

OTTAWA LETTERS.

Mr. Mulock Chops Off a Head in Nova Scotia.

Commissioner's Bill of \$20 for Reading Mulock's Letter of Instructions.

The Flood of Western Oratory—Not a French Speech on the Budget.

Ottawa, April 27.—Three days' study of the tariff reveals the fact that while it is in general principles what Mr. Fielding declares to be, mainly the late tariff, in its particular features it strikes a serious blow at some branches of Canadian industry.

Moreover, there is a feeling of uncertainty. It was thought that when the new tariff came in the confusion and anxiety would be at an end. But now there is a duty against German goods is a 30 per cent, or a 25 per cent. duty. Nor indeed is anyone quite certain that the duty in favor of England will stand.

One other thing has come to light, which is, that a great many people, who at first thought the tariff was not a bad measure, are now quite seriously alarmed about it.

The government will have to abandon some of its proposed changes. Already intimation has been given that the custom of the Medes and Persians is not to be observed. When the work of reconstruction starts one can hardly say where it will end.

The feeling of alarm that was felt in some degree in the cities of Montreal and Toronto was deepened by Sir Richard Cartwright's speech of yesterday. Sir Richard was evidently annoyed at the charge that he and his friends had appropriated the National Enquirer.

Sir Richard Cartwright and Sir Charles Tupper gave the usual speech of field on the tariff discussion yesterday. Sir Richard took the whole afternoon and Sir Charles the whole evening. It was a battle of giants, recalling the old days from 1874 to 1879, when Sir Richard Cartwright was defeated by Sir Charles Tupper in the financial crisis in the third parliament; and later, the period when Sir Charles was the first to reply to Sir Richard's review of the budgets of Sir Leonard Tilley.

the tariff was in line with the promises and protests of the last few years. The farthest he went was to say that it was in line with what he would have done years ago, when he was finance minister, if he could have had his way.

The discussion of the episode of 1876 was rather interesting. Sir Richard has never before admitted that he was obliged in that year to withdraw a tariff scheme with some protection in it. The visit of Mr. Jones of the Nova Scotia delegation which broke in upon him after he had delivered the first half of his tariff speech and compelled him to change his policy and end his speech in an unlooked-for fashion, has often been charged but never before admitted.

Sir Richard is not sure about his preferential clauses. He hopes they will stand. He hopes the treaty with Germany will not be a barrier. The government intends to argue the point out with the home government when the question is raised. If the Laurier government is found to be wrong, then an attempt will be made to set aside the treaties. Meanwhile it is proposed if the treaty is in the way to disregard it.

Ottawa, April 28.—The tariff is not yet an old story, nor will it be until the bill is through the committee. It is a very live question at present, not so much because it is debated in the house, but because it is affecting the business of many thousands of people, and because delegation after delegation is pressing to the capital to make protest.

In the house, Controller Paterson resumed the tariff debate. He is the third member of the government who has spoken on the subject, and like those who went before, has little in explanation of the new tariff. What he lacked in definiteness he made up in volume of voice. He shouted for an hour so vigorously that Mr. Davin, who followed him, was led to remark that he was speaking "on the drum head with his soup."

There is a dispute among all who have tried to ascertain what countries have duties on Canadian goods lower than the Canadian duties on their goods. The difficulty is to ascertain what shall be the basis of comparison, and that depends on the meaning of the three words "on the whole."

Mr. Paterson, by way of contending that the government has not embraced protection, insists that the particular tariff applied to England must be the basis of comparison with the old one. But as Mr. Craig pointed out, it is still used by the government as an argument to the protectionist manufacturers that they are still enjoying a considerable advantage.

Mr. Paterson's reply to Sir Charles Tupper was exceedingly weak in all but the lung power displayed. Sir Charles contended that the German treaty stood in the way of the preference to England. Mr. Paterson undertook to quote Sir Charles against himself and was able to show that Sir Charles, speaking in England, had showed that England might easily get clear of the German treaty. But this was exactly what Sir Charles had said in the house the night before. The German treaty might have been got out of the way in order that a preferential system within the empire could be introduced. But the treaty was not got out of the way. It is there yet, and what Sir Charles

says is that the first thing is to abrogate the treaty and the next is to establish a system which will give a preference to England over all countries and will also do what the tariff does not, give this country a preference to the English market.

