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THE TIMES.

Even the *Globe* is compelled to acknowledge that, if Canadian High Commissioner in London there must be, Sir Alexander Galt is the best possible man for the important office. It says: "His manners are more than agreeable—they are charming, familiar without inducing to familiarity, dignified without a trace of restraint. His qualities are indeed such that Canada may be proud of her representative." So far so good. It is a comfort to know that the appointment is so fortunate, for undoubtedly the position to be held will be a most trying one, and will require all the tact and patience Sir Alexander can use. For my own part, I think it will require a little more even to make it bearable. Hitherto our representatives in London have been well treated by the commercial aristocracy of London because there was money in it. When great loans had to be negotiated it was worth while for those who had a tender regard for commissions to make an effort in order to stand well with those who had business to give their friends. Money is a great power in England—even in political circles, and is able at any time to secure a friendly recognition for a friend of bankers and brokers. But now that we are going to transact our own business and give fat commissions no longer, the friendship of mammon will, to a large extent at least, cease from our representative. The fact that he has to hand over interest to those who have lent us money will not give him much social recognition, and there is every evidence that Canadian loans will not be very popular in England for some time to come.

After the merely financial matter is disposed of, it is not easy to understand exactly what our High Commissioner is to do or attempt. Sir Alexander's speech at the dinner given to him in Montreal contained some considerable contradictions, and opened up some rather startling possibilities. Sir Alexander announced that Canada intends to negotiate directly with foreign countries whenever anything has to be done in which the Dominion is interested. That taken alone would be practically a declaration of independence; but of course it cannot be, taken alone, for it was subsequently modified and almost explained away. On the whole it may be looked upon as a bit of highfalutin' talk, not at all ill adapted to the occasion. Sir Alexander must know perfectly well—no man better—that while England may be content to allow the colonies to manage their own internal affairs as to politics and commerce, England will not consent that they shall make their own treaties with foreign countries without the will and consent of the Home Government. Under our present colonial system it is difficult to see what change Sir Alexander Galt is going to effect in the matter of Canada's commercial relations with other countries. Nothing can be done in London that could not as well be done at Ottawa.

But a still more important subject was broached by Sir Alexander at the dinner. He gave us to understand that as the Government undertook the colonization of the North-West, at the request of the Imperial Parliament, and with the express condition that Great

Britain would give practical support to the policy; and as the construction of the Imperial Pacific Railway is rushing the Dominion into bankruptcy, Great Britain must pay its share in this enormous expenditure. Sir Alexander distinctly affirmed—speaking, it must be supposed, with the full authority of the Government—that the building of the Pacific Railway is an Imperial policy, and was commenced, if not at the dictation, by the earnest request and approval of the Home Government. He ventured to go so far as to say that this projected railway is no more to the Atlantic Provinces than to the farmers of Tipperary and Lancashire, and that it would be unjust to expect that Canada shall, at her sole cost, open up the North-West Territories for the benefit of the Empire. Now, this is no small matter, and has in it the germs of serious differences and complications. If the scheme was first suggested, or even encouraged with promises of help, by the Home Government, the condition of things is vastly changed with us since those promises were given. Then we had Free Trade, and England looked to Canada for an ever-increasing market for her manufactured goods; now, England has the same rights in New York or Boston as in Montreal. May not British statesmen very reasonably tell Sir Alexander that we, on our side, have so changed the mutual relations as to make the carrying out of those promises impossible. In what way will our High Commissioner meet that? So far as present appearances go we have had all the money we are likely to get guaranteed by the Imperial Government, and English investors will be very chary in putting money into a concern which everybody knows will not pay anything for half a century to come. Will Sir Alexander quarrel with the Home Government if he cannot get help to build the Pacific Railway? then let us make up our minds for the worst, for the disagreement is inevitable.

Sir Alexander Galt's scheme for an Imperial Zollverein—that is, free-trade between the mother country and all the colonies—is, to say the least of it, a bit humorous. In face of the newly-fledged National Policy how could such a thing be soberly said? To carry out such a policy would be to ask us to sacrifice our latest darling, and Great Britain to renounce the creed which Whig and Tory hold in common. This, along with the suggestion that from henceforth we are to assume our share of the military defence of the Empire, including a naval reserve, war ships, and all the other adjuncts of a powerful military organization, sounds uncommonly like a well digested after-dinner joke. The only foreshadowing it gives is, that Sir Alexander will be much disappointed, and is certain to take it all kindly.

When the Pacific Railway question comes up for debate in the House we may expect to have some lively and interesting scenes. A good many members of both parties are persuading themselves that party allegiance ought not to be carried to the extent of ruining the country. Some of the Conservatives are anxious to make it an independent question, so that they may vote according to their judgment, and do no harm to the Government if it should find itself in a minority on this one division. If Sir John A. Macdonald would consent to such an arrangement, I am certain that the Pacific Railway scheme would be postponed *sine die*. The people have been awake to the fact for years that this railroad is likely to run the country into bankruptcy, but what could they do? The daily press is in the hands of the politicians, with but few exceptions, and as both parties were pledged to the mad policy they could only haggle and fume over contracts and routes. But latterly the people have been agitating this matter, not loudly, perhaps, but with earnestness, and many members of Parliament find that it is not only safe, but needful to make a firm and decided stand against any further wholesale waste of money. It is