitimately spent. It is "up to" the best citizens of Canada to use their influence against illegal use of these monies. If public sentiment is against illegal expenditures, there will be little of it in evidence.

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Why September 21st?

SEPTEMBER 21st was chosen as the date of the general elections mainly because it was necessary to have the political situation cleaned up before the arrival of the Duke of Connaught. The new Governor-General will arrive about October 10th or 12th. The present occupant of the office will want to get away before the Duke arrives, so that there will be no clash between the two events. A general election on September 21st will enable Earl Grey to be on hand ready for any emergency which the result of the voting may create and yet have time to enjoy the hearty "send-off" which he has a right to expect and which Canada will be proud to give.

There was only one reason why September 28th or October 5th might have been more convenient. Harvesting in the West will be somewhat late this year because of the cold weather in the middle of July and because the harvest will be greater than the supply of harvesters. The Western farmer will have little or no time for political discussion and certainly no time for political organization. This reason did not apparently weigh as heavily as that concerning the Duke of Connaught and Earl Grey. The Western farmer has had plenty of time for discussion during the seven months which have elapsed since reciprocity was first discussed, and it is reasonable to suppose that he has made up his mind how he intends to vote. He is not likely to complain because the earlier date has been chosen.

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Heedless of Their Wealth

THOSE of us who are accustomed to consider every dollar we own with the greatest respect and care, find it hard to conceive that there are enough careless Canadians to leave \$638,441 in the banks unclaimed. Yet such is the fact as revealed by a recent government blue-book. The banks are compelled to report to the government all sums which have lain unclaimed for five years. On the 31st of December, 1909, the amount was \$620,000, and on December 31st, 1910, it had grown to \$638,000. Eighteen thousand a year would be a tidy income for, say, the National Museum at Ottawa, if the banks were to turn over these unearned balances.

In addition there is an increase of \$250 in unclaimed dividends and \$5,000 in unpaid drafts. This brings the total yearly amount of unclaimed wealth to \$638,000. Eighteen thousand a year would be a tidy income for, say, the National Museum at Ottawa, if the banks were to turn over these unearned balances.

In the meantime, if you think any of the money belongs to you, get the blue-book and see if your name is on the list.