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A large and enthusiastic Convention of Liberal Conservatives from the Fort Augustus District Assembled in Charlottetown on Friday last, for the purpose of selecting Opposition Candidates for the next election. For Assemblyman, three names were presented to the convention; Dr. Dewar, Southport, John H. Gill, Little York and Leonard Wood, former Conservative member for the district. Although his name was presented, it was understood by most of the delegates, that Mr. Wood did not, for business and other reasons, desire to go into nomination. When the ballot was taken Dr. Dewar had a majority and nomination was made unanimous amid enthusiasm. For Councilman only one name, that of Mr. H. F. Feehan of Mount Stewart was presented; so that he was unanimously and enthusiastically chosen as the Candidate. We expect these standard bearers will succeed, quite handsomely, in placing the third district in the Conservative column.

Several things happened among our Liberal friends in this Province since our last issue. In the first place the two important Federal appointments in suspense at our last writing have eventuated. Evidently the citadel was stormed, for Premier Haszard returned from Ottawa with the appointment of Judge of the Supreme Court in his possession. Mr. B. C. Prowse did not return; but remained at the Capital to take his seat in the Senate, to which he had been called. The respective vacancies in the Senate and on the Bench of the Supreme Court for this Province are thus at last filled by the appointment of Messrs Haszard and Prowse. Premier Haszard was in the line of promotion by his occupancy of the Attorney-Generalship and, as things go had his claims on the Laurier Government for his services in holding the Provincial Government together. The appointment was bound to go to a Liberal, and his claims probably could not well be overlooked. We extend to him our congratulations. The Senate Vacancy filled by Mr. B. C. Prowse's appointment was caused by the death of the late Senator Ferguson, a man of eminent, acknowledged ability. Mr. Prowse certainly deserves the heartiest congratulations on his capture of the coveted prize. An idea used to prevail that no one should be elevated to the Senate except such as had given some evidence of statesmanship, or of possessing in some degree such eminent qualities as would distinguish and adorn the recipient of the great honor conferred. But it would appear as if the Liberal Federal Government had relegated all such notions as these to the limbo of exploded theories. At any rate, it cannot be said that Prowse Brothers are not doing pretty well; one in the Commons and one in the Senate at \$2,500 each per annum, \$5,000 in all.

The Federal offices having been disposed of, and the excitement consequent on the struggle having subsided, attention had next to be directed towards the Local Government, now verging on a state of collapse. The condition of the Government could scarcely be otherwise than most critical. Mr. Has-

zard's acceptance of office removed the main prop of the tottering fabric and Mr. Palmer's sudden abasement from the judicial plane where, for a brief space he had ruminated in sweet anticipation, were not encouraging factors. No time was to be lost; so the members were summoned to conclave on Friday, to consider ways and means of reconstruction. The first thing to be done was the application of a healing balm to the harrowed feelings of Mr. Palmer. This was done by tendering him the Leadership, which he accepted. Mr. Palmer is therefore the new Premier of Prince Edward Island. It is a matter of very serious doubt whether or not Mr. Palmer is to be congratulated on assuming the Leadership of the rump Government of this Province at this time. Several problems must immediately engage his attention. In the first place there is the vacancy in the Belfast district consequent on the retirement of Mr. Haszard, and then the Attorney-Generalship. Should the Premier allow the vacancy in the Belfast district to remain and create no other vacancy, he would have no majority apart from the Speaker. Should he bring on a by election and fail, then he would have no majority at all. Should he himself take the office of Attorney General it would necessitate his appealing to his constituents, and that involves danger. Perhaps he may decide to have a general election before meeting the House again. In any case he will likely take his time and feel his way. We do not begrudge Premier Palmer any happiness his new honors may bring him.

Federal Parliament

At this writing, Mr. Borden, Leader of the Opposition in the Federal House of Commons, seems to be master of the political situation at Ottawa. A couple of weeks ago, the Conservatives in Caucus decided to continue the most unqualified opposition to the Reciprocity agreement. At the same time they recognized that Canada should be represented by its Premier at the Imperial Conference opening in London on the 22nd, inst. Mr Borden, therefore, announced in the House the conclusion at which his party had arrived regarding its attitude towards the reciprocity pact, and at the same time set forth the desire that the Leader of the Government should attend the Imperial Conference and the King's Coronation. In order that this might be done without inconvenience, the Leader of the Opposition suggested three propositions agreeable to the Conservatives, any one of which, if adopted would allow the Premier of Canada to proceed to London without inconvenience. These were: (1) that the Premier should go at the proper time and leave the leadership of the House to Mr. Fielding or any one else whom he might designate; (2) that the House should adjourn for a couple of months until Sir Wilfrid's return, or (3) that Parliament should be dissolved and the reciprocity question be submitted to the people in a general election. Sir Wilfrid Laurier refused to accept any of these alternatives, and declared his intention of remaining at home to look after the reciprocity agreement, rather than go to London to attend to Canada's interests there. There the matter rested for some days; but Sir Wilfrid and his friends thought better of the matter and a few days ago, the Premier called on the Leader of the Opposition and agreed with him to have Parliament adjourn from May 19 to July 18, so that he might go to

London and on his return the reciprocity debate would be resumed. As this was the second alternative proposition previously submitted by Mr. Borden, he offered no objection. That is where the matter seems to rest at the present time. From this it will be seen that the Opposition have secured their own terms.