The despatches gave a few of Mr. Davin's felicitous phrases, but none of them. Mr. Davin narrowly missed being a genius and he did not miss being a phrase maker. He charged Sir Richard Cartwright with stealing not only his tariff policy but his imperial policy from the conservatives. He had even stolen from the late Sir John Thompson a reference to Mr. Foster as a "lean and hungry Casius."

Mention is made above of Mr. Craig's remarks. Mr. Craig, one of the members for Durham, is a scholarly man, who speaks briefly and usually to the point. He has taken his union in an independent way. Mr. Craig is of the opinion that the lower of the two tariffs is the one that is likely to inflict the most damage on the Canadian producers.

He discussed in a rather lively way the claim made by some of the supporters here and apparently endorsed in England, that this tariff strikes a blow at the United States. Possibly the ministers intend to hit back in response to the Dingley bill. This is the way they went about it. The first blow they struck was to admit corn free. That blow was not enough, they must hit her again. So they reduced the duty on wheat. But on reflection they concluded to deliver a third blow, and reduced the duty on flour.

The objection of Ross Robertson was heralded as a great liberal triumph. But Mr. Robertson afforded the liberals very little comfort last night. He declared himself emphatically a supporter of Sir Charles Tupper on this issue. The leader of the opposition, who has been so far from retaining his principles, "I propose," said Mr. Robertson, "to follow the principles, clothes or no clothes." Some precious features of the national policy had been spared, but there was too much free trade in the bill. He recognized it as an attack on the tariff, and he felt that his objection because it was not direct or honest. The gradual style of attack was the most deadly. The government knew that the people were in favor of protection. They did not want to "daily talk about the tariff, and then when the time comes to vote, to vote for a revenue tariff."

The despatch sent some days ago concerning the change of regulation in the Royal Military College shows that the new commander is anxious to secure more students. A degree in the college has hitherto had high value, but it cost a good deal of money and the institution has been practically out of the reach of the masses. Sir Kitson desires to change all this. His programme reduces the cost of the course to about one half what it was and the length of time from four years to three. It would seem to reduce the value of the course of military instruction because the giving to engineering and mathematics is the same as before. Military instruction and free hand drawing are among the subjects which are to some extent sacrificed. On a hasty glance it seems that the college is changed from a place of military instruction to an institution of scientific learning.

Mr. Kitson, when seen the other day, spoke very modestly about it and said that he hoped to make the school more popular by this method. No doubt it will be more popular for students who desire to take an engineering course and do not care for the military side of it. It is a question how far the government ought to pay for the same class of work as is done in other colleges.

Sir Richard Cartwright in the intervals of tariff discussion is toiling over the jubilee battalion. So far the list of officers has not been completed. Except that Col. Aylmer will command, it is not known who will go

with the force as officers. It is presumed that the one hundred infantry and engineers will have two captains, that the fifty cavalry men will have one and the fifty artillery men one. But apparently it is not intended to have many officers for ornamental purposes. The impression is that the regiments which have been skipped in making up the list of privates will present a part of the list of officers. A group of colonels and other officers will accompany Mr. Laurier as his personal staff. So far the names of Captain Bate and Col. Donville are the only ones mentioned in that connection. Meanwhile the 43rd of Ottawa is disgruntled. It is not understood why this crack regiment should be left, but perhaps it will be made clear when the list of officers is announced.

Mr. Laurier still insists that the matter of the Grand Trunk and the extension of the Intercolonial to Montreal has not been entirely settled. There are some details yet to be arranged and until these are completed he has no communication to offer.

Ottawa, April 29.—The new tariff and the outbreak of English opinion thereon, together with the sudden and extreme conversion to imperialism of the dominant party in Ottawa, gave a new interest to the annual meeting of the British Empire League yesterday. Hitherto Col. Denison, as head of the Empire League, has had the Imperial Federation League, his hand to make his way as best he could with help from one party. This year the league has become, in fact, what it was in name and principle, a non-partisan body. A liberal minister was proposed a resolution, and took his place as one of the vice-presidents of the league. It is true that Mr. Dobell has always been a member of the organization, but that is not important, because hitherto Mr. Dobell had been a conservative.

