

The Weekly Times

Victoria, Friday, July 26

BRITAIN'S CHANGE OF RULERS.

The electoral battle in Britain has proceeded so far that a very substantial victory for the Conservative-Unionist party is certain. In 1892 the English boroughs went against the Liberals, who were enabled to score a success by the unexpected support they received from the counties. This time the boroughs have gone still more solidly to the Conservatives and Unionists, and the county vote could not begin to save the Liberals even if it were as favorable to them as in 1892. The counties, however, have the same tale of Liberal loss to tell as the cities and boroughs. Probably the Tory-Unionist majority in the new House will exceed 150, and the Tories by themselves will a good deal outnumber all the other parties and groups. This later fact may not be altogether comforting to the section led by Mr. Chamberlain. It is hard to see why the reaction against the Liberals should be so extensive. A reaction was to be expected, and for a year or two there were plain signs of a coming Liberal reverse, but few would have been so rash as to predict a change so radical. Objection to home rule is put forward as the great reason for the change, but we should hesitate to accept the theory that the British people have become mercenary enough to make a complete somersault on this one question in the course of three years. Home rule was the dividing question in 1892, and was made even more prominent than in the present contest. Probably the retirement of Mr. Gladstone and the unsatisfactory leadership of Lord Rosebery have done more than anything else to cause the Liberal discomfiture. A period of discipline will probably do the party good and put it in better condition for the next struggle. It is not at all likely that the Conservatives and their allies will be able to hold on to power for more than one parliament.

THEIR CHOSEN ROAD.

Notwithstanding the fact that quotations from the rebellious Conservative papers are disagreeable to our neighbor, we feel it advisable to reproduce one more extract from the Toronto World. Whether Ontario Conservative opinion be right or wrong on this question, it is important to know just what Ontario Conservative opinion is, for evidently that will be a potent factor in the final settlement. The World and Spectator are more likely to be correct indicators of that opinion than a paper like the Mail and Empire, which is an organ pure and simple and makes no claim to independence. The last issue of the World to hand has the following editorial remarks:

"Parliament is free to act in the case as it sees fit. Parliament is not bound to act in any jurisdiction assigned to it. Parliament is restricted in many directions, but in no way is it forced. We believe that this contention is sound, and a discussion of it in parliament will enable the public to reach a sound conclusion on the agitation, which will now begin throughout Ontario, the Northwest and the Maritime provinces against the passage of any law next session. We believe that no such bill can be carried. We believe there will be such an uprising against the Bowell cabinet that, while they may redeem their pledges to introduce the law, they will be defeated by Conservative votes when they attempt to carry it. The administration on one and all have committed themselves, to such a law notwithstanding the protests of many of their followers from Ontario; notwithstanding the protests of nearly every Conservative paper in Ontario; notwithstanding the dangers pointed out by the Montreal Gazette; and in opposition to what is known to be the unchangeable opinion of the great bulk of the Conservative voters in the Maritime provinces, in Ontario and in the Northwest. They have chosen to stake their political life on the stand they have taken. They are like men who have locked themselves in a cell and thrown the key out by a grated window, to Mr. Greenway of Manitoba, who is taking directions from Mr. Laurier of Ottawa. It is not likely that they will unlock the door, but if it is on their generosity and on it alone that they hope to avoid a conflict with their followers from Ontario and the Maritime provinces. Ontario will never consent to a law that will coerce Manitoba. Neither will the Maritime provinces consent to such a law, for if it is ever passed there will be a demand at the very next session for a law coercive of New Brunswick, and then right through these provinces which now see fit to get along without separate schools. Do Sir Mackenzie Bowell and his colleagues know where the road they have chosen leads to?"

The government stands pledged to remedial legislation, and will be defeated by its own followers if it attempts to make good its pledge; that is the situation as the independent Conservative papers see it. If the government had chosen its course from patriotic motives it would at least have had the satisfaction of prospective martyrdom

in a good cause, but now it has the galling consciousness that it has over-reached itself in the prosecution of an unworthy political scheme.

PRESIDENT KER'S ADVICE.

