

The application of Sir Alexander Galt was, in substance, that Canada should have an opportunity of expressing its opinion as to the desirability of its being included in any future commercial treaty, and also that it should be enabled to withdraw from any which are now existing. The reply of the Secretary of State contains an assurance that "the wishes of Canada as made known in that letter shall be duly attended to in future commercial negotiations." As to existing treaties the Government of Canada is asked to specify any treaty to which it has an objection, when the Secretary of State will consider what steps are necessary to give effect to its wishes. We learn from the organ of the Government here that Canada has obtained exclusion from the treaties with Ecuador and Montenegro, and that up to the date of the dispatch it had been unsuccessful in regard to Belgium, Germany and Servia. We have, however, no information as to the objections to these treaties, and must, therefore, wait patiently the printing of the documents.

#### DISCRIMINATING DUTIES.

It seems to be admitted on behalf of the Government that duties which discriminate in favor of foreigners and against British subjects would involve a disruption of British connection, and we therefore need add no more on this subject. It appears to us that to discriminate in favor of one British Colony and against another is open to the same objection as in the case of foreigners. The precedent on which the Canadian Government relies is hardly in point.

It is very similar to the case of the Australasian Colonies, which were long since permitted to have free trade with one another. Even with the United States, a foreign country, Canada had for many years free trade in natural products. Even, however, if the principle were admitted that such reciprocal arrangements as those suggested, in the case of Jamaica could be made, it is clear that the Imperial Government must have a veto on the policy of Governments for which it is responsible to the Imperial Parliament. It would therefore be impossible for Canada to enter into any such arrangements with the West India colonies. It is most fortunate that such is the case, for a more suicidal policy for Canada than that suggested by Sir Leonard Tilley could hardly be imagined. We should offend at least ten of our customers in order to force a trade with an Island which is of comparatively little impor-

tance, and we should disturb all our own fiscal policy. If we reduced the duty on rum what would our own distillers say, unless we made a reduction in our excise duty? And as to sugar we should not only have our foreign exporters down on us but we should have complaints from those who have invested capital in the manufacture of beet root sugar. The truth is that discriminating duties are indefensible.

#### SIR CHARLES TUPPER'S SPEECH.

There will be general satisfaction that Sir Charles Tupper had sufficiently recovered from his severe attack of inflammatory sore throat to be able to deliver his exposition of the policy of the Government in regard to the Pacific railway on Friday evening last. The speech was necessarily controversial, as the Pacific railway has been made one of the principal planks in the Opposition platform. The chief subject of attack has been the enormous subsidy in land and money, and this of course formed a prominent topic of the speech of the Minister. The great difference between the antagonistic parties is to be found in the estimated value of the lands, which is placed by Mr. Blake at \$2.68 per acre, being it may be presumed an estimate based on the sales already made. When the bargain was originally entered into, the lands were estimated at \$1 per acre, and it will, we should think, be admitted that if the Government had put up those lands to tender it would have been impossible to have obtained such a price for them. Sir Charles Tupper made a good point by referring to the land subsidy granted to Mr. Foster, who had offered to the Mackenzie Government to commute it for 20 cents an acre, which was refused. The land has been sold so far much better than the Government could possibly have anticipated, but it has been pointed out that, in order to obtain good prices for the remaining lands, the Company will have to construct branch roads at their own expense, which will materially add to the value of the Government lands. There is no doubt that in the case of the railroads subsidized with lands in the United States there has been, as a rule, a very considerable advance in value. This very circumstance is a justification of the policy of constructing the railway, as the lands belonging to the public have increased in the same ratio, and whether sold for cash or given to actual settlers, the result will be to relieve the people of the Dominion of a large portion of the cost of the railroad.

#### THE ROUTE.

Sir Charles Tupper did not fail to vindicate the policy of insisting on the construction of the road through Canadian territory north of Lake Superior, and he made a good point by demonstrating that, on the assumption that the lands are worth what Mr. Blake estimated them at, the prairie sections alone would have entitled the Howland syndicate to a much larger subsidy in proportion than the Canadian Pacific Company have obtained. The practical effect of giving the contract to that syndicate, which would necessarily have been under the control of the Northern Pacific Company, would have been that our whole Western system would have been tributary to the United States lines. It is inconceivable how the Opposition leaders could have failed to perceive this.

#### THE GRADES.

The route by Kicking Horse Pass through the Rocky Mountains has been severely condemned on account of the unfavorable gradients, which it is admitted will be 116 feet to the mile on two sections of 20 miles each going east, and one section of 20 miles going west. On the Northern Pacific there are gradients as high as 128 to 130 feet per mile, and on the Union Pacific several of 116 feet. The steep gradients are compensated for by the immense saving of distance, viz., 119 miles as compared with the Yellow Head Pass, and 79 as compared with that by the Big Bend of the Columbia river. The sections with steep gradients can be worked advantageously with a pilot engine. Between Montreal and the Rocky Mountains there will be no grades exceeding 52 feet to the mile.

#### DISTANCES.

Sir Charles Tupper did not fail to draw attention to the great saving in distance between China and Japan and Europe by the Canadian Pacific Railway. The distance between Chicago and San Francisco is 2,408 miles, and from Chicago to Port Moody by way of St. Paul and Winnipeg 2,342 miles. The distance from Montreal to Port Moody 2,875. From New York to San Francisco the distance is 3,331 miles. Now the distance from the Asiatic ports in China and Japan is much shorter to Port Moody than to San Francisco. Sir Charles Tupper held that with its advantages in distance, grades and the use of its own railway from seaboard to seaboard, the Canadian Pacific will be in a position to command its full share of the trans-Pacific traffic, as well as that of an extensive section of the Pacific coast. It seems to us that Sir Charles Tupper made out a good case for through traffic to Europe.