Among the prominent men seated around the table at yesterday's meeting were the high commissioner, Sir Donald Smith; Sir Charles Tupper, McNeill, and the other officers. The meeting of the house of commons, has been found too small to accommodate the membership, which is growing with great rapidity. Some 30 or 40 senators and members of parliament were in attendance at yesterday's meeting, and these, with delegates from the provinces, well filled the large railway committee room. Those from the maritime provinces include Senators Wood and Almon, and Messrs. McAllister, McInerney, Ganong, Hale, Plint, Mills, Borden, and others.

Col. Denison, moving the adoption of the annual report, made a spirited address. He was rather well pleased with the steps taken by the government in the tariff bill so far as they favored Great Britain. But he maintained with great vigor that Great Britain ought in her own interests, as well as those of Canada, to give preference to Canadian goods and products in her own market. The result would be more to Britain's advantage and protection than it would be a gain to Canada, but it would be of great value to both countries. He spoke of his visit to England, when he had a discussion with Arnold Foster on the question of food supply and the possibilities of England being starved in the event of a war with the United States. At the time of his visit to England, quite confident that a war with the United States was an impossibility, and that the food supply of England was safe. It was not very long after that the Venezuelan question arose, and all England awoke to the consciousness that a war with the United States might happen. Arnold Foster had changed his mind entirely and had written to Col. Denison, telling him so. He admitted now that a war might take place, and that the question of food supply was a burning one. Recent events in England have deepened that conviction in England. The United States, Russia and Turkey are the chief sources of British food, and all thoughtful men in England feel that it is important that the country should be provided with the chance to get food independently of those countries. Yet today several-ninths of the total quantity of bread imported for English use comes from those three countries. The quantity produced in England itself is comparatively small, and there are often times when the country has not a week's supply ahead.

Col. Denison dwelt upon the possibility of Canada as a source of food for England. He pointed out that 50,000 farmers in the Northwest with 100 acres each, would grow all the grain necessary to feed the people of Great Britain in addition to the local supply. He dwelt upon the advantage of the geographical position. The road from Canada to England was across the Atlantic, which Col. Denison declares is practically a British thoroughfare. This road, he says, is the only one between grain growing countries and England which would be free from attack by hostile fleets. The striking distance of a ship of war has been reduced by modern methods. A modern ship must be within a limited distance of a coal supply. Between Canada and England by the northern route there is no foreign station within striking distance. The French port of St. John's is the nearest, and that is shut by British naval stations. Halifax is ours, St. Johns, Newfoundland, is ours, the Bermudas are ours. Every point to the south and west of this route is guarded by the coast guard. So far as other nations are concerned the North Atlantic is a British sea.

Col. Denison was, as usual, outspoken in his declaration that Canada was prepared to fight in the last ditch for her own country and for Britain. The colonel comes from a line of soldiers and has himself served in a sufficient number of campaigns to show that he means what he says.

Hon. Mr. Dobell, speaking in support of the resolution, traced the development of the federation league during the twenty years of its history. He was with the Canadian movement at the beginning, and was able to describe the progress of public opinion during that period.

The question of preferential trade was brought up on a resolution by Sir Charles Tupper, who moved "that this league, feeling the great advantage of Canada and the empire establishing a system of preferential trade within the empire, would respectfully urge upon the Canadian government to take action upon the suggestion made by the Right Hon. Joseph Chamberlain at the congress of the Chambers of Commerce in London last June and arrange for a conference with him to consider the best method of carrying out what is evidently the desire of and would tend to the advantage of the whole of the British Empire."

In the discussion in the house a day or two ago, Sir Charles pointed out the position taken by Mr. Chamberlain and discussed pretty fully the whole question. His remarks have already appeared in your columns. In the discussion yesterday Sir Charles avoided anything of a controversial character. Whatever might be the view of the tariff proposal before the house, both political parties were in favor of preferential trade. Evidence in favor of this last remark was followed when Mr. Lount, a strong supporter of the government, rose to second the motion. Mr. Lount spoke with great vigor and eloquence in favor of an imperial trade policy.