President Ker, of the board of trade, in effect told the business men of Victoria that if they wanted to retain their leading commercial position they had to work unitedly. The tendency of recent events had been to divert trade, in certain lines, to other cities, which are probably more enterprising or certainly more eager to secure customers. The mining industry of Kootenay and Cariboo is being rapidly developed, and as a consequence new and profitable markets are being established. These are exploited most persistently and successfully by rival cities. The ability of Victoria merchants to compete with those of Winnipeg, Spokane or other cities was shown in the sale of supplies, under competition, to a firm of railway contractors, and generally by the success that a few pushing and intelligent salesmen meet with in the new districts. All roads, Mr. Ker seemed to think, lead to Victoria, and it remains for our commercial men to cause a large share of the new commerce to pass over them. It was implied rather than expressed that the policy of "every man for himself" had prevailed too long for the good of the city, and that concerted action was necessary to bring the distant markets nearer. Mr. Ker referred to the necessity for a telephone line to Vancouver, which is now in connection with many of the principal cities of the Northwest, and also to the urgency for improved and cheaper transportation facilities. There is but one opinion on the latter point, but how best to accomplish the object desired is the difficulty. Most assuredly nothing will be done if disunion and indifference prevail. The map of the world is dotted with cities that failed to take advantage of their opportunities, and which, notwithstanding the superiority of their geographical situations, have been surpassed in the race by others less favored by nature. The city that pursues the rest-and-be-thankful policy, whose citizens are not aggressive, or imbued with the true commercial spirit, will go behind in a race with rivals less advantageously situated and, less wealthy, but who are at all times united in purpose, loyal to themselves, enterprising, and never let a chance pass to extend their influence and business.

If Mr. Ker succeeds in arousing our business men, and our wealthy men, to a correct appreciation of the situation and to what may be achieved by unification of effort, and imbue them all with the belief that Victoria's destiny depends primarily upon her citizens, and not altogether on her unequalled natural advantages, he will have accomplished a good work, the fruits of which will soon be visible. The task is a big one but it is not impossible of accomplishment.

Casper W. Whitney in the sporting article in Harper's Weekly has some comments to make on Harvard's refusal to ally itself with Yale in an athletic contest against Oxford and Cambridge. One of his sentences is as follows:

Harvard and Yale, do, however, occupy the prominent position among American universities which is held among English universities by Oxford and Cambridge. Harvard's letter to the contrary notwithstanding, and as such, and for the sake of the lessons in sportsmanship, of which we stand in such sore need, and which the English are fully qualified to give us, it is indeed too bad that the Englishmen's challenge could not have been received and accepted in the same sportsmanlike spirit in which it was sent.

This admission that Americans are in need of lessons in sportsmanship, and that the English are well qualified to give them, is the best sort of commentary on effusions like those of the Oregonian. It comes from a man who has some idea of sportsmanship and a soul above petty Americanism.

PREFERENTIAL TARIFF QUIETUS.

Lord Ripon's dispatch officially conveying the views of the Imperial government in regard to the preferential trade resolution of the intercolonial conference at Ottawa is of some interest, though it can hardly be said that the subject matter is one of practical importance. In order to help to a clear understanding of the British government's statement it may be well to recall the conference resolution on the question of preferential trade. It reads as follows, having been moved by Minister of Finance Foster and seconded by Sir Henry Wrixon, the delegate from Victoria colony:

"Whereas, the stability and progress of the British empire can be best assured by drawing continually closer the bonds that unite the colonies with the mother country, and by the continual growth of a practical sympathy and co-

operation in all that pertains to common welfare; and

"Whereas, this co-operation and unity can in no way be more effectually promoted than by the cultivation and extension of the mutual and profitable interchange of their products; therefore,

"Resolved, (1), That this conference records its belief in the advisability of a customs arrangement between Great Britain and her colonies by which trade within the empire may be placed on a more favorable footing than that which is carried on with foreign countries.

"(2), That until the mother country can see her way to enter into a customs arrangement with her colonies, it is desirable that, when empowered to do so, the colonies of Great Britain, or such of them as may be disposed to accede to this view, take steps to place each other's products, in whole or in part, on a more favored customs basis than is accorded to the like products of foreign countries.

"(3), That for the purposes of this resolution the South African customs union be considered as part of the territory capable of being brought within the scope of the contemplated trade arrangements."

It will be noticed in Lord Ripon's dispatch, embodying the view of the British government, both proposals advanced in the resolution are condemned without hesitation. The decision of the Rosebery government in this matter may be regarded as final, for their successors are well known as men of like views. The new colonial secretary, in particular, is among the most determined of free traders, to whom any proposal favoring protection is most obnoxious. He would no doubt strenuously second Lord Ripon's assertion that the Imperial government "feel compelled to express grave doubts as to whether the fiscal policy which has been adopted by the majority of the conference as a means of securing its object is really calculated to promote it." That is a point to which Canadians may well give attention. They are likely to see more and more clearly that the best way of encouraging inter-imperial or inter-colonial trade is a general lowering of duties, without any regard for preferential customs arrangements. It is the best policy for each, and for the empire as a whole, as Lord Ripon suggests.

