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THE SEMI-WEEKLY SUN.

ST. JOHN, N. B., NOVEMBER 21, 1903.

CANADIAN AND BRITISH PREFERENCE.

When Mr. Chamberlain is asked by his English critics for some assurance that the colonies will respond to a preferential tariff he recognizes that some answer is required. He does not say with certain Canadian politicians that the trafficking and huckstering spirit ought to be rebuked. Mr. Chamberlain is bringing forward a business proposition and is prepared to have it treated as such.

The Canadian policy is most inconvenient for the advocate of preferential tariff in Great Britain. If Mr. Chamberlain could say to the people of England: "Canada now treats all countries alike, but she is ready to respond to a small preference on wheat and on animal products to give a preference to British goods equal to one-third of her tariff," that assurance would be an answer to much criticism.

It is true that Mr. Chamberlain can say that Canada has already given the one-third preference. But that is not an effective statement. He is met by the declaration that it is not necessary to give Canada a preference in response to one which she has given to other countries, and in her own interests. The free traders quote to Mr. Chamberlain the words of Sir Wilfrid Laurier that Canada desired no return in kind for this concession, but that the Canadian reduction was the first step in the direction of free trade, and that Canada's advice to Britain was never to depart from the free trade policy.

In a recent speech Lord Rosebery quoted Sir Wilfrid with great effect, and Mr. Chamberlain could only meet him by showing that Sir Wilfrid had since then agreed to the declaration of colonial premiers in favor of a general imperial preference.

In Birmingham, Mr. Chamberlain met the demand for information as to what the colonies would do by reference to the policy adopted in Australia, South Africa and New Zealand. In regard to Canada he told the audience that they could not count on the continuance of the preference in this country unless Great Britain took corresponding action. This view he supported by a citation of the passage in Mr. Fielding's budget speech in which the Canadian finance minister observed that the Canadian preference did not appear to be appreciated by Great Britain, and that since such was the case, it was a question whether it should not be withdrawn in the near future.

A QUESTION OF INFERENCE.

The Sun admits editorially today that in the event of a general election the Laurier government will win. This remarkable statement appears in yesterday's issue of the Moncton Transcript. When we come to look for

an excuse for the Transcript's assertion we find it in the suggestion of the Sun that senatorships now vacant may be reserved for the consolation of defeated candidates. The Transcript says that Lord Aberdeen refused to appoint senators on the recommendation of the Tupper government after the election of 1896, and concludes that as a defeated government cannot therefore make recommendations the Sun does not expect the Laurier government to be defeated. The reasoning is bad. Sir Wilfrid may expect Lord Minto to follow the precedent set by Lord Dufferin rather than that of Lord Aberdeen. Besides it does not follow that Sir Wilfrid will be successful in the election because he hopes for success. The Transcript's inference suggests an observation made by Ben. Russell, M. P. for Hants, under similar circumstances. A Halifax lawyer whom we will call Mr. Vulture charged Mr. Russell with having made a certain statement. When challenged for particulars he contended that the statement could be deduced from something which Mr. Russell had written. In his rejoinder Mr. Russell rejected the explanation observing that "any fool should be able to repeat a statement, but to draw an inference is an intellectual operation implying the use of faculties which Mr. Vulture gives no indication of possessing."

THE FEDERAL MUSEUM.

The federal government has taken the first step toward the erection of a building that is much needed. A site in Ottawa has been purchased for the Victoria Museum which will be the home of the geological survey, and a place to exhibit the priceless mineral collection now contained in Sussex street. For some time past the geological staff of the government has been pressing upon the government the necessity of protecting this collection, which contains the fruits of a half a century of work of members of the geological survey staff, with much that has been purchased from or contributed by other collectors. The collection, which is zoological, botanical, and archeological, as well as mineral, is hardly available for examination and instruction where it is, and it ought to be displayed in a building worthy of the object and of the country. It is hoped that the museum will be such a structure.