Our Ottawa correspondent, writing under date of May 4th says: It is becoming more and more apparent that the Laurier government would rather look to Washington than to London. This fact was demonstrated by Sir Wilfrid Laurier himself during the debate on the question of the desirability of his attending the Imperial Conference which opens in the capital of the Empire at the end of this month. When this matter was brought up in the House recently Sir Wilfrid Laurier declared that if it was the intention of the Opposition to fight reciprocity he would have to change his mind and stay at home. In this attitude the Premier who boasts of his loyalty and whose followers acclaim him being more loyal than King George himself showed that he put this trade arrangement with the United States ahead of every Imperial consideration and that the Empire might go to the dogs as long as he got his reciprocity pact through.

Impressing on the Premier the importance of Canada being represented in London not only at the Conference but at the Coronation Mr. Borden pointed out that this was an occasion when Sir Wilfrid Laurier might have regard not only to trade relations with the United States but to trade relations with this great Empire to which we belong. The following subjects are to be taken up at the conference which will shortly be participated in by the statesmen of the Overseas Dominion when they meet in London:

- Merchant Shipping and Navigation laws.
- Cheaper cable rates.
- The all-red-route.
- Imperial Court of Appeal.
- State owned Atlantic cable and telegraph lines across Canada.
- Imperial representation.
- Commercial co-operation for the encouragement of British manufactures and shipping.
- Emigration and the position of labor exchanges.
- Cooperation between the naval and military forces of the Empire and the status of Dominion navies.
- Naturalization.

These are some of the questions of Imperial moment which will come before the Conference. Yet until Sir Wilfrid Laurier saw that he had made a blunder in refusing to go, and that it was bad policy to let the people of Canada believe he would rather stay from the most important gathering of colonial statesmen since the conferences were inaugurated, he was insistent in his determination to stay at home and endeavor to force upon parliament and the people an agreement concerning which the country had never been consulted.

Mr. Borden put the attitude of the Conservative party clearly before the House and country in this connection. He said:

"Sir Wilfrid Laurier suggests the importance of this trade agreement with the United States. We on this side of the House entertain a precisely contrary view, and under the privileges of parliamentary institutions we are entitled to the full expression of our view, and we propose to exercise that right. We have been told by Ministers of the Crown that the honor

of this country has been pledged to the President and Government of the United States in connection with the agreement. I do not know when the people of Canada gave any mandate to the Prime Minister or the government of this country to pledge the honor of Canada to these proposals. If the honor of Canada is pledged to the United States in respect to this matter it is also pledged to the Empire in respect to the matters which will come before the conference. It would seem that the question which must present itself to the Premier is whether or not our trade and relations with the United States are more important in his mind than our trade and relations with this Empire of which we form a part. I know that his trade proposals appeal to the Premier but on the other hand our relations with the Empire and the importance of Canada's representation in the Imperial conference appeal to us on this side just as strongly and more strongly than his trade agreement appeals to him."

President Taft is proving to be one of the best sources of inspiration for those who believe that this pact is against the best interests of Canada and the Empire. In his recent speech at the Publishers Banquet in New York he used the following words:

"In one form or another the federation of Greater Britain is quite possible, and though the issue will not be settled in a day it bids fair to become within a generation one of the most momentous in politics. From the point of view of the United States there would be no cause to welcome this federation. If it should be based upon internal reciprocity with protection against other nations. American exports, both raw materials and manufactured goods would suffer. So vast are the markets included in the domain of Greater Britain, so imposing is its situation almost everywhere, that if this greatest of Empires was to follow a policy of exclusion towards others, it might provoke a league to break its power. In such a league too the United States might conceivably have a place; for from the closeness of its relations with British America it might be forced either to become part of this Greater Britain or as a matter of self-preservation to oppose it. It is a fact of the present that the drawing together of Greater Britain and Canada is in no sense to the benefit of the United States."

In commenting on this utterance of President Taft Mr. C. A. Magrath the member for Lethbridge stated in the House that Canada would be foolish indeed to enter into any pact with another country which might interfere with the cementing process in her own family. "I have," said Mr. Magrath, "faith in our own people, and I wish to see some organic union among the British people not for the purpose of dominating others but because I believe it would be best for humanity and best for us."

The more this pact that Mr. Fielding brought home from Washington is looked into the clearer becomes the vision that it means breaking away from the ties that bind us to the Empire. President Taft is anxious for its adoption in order that the federation of the Empire which he fears may be stayed. This government in binding the hands of Canada in the way it has done has struck a death blow at progress along the lines of making our own tariffs independent of the United States and continuing the course laid down in the years when the face of Uncle Sam was turned aside in hostile contempt for our national aims and ideals. And at the first crook of the finger of President Taft Mr. Fielding hurried to Washington and without adequate information closed a bargain which the Opposition believes is not in the best interests of Canada and the Empire and is prepared to fight all the summer if necessary.



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