PENITENTIARY MATTERS.

The minister of justice is reported as making in the house yesterday the statement that Deputy Warden Fitzsimmons has been granted two months' leave of absence, "to prosecute with celerity the libel suit against the Columbian."

The government has done some extraordinary things in connection with the Westminster penitentiary, but we shall be charitable enough to assume that either Sir Hibbert Tipper was misreported in this case, or that he did not quite correctly state the purpose of the government in granting the leave of absence. He probably said, or meant to say, that the two months' leave was decided upon to allow of the suit being determined, when the government would know from its issue whether Fitzsimmons should be given employment in another penitentiary. This interpretation coincides with the statement of Premier Bowell in reply to Senator McInnes the other day. After confirming the reports that Mr. Moresby had been appointed warden and Mr. Harvey accountant, the premier said: "I will add to these answers something which might be asked later on, that Deputy Burke has been transferred from the Stony Mountain penitentiary to take the place of Mr. Fitzsimmons. Fitzsimmons is now on leave of absence, but it is possible, on further investigation, that he may be sent to the Manitoba penitentiary; as to that I am not positive." Sir Mackenzie further on made reference to the libel suit against the Columbian and the renewed investigation it would afford, concluding with the remark: "If it is then proved he is a man of the character represented, the government will deal with him." All of which we take to mean that if Mr. Fitzsimmons is beaten in his libel suit the government will regard him as unfit for further employment in the penitentiary service, but if he is successful he will be transferred to the Manitoba penitentiary. If that is not the meaning to be attached to the premier's and Sir Hibbert's words, then it must be concluded that they are giving a new exhibition of their propensity to fly in the face of the public. But granted the intention of the government to be honestly guided by the result of the libel suit, those familiar with the history of the case will notice how their attitude bears upon the investigation held by the Hon. Justice Drake. They say in effect "by their present actions that that inquiry was a farce and that no attention whatever should be paid to the evidence then adduced or the commissioner's finding thereon.

Spokane, Wash., July 19.—H. E. Smith, under sentence for the murder of John Hyant, attempted to escape from jail, but being overtaken by a crowd in pursuit, he cut his throat, lying instantly.

JAPAN APPLIES THE GAG.

Her Citizens Are Denied the Right of Free or Any Other Kind of Speech.

China Will Have to Make Reparation for Outrages on Missionaries.

Tokio, July 2.—The largest mass meeting ever convened in Tokio was called together on June 13th, at which more than twenty prominent leaders of the parties opposed to Count Ito's ministry were expected to make speeches. From the beginning, however, it was evident that no expression of opinion adverse to the government would be tolerated. No speaker was allowed to touch upon the subject of the recent negotiations with Russia, Germany and France. Thirteen orators in succession were silenced by the police before they had occupied the platform for five minutes. Some of them endeavored to accomplish the desired effect by giving extracts from works on international law, the application of which was obvious, every description of public criticism of the government is causing deep anxiety among the moderate and law abiding classes of the community. Since the adoption of a constitutional form of government, no administration has ever before gone to such extremes in fettering the speech and thoughts of the people. Count Ito undoubtedly believes that his arbitrary course will be approved by the majority of his countrymen, but there are ominous signs that he is gradually losing the confidence of those whose support is indispensable to his tenure of office. The Emperor of Japan gave audience to the ministers and secretaries of foreign legations on June 26th, and received from each envoy a congratulatory address, to which an appropriate reply was made. Count Matsugata has withdrawn his resignation as Japanese minister of finance, and will continue to co-operate with the present cabinet. The representatives of France, America and England at Peking are demanding reparation for ill-treatment of missionaries and destruction of foreign property in the province of Szechuan with a vigor which startles the Chinese government. Liberal offers of pecuniary compensation are tendered, but these will not be considered until after the instigation of the outrages are held to account and duly punished. Such promptness and energy as are now displayed by the diplomatic agents have never before been brought to bear upon the Tsung-li-yamen. The lesson taught by Japan is being fruit, and the Chinese rulers will find hereafter that the delays and evasions of past years must be discarded. Ships-of-war of the three na-