The question of fast steamship communication was taken up on a motion of Mr. McNeill, who in the course of his remarks had occasion to commend Sir Oliver Mowat as a loyal and devoted defender of the imperial interests in Canada. Sir Charles Tupper gave some reminiscences concerning the first visit of the British association. When he, as high commissioner, invited them to come here, there was a storm of protest. Members said that the new departure would ruin the association. It would be impossible to have a good meeting so far from home. They had changed their minds since then and were coming again this year, but he would be much obliged if we had a steamship line of our own equal to those that come to New York. Then the members of the British association and of that other great gathering, the British Medical association, would come direct to our own ports in our own steamships. Sir Donald Smith spoke in support of the resolution, and he remarked that he thought it worth coming out from England to see such a meeting.

Captain Wickham lives in Toronto. He is a retired naval officer and a member of the Imperial Navy League. When he appeared at the meeting yesterday he came straight from an interview with Mr. Laurier. The navy league has a large membership in Toronto. Its programme is to build a fleet of battleships, and of nearly every city in Canada. The policy is based upon the desire of the British admiralty to provide a strong naval reserve. In England they are afraid they cannot get men to man their fleets in case of an immediate demand. A large proportion of the naval force is composed of foreigners. Now it is certain that there is an abundance of the best material in the world for the British navy to be found on the Canadian coasts. Thousands of men, accustomed from their youth to the sea, could be called upon if that service should be needed. There are no men in England as good as these, and there is no doubt that if the admiralty would provide some means for enrolling them a large reserve force could be established. It seems remarkable that in a maritime country like ours we should keep a small standing army and a large militia force and yet do nothing to provide for a naval defence corps, though it is admitted that the great British war of the future will take place on the sea. The naval league people say that some sort of training for naval duty should be provided, but their main contention is that Great Britain should extend the principle of subsidizing lines of merchant ships, and that every subsidized ship should be compelled to make up her whole crew from men enrolled in the navy reserve.

The tariff discussion still goes on. Yesterday's debate was very lively, but it was somewhat unproductive, especially late in the evening. Mr. Richardson, a good government supporter from Manitoba, filed strong objections to the duties proposed. They were not what Manitoba was to expect. He thought from what the ministers promised that the oil duty would be abolished, or at least cut in half. Instead they had taken only one cent off, which was not very much when oil cost 35 cents a gallon and in the west 30 cents a gallon. He thought also that lumber would be made free, and the duty was still unchanged. With the high ad valorem duty on lumber and the price of the cheapest boards about \$20 per thousand, the duty called for \$4 per M. additional price. He had thought that the striking distance of a ship of war had been reduced by modern methods. A modern ship must be within a limited distance of a coal supply. Between Canada and England by the northern route there is no foreign station within striking distance. The French port of St. John's is the nearest, and that is shut by British naval stations. Halifax is ours, St. Johns, Newfoundland, is ours, the Bermudas are ours. Every point to the south and west of this route is guarded by the coast guard. So far as other nations are concerned the North Atlantic is a British sea.

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friends around him felt so deep an interest. S. D. S.

Ottawa, April 30.—Mrs. Isabella McManus, late postmaster of Northfield, British Columbia, has suddenly become a political issue. A few days ago she appeared to be a forlorn and desolate woman, without a husband, without a livelihood, and almost without friends. In her own province there were few who knew her, and none to call her famous. Mrs. McManus could hardly have dreamed that the Canadian house of commons would spend the greater part of an afternoon discussing her character and her history; that the premier of Canada and several of his ministers, the leaders of the opposition, and a score of prominent members of parliament would have delivered addresses upon the incidents of her life. A dozen years ago Mrs. McManus dwelt with her husband, an old soldier, in the western village of Qu-Apelle. There they kept a house of entertainment for travellers. Among the guests of the house, Mr. Davin, the poet politician of the prairies, and Mr. Davin, the merchant poker-player of the Northwest, were among her guests, when they chanced to visit that part of the country. Mr. McManus had served his Queen in foreign lands, and bore the marks of many a battle. He was among the first to come to the help of the country against Riel and his insurgents in 1885. When the territories were settled up, the McManuses having a liking for frontier life, moved to British Columbia and found their way to the mining district of which Northfield is the centre. Mrs. McManus was appointed postmaster of the village on the recommendation of Mr. Haslam, a worthy New Brunswick man, who then represented the district at Ottawa. Mr. McManus had a contract for carrying the mails to that point.