THE GENTLE ARMENIAN.

William Watson, the poet, and the other fierce assailants of "Abdul the Damned," will perhaps find some instruction in the two Armenian murders which recently took place in London. The perpetrators of these outrages are among the new Christians with whom the Sultan has to deal. It appears that the London victims were men who have done all that they could to assist the poor among their fellow countrymen. The assassins and the society to which they belonged hated them because they did not spend their money in supporting insurrections and promoting revolutionary movements. Similarly in Macedonia the professional freedom of liberty is the man who butchers stray Turks, dynamites ships and trains, burns villages, abducts missionaries, and carries on other diversions of the kind, either to procure means for larger operations, or to provoke the Turks to reprisals which will make a talk in civilized Europe. Yet there are in England great numbers of kindly men and women who think that Great Britain should interfere on behalf of the Armenians in Macedonia. Some of these gentlemen still blame England for defending British South Africa against the Boer invaders.

OUR DESTINY.

The valued Globe has postponed the further advocacy of annexation and is now going in for Canadian independence. Possibly encouraged thereby by the rapidity of United States acknowledgments. While others see in recent history many signs of the closer union of Canada with the rest of the empire, the Globe finds that the Dominion is tending toward complete separation, and thus states its conclusions or desires.

CANADIAN GOVERNMENT FINANCE.

The government organs are pretty well supplied with campaign literature, showing that they expect an early election. They furnish daily variations of Mr. Fielding's budget statements concerning the increase of trade and revenue. It is not clear what the government has done to increase the trade which, as expressed

the empire. We shall then be one people in a far deeper sense than we are now.

A RAILWAY DEAL.

The report published this morning that the Grand Trunk company has acquired the Great Northern railway of Canada, and is likely to acquire the Mackenzie and Mann lines east and west is interesting, if true. But it should be remembered that both Mr. Mackenzie and Mr. Mann have declared that they intend to complete their system as an independent trunk line. The Great Northern runs from Riviere a Pierre, Quebec, to Hawkesbury, Ontario. From the first named place it has access to Quebec city by running rights on the Quebec and St. John railway. Westward it meets the Canada Atlantic, with which it has close traffic arrangements, the two roads constituting a through route from Parry Sound to Quebec city. A branch to Montreal is under construction. The Great Northern's own line is 175 miles in length, and the company has a large terminal property and elevator at Quebec. The company is stocked at \$3,000,000 and bonded for over \$4,000,000.

THE POSITION OF ST. JOHN.

The organ of the Laurier government at Ottawa says: St. John is winning pitifully over its winged port. It must, it says, have more workers and warehouses. But who is to provide them? The municipality, the C. P. R. want, the provincial government want. Timorously, St. John is now asking itself whether this is a work of general advantage to the Dominion or of national importance, because in that regard there would be a prima facie case for aid from the Canadian treasury.

BRITISH COLUMBIA CONSERVATIVES.

The return of Attorney General Wilson in the city of Vancouver by a large majority, places the conservative government of that province in a position of danger. As the McBride government has a majority of only two in the legislature over liberals and independents together, the defeat of a minister in a by-election would have placed the ministry in an awkward position. This was recognized by the premier, who said before the polling that he would not attempt to carry on his government. While Mr. Wilson and his ticket of five had been returned by a majority of between five hundred and a thousand, the government candidates did not have a majority of the whole vote cast. There were two independent tickets, and some of the candidates on these tickets obtained as many votes as the lowest liberal candidate. As no labor or socialist candidate offered in the by-election, the element of uncertainty in this case was the labor and socialist vote. It would appear that the government candidate received at least half of this non-party vote.

Mr. Houston of Nelson, who was excluded from the ministry by Lieutenant Governor Sir Henri Joly, is reported to have declared that he is going to the legislature to push the McBride government for not insisting on his appointment. Mr. McBride could have insisted to the extent of resigning and giving over the control at this critical time to his political opponents. He might naturally think that this was too large a price for the party and the country to pay for Mr. Houston, and if Mr. Houston is taking the position attributed to him, Mr. McBride is right.