tions concerned are hurrying to the districts where their protection is needed, and a squadron of French vessels is charged with the duty of exacting atonement by the severest methods in case the demands of the envoy are not immediately complied with. The central government is bewildered and frightened, but shows that it recognizes the emergency by dispatching a new viceroys in haste to take the place of the official who provoked the riots. No direct intelligence from the members of the missions at Chengtu has been received. The Americans, however, are believed to be in safety, and there is no evidence that any lives have been lost. The Japanese government has learned that its legation in Peking is unfit for occupancy by the new envoy, Mr. Hayashi. The building was sacked by a mob soon after war was declared last year, and has been allowed to go to ruin. When the Chinese representative arrives in Tokio he will find his quarters in thorough preservation, and probably in a more cleanly and wholesome condition than they ever were when inhabited by his predecessors in office. The usual monthly change of administration in Corea took place June 27th. The prime minister resigned with several colleagues, having quarrelled with the king on some petty detail of punctilio. The guard of marines at the U. S. legation in Seoul was withdrawn June 19th.

HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY. Report of the Governor and Committee to the Annual Meeting. Following is the annual report of the governor and committee presented to the annual meeting of the shareholders of the Hudson's Bay Company on the 15th instant.

The governor and committee have now to submit to the proprietors the annual accounts, which show a profit of £60,275 15s. 7d., to which must be added £25,023 5s. 9d. brought forward from last year, making a total of £85,300 5s. 4d. Out of this sum they recommend a dividend of 12s. per share, free of income tax, which will absorb £60,000, leaving the sum of £25,300 5s. 4d. to be carried forward.

The quantity of furs sold by the company in January and March last was about the same as that sold in 1894. The improvement in prices, indicated in the last report as probable, was realized this spring, and although the value of some furs declined, the majority of the changes showed an improvement upon the low prices of last year, the principal advances being in marten, mink, lynx and white fox.

The information so far received from the company's trading posts encourages the hope that the quantity of furs to be imported before next year's sales may not fall short of the average. It is satisfactory to know that most of the furs traded by the company continue in fair demand, and should the general improvement in business continue and extend, satisfactory prices may be looked for at the next sales.

The land account gives the cash receipts and disbursements of the land department for the year ended March 31st, 1895, and it will be seen that receipts from instalments, interest on sales, rents, etc., amount to £18,479 6s. 9d.; this compares with £28,549 7s. 9d. received in the preceding year.

The sales have been—farm lands, 4431 acres for £23,209 (averaging \$5.24 per acre); town lots, 126 lots for \$37,324, total \$60,533, as compared with last year—farm lands, 7529 acres for \$45,225 (averaging \$6.40 per acre); town lots, 79 lots for \$38,585, total \$83,810.

The low price of wheat and the general depression affecting all agricultural interests alluded to in the last report, prevailed in even a greater degree during the past year, and together with the increase of immigration operated most forcibly in reducing the sales of land and the collection of instalments. It is, however, satisfactory to be able to state that the collection of interest on unpaid instalments has, in spite of the drawbacks above enumerated, been fairly good, and does not show a large falling off in comparison with the preceding year.

The general trade of the company has also been adversely affected by the great commercial depression which has existed in Canada and the United States, but present advances point to the prospects of a good harvest and to a general revival of trade throughout the country.

It will be noticed that the number of accounts has been reduced from six to three. This simplification has been made possible by the arrangement lately carried out between the company and the officers, which obviates any further necessity for keeping the far trade accounts separate from the general accounts of the company.

Owing to this alteration the charge of interest hitherto made against the fur trade for capital advanced can no longer be made. The result is that this year's accounts suffer to the extent of £10,026 19s. 4d., this being the amount which would have been credited in the regular course for interest on capital advanced to the fur trade. Having in view the exceptional circumstances of the case, the board have not thought it right that the whole of this sum should be charged against the profit of the year, and they have therefore taken £10,000 from the insurance and reserve fund, thereby reducing the sum chargeable against profit and loss to £60,266 19s. 4d.

The insurance and reserve fund above alluded to has been created by the amalgamation of the fur trade fire insurance fund and the marine insurance fund, and now stands at £80,000.

The Earl of Lichfield, deputy governor, and Mr. Alderman Vaughan Morgan, are the members of the board retiring on this occasion, and being eligible, offer themselves for re-election.

Mr. Thomas A. Welton also offers himself for re-election as auditor.

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