The town had, as it appears, a turbulent element, and occasionally there was trouble about the post office as well as other points. The woman postmaster was no tender-foot, but proved to be quite capable of taking care of herself and her office. It appeared on investigation that some people wanted to get papers which had postage charged against them, and that there were slight disputes, which grew out of the confusion between two persons of the same name who got mails at the office. Some other matters were charged and led up to an investigation by the post-office inspector. In February of this year Mrs. McManus found herself a widow and was deprived of her office about the same time. Her husband kindly insisted, and she met with an accident, from the effects of which he died some months later. In her trouble she wrote to her old friend Mr. Davin, who brought the case up in the house.

If Mr. Mulock, the postmaster general, had been a little less brutal in his treatment of the case in the house, members would have been more ready to believe that he had not been heartless in his dismissal of the woman. As it is, Mr. Mulock has shown himself to be entirely without kindly instincts, and also to be incapable of dealing honestly in the house with a case like this. The office itself is not an important one, as the salary is less than \$200, but the treatment of the case is very useful for purposes of illustration.

Mr. Davin, some days ago, put the question: "Why was Mrs. Isabella R. McManus deprived of her position as postmistress of Northfield, B. C.?" To this the postmaster general replied, "The postmaster in question was dismissed because she was incapable of dealing honestly in the house with a case like this. The office itself is not an important one, as the salary is less than \$200, but the treatment of the case is very useful for purposes of illustration."

Mr. Davin did not allow the matter to rest there. On Wednesday he moved the adjournment of the house and brought up the question of the reading a letter from the widow and assuring Mr. Mulock that Mr. McManus, who died last February, had not come to life since. He insisted that there had been no grounds at all for the dismissal, except that a man wanted the office. Mr. Mulock rising to defend himself, began with a flippant reference to Mr. Davin, and "this word of his." Then he read his alleged justification from the inspector's report. To show what kind of a man Mr. Mulock is, the following paragraph from the report is quoted: "There hardly seems to be sufficient grounds in the evidence of the petitioners to support the charges of mismanagement of the office. That there has been considerable ill-feeling between those of the petitioners who gave evidence and the postmaster, is on the other hand apparent, and I would state that some enquiries I have made among the people of the place generally there is a feeling that the postmaster and her assistant, Mr. McManus, her husband, are somewhat overbearing in their conduct toward many visiting the office, and several instances were brought to my notice, trivial in themselves, where a more judicious treatment might have avoided more or less unpleasantness. This gave rise to a feeling amongst many of the residents of Northfield that a change is desirable. On the other hand, the duties of the office are satisfactorily carried out and more attention is given to detail than is generally found in a country office. It is therefore, to submit the result of my investigation to your consideration."

This closing paragraph of the report follows a review of the evidence in which the inspector considered each of the charges and found them all disproved. Now, it will hardly be believed that Mr. Mulock, who as the head of the department, was the only member of the house in possession of the document, read the paragraph omitting entirely the first sentence quoted above and leaving out the two last ones. That is to say, he garbled the report by taking out of the middle

of the paragraph made by the altogether the report charges were Mrs. McManus in a satisfied

Mr. Foster little later as which left Mr. fortunate po general is a skin, but ev tive over the gave him, n but his ne was not the that temper, who was one men in that party man, that any me should be de presented." whole of M there was no mistress age could not be than had bee field people Victoria, Sir an other me side joined ing out that a political d the plunder Mulock to re spoint the fa the fact that soldier and b no means of the case wa that should the spoils ay

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