LET US HEAR MR. BLAIR.

Mr. Blair is now in this province, among a people greatly interested in Canadian transportation problems, and especially in the Grand Trunk Pacific project. As minister of railways it was Mr. Blair's particular business to study these questions, and as head of the railway department, he made a thorough examination of the Grand Trunk Pacific project. To him the project was so important and gave such promise of national disaster, that, rather than accept responsibility for it, he resigned office and left the government. His own conclusions were expressed some three months ago in an able speech. Since then, Mr. Blair has not joined in the discussion, though many criticisms of his speech were offered by ministers and members of the house. Some of these not only criticized Mr. Blair's speech, but Mr. Blair himself.

Now that the smoke of the battle has cleared away and the question can be discussed before the public in a cool and frank fashion, Mr. Blair cannot do better than call a meeting of St. John electors and lay the case before them. This is his constituency, and we can assure the representative of the city an audience only limited by the capacity of the building where he speaks. We can assure him also that he will be heard with a real and intelligent interest, not only by his own friends and supporters, but by the whole community without regard to party. St. John has had representatives in many ministries, federal and provincial, but it is not recalled that on any other occasion was a minister representing a St. John riding compelled to retire from the government by a difference of opinion with his colleagues. Now for the first time Mr. Blair has opportunity to meet his constituents face to face and explain to them the occurrence which sends him back a private member after his election as a minister.

YORK CLAIMS THE SEAT.

The Sun's statement that York county would make a claim for the seat in the cabinet vacated by Mr. Dunn if he should be appointed to the custom house is confirmed by the Frederickton Gleaser. That journal, which is a strong supporter of the provincial government, says: His appointment to the collectorship would make a vacancy in the provincial government, and this vacancy we feel should be filled by one of the representatives of York county. It is some years since York was represented in the government. Party consideration induced her representative not to press her claims for a portfolio. But now the situation does not call for a sacrifice, and we have representatives of the material which has ever done credit to the people. The next survivor general should be a York county man.

NEW TRANSPORT MEDALS.

Some of the Officers Who Received Them Known Here.

The London Standard of November 5 contains the following list of recipients of the King's medals for valor. The King, in the grounds of Buckingham Palace, yesterday morning presented to various officers of the British army and navy medals for valor. The medals were instituted by his Majesty in 1902 in recognition of the efforts of the British troops in the South African and China wars. The medals have his Majesty's effigy on one side, and a map of the southern hemisphere, in relief, on the other. The ribbon is of dark blue and red. The name and description of the recipient are engraved on the edge. The total number of officers entitled to the decoration under the rules laid down by his Majesty in 1902, is 1,810, representing 180 troop transport sailing under the British flag and owned by 39 companies or firms, of which 116 were engaged in the transport of troops to South Africa, and 64 employed in the transport of troops to China. The distribution yesterday was to 143 officers, belonging to 23 different lines of steamers, having their headquarters at London, Liverpool, Glasgow and Hull. They followed the complete list of officers to whom medals were presented by his Majesty. Some of the recipients are known here, having formerly visited St. John. Among them are Capt. A. J. Braes of the Albany, who came here in the Monaghan four years ago. He now commands the Parisian. Along with him medals were given to Second Officer engineer, Capt. J. Craig of the Anchor line, was awarded a medal. He was in the City of Rome. It is believed Capt. Craig was in St. John in 1888 in the "St. Italia." Owen Jones, R. N., R. of the Elder-Dempster, R. N., also got one. There was a captain of this name here in the "St. Rammore" in 1902. The medals were presented by his Majesty at the Admiralty in London. Some of the recipients are known here, having formerly visited St. John. Among them are Capt. A. J. 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