

The Colonist.

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THE REVELSTOCK CONVENTION.

The convention at Revelstoke which closed its deliberations last night must be accepted as very fairly representative of Conservative opinion throughout the province of British Columbia.

It declared its desire for the introduction of party lines into provincial politics in a most unmistakable and emphatic way. In this we think it is sure of popular approval, men of all shades of political opinion having come to the conclusion that the introduction of party lines into provincial politics is at once inevitable and desirable. We believe it to be desirable, not merely because it is inevitable, although for that reason also, but as well because it guarantees, as nothing else can, stable and responsible government. It must not be forgotten, however, that as to the time and circumstances of the introduction of party lines, there are matters to be taken into consideration upon which no convention of either party, however representative and influential, can possibly have the right word to say. It may be to the advantage of the province to transfer the seat of government from the lines on which it has been run in the past on to the modern rails of party politics; but it must not be forgotten that the attempt to make the transfer except at a proper switch, would only result in the machine being run off the rails altogether, and confusion worse confounded. The next general election held under the Re-distribution Act forms the obviously appropriate time for so radical a change. In harmony with the spirit of the country which this convention has expressed, rather than as a result of its declaration, no candidate at the next general election but can only receive a nomination from one or other of the parties, unless he is attached to his constituency by long years of faithful service on the one hand, and high personal esteem and respect upon the other. We expect, of course, candidates nominated in the interests of the Labor party, which is independent of both the Liberal and the Conservative parties. Most of the candidates at the next general election will run as party line candidates, or they will be out of the race. Naturally, this may result in a certain ranging up on one side or the other during the intervening period between now and the general election. This may be, nay, must be, embarrassing to some who have had ties of affection between themselves and men on both sides of federal politics, in provincial affairs; but, although embarrassing to some, it is none the less inevitable to all. As the peculiar situation thus created has for some considerable time been cheerfully accepted by the Liberals, we fail to see why Conservatives should back out of it. In the recent political history of this province, say, within the last eight years, the question of Conservatism of Liberalism has been, in very many cases, the determining factor. It has bred the demoralizing condition of affairs that men

were ready to oblige opponents both in policy and patronage to gain some advantage, while they relied on the party allegiance of friends not to hurt them. If party lines were not already an influence in political affairs, there might be no necessity for their formal introduction. But the people of the country are determined to put an end to the allegiance on the one hand without responsibility on the other, which has led to the politics of the country degenerating into a scramble of individuals for the immediate adoption of whatever proposals suited their interest or inclination. The people have determined to put an end to that by having, at the earliest practicable opportunity, party lines, party platforms, and party candidates. It has fallen to the lot of Premier Dunsinuir and his colleagues to pilot the country through a period of transition in which chaos beyond the position again and again. After the storm, when government in this country is responsible to a well-organized body of public opinion in the country on one side or the other, both the difficulties of the interim, and the patience of those who hold the reins of power, will be better recognized by many than they are at present. Until party lines can be feasibly and properly introduced, the present legislature may be left to make the very best of the very heterogeneous materials it contains, and in so doing, the present government, or some successor, will receive from us at least a full measure of respectful sympathy. When the time is ripe we shall be found in accord with the Provincial Conservative party in the principles of Conservatism are recognized in its organization, as they undoubtedly will be. A great many seem to imagine that Conservatism must needs be victorious in local politics in British Columbia. We say, yes! if Conservative principles and measures are the basis of organization, but we say, no! most emphatically, no! if the Conservative party in provincial affairs is to be tossed hither and thither by individuals whose allegiance to it may be interpreted as only a desire that it should assist them in their personal ambition and aggrandisement. It will require devotion to principle, organization and self-sacrifice to make the party worthy of support and capable of commanding it. Given these, it has a prospect as brilliant in the domestic affairs of British Columbia as its past has been glorious, and its future is inspiring in the larger history of the Dominion.

BASE INGRATITUDE.

The much-exalted "British preference," which was so much appreciated at first glance by the Cobden Club that antiquated body, awarded a gold medal to Sir Wilfrid Laurier as a distinguished apostle of free trade, has evidently been weighed in the balance and found wanting. Mr. Harold Cox, secretary of the club, having quite recently repudiated Sir Wilfrid's "gift to the Motherland."

Writing to the Halifax Chronicle on the subject of Imperial preference, to which he holds Canada should contribute, Mr. Cox says:

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THE FAST ATLANTIC LINE.

A cable from London reports a rumor that the Canadian government has abandoned the idea of establishing a fast Atlantic passenger service, and will content itself with putting on a fast freight service.

This is not at all surprising considering the way in which the Liberal administration has trifled with this great national question ever since it came to power. At that time the Conservative government had completed arrangements for the establishment of a fast line which would have had no equal in the Atlantic. The negotiations were some and only awaited the sanction of parliament, but the Liberals with their accustomed picaresque policy declared the country was too poor to embark in such an enterprise and the question was shelved, only to be revived at intervals when public opinion demanded that action should be taken. The whole Liberal policy with regard to this question has been one of deceit, we doubt very much if Sir Wilfrid Laurier or any of his colleagues with the exception perhaps of Mr. Tarte, had ever an honest intention of establishing the line. How they propose to recede this latest fiasco with their announcements of a few weeks ago, remains to be seen. The people of Canada, irrespective of party, will demand a satisfactory explanation for if there be foundation for the rumor rumors will become the laughing stock of the Empire.

THE PREFERENTIAL TARIFF.

Liberal newspapers persistently libel Conservatives by declaring that they oppose the British preferential tariff. The charge is without foundation and none are better aware of that than the men who delight in relishing it. The Conservatives, with the exception of Mr. Tarte, have always favored preferential trade matters, but has not advocated the tariff of the Motherland in that active step taken to introduce Canadian manufactured goods and to establish a direct line of trade between the British Columbia and the Motherland. We are upon, but would suggest that such a vital matter should not be left to the hands of the Board of Trade of Victoria and Canada, but that the Manufacturers' association, take the question, collect all available information, and then, in conjunction with the Manufacturers' association, take measures to approach the Canadian government which her geographical position and manufacturing resources should secure to her.

WHAT TROUBLES THEM.

The unanimity with which the Liberal newspapers are decrying the Liberal tariff is a very curious phenomenon. Mr. Borden's visit to the West is very interesting. They declare that his speeches contain nothing new, that in them can be found no declaration of the trade policy of the government, nothing that can appeal to the voters, that the Conservatives are right in their opposition to the tariff, and that the Liberal government is a mere puppet of the British Empire.

Again, the Conservatives oppose and will insist upon a preferential tariff of duty and floods the Dominion with cheap goods under the preferential tariff. They demand that British goods should be required to furnish a certificate of origin, and that only goods of British origin should be allowed to enter the Dominion. They demand that the British goods should be required to furnish a certificate of origin, and that only goods of British origin should be allowed to enter the Dominion.

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