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Government

Mr. Balfour has succeeded in filling the vacancies in his cabinet. In the reorganized administration Mr. Brod-

Reconstruction

rick, formerly Secretary for War, succeeds Lord George Hamilton as Secretary for India. Austen Chamberlain, Postmaster General, succeeds Mr. Ritchie as Chancellor of the Exchequer. Alfred Lyttleton, Recorder of Oxford, succeeds Joseph Chamberlain as Secretary for the Colonies. H. O. Arnold-Forster, Secretary to the Admiralty, succeeds Mr. Brodric as Secretary for War. Graham Murray, Lord Advocate of Scotland, succeeds Lord Balfour of Burleigh, as Secretary for Scotland. Lord Stanley, Financier of the War Office, succeeds Austen Chamberlain as Postmaster General. It appears to be the general opinion that the new timber put into the cabinet is hardly of a character to support the expectation of durability. Mr. Brodric and Mr. Austen Chamberlain who were previously members of the administration and have simply been transferred to other departments are men of tested and well recognized ability, and will not probably be judged incompetent of filling satisfactorily the new positions to which they have been appointed. The appointment of Hon. Alfred Lyttleton to the office of Colonial Secretary is that which causes most surprise. Mr. Lyttleton is a man wholly without ministerial experience. His fame, it would appear, is connected with athletics rather than with state-craft, and although he is said to be a man of ability and a good speaker his appointment to the head of so important a department was not among the things expected. Mr. Arnold-Forster and Lord Stanley are comparatively young men of some parliamentary experience. They may prove themselves to be able administrators, but that is a matter for the present to be taken on trust. Lord Graham Murray, who succeeds Lord Balfour of Burleigh as Secretary for Scotland, may also possess ability as a statesman, but his reputation is yet to be made.

Devonshire's

Resignation.

It is announced that the Duke of Devonshire, who was leader of the Conservative party in the House of Lords, has resigned the office of Lord President of the Council. This is considered a very serious blow to the administration. It has been doubtful which side of the fiscal controversy now agitating the United Kingdom the Duke would espouse, but it had been recognized that his influence, on whichever side it might be cast, would be exceedingly influential. Some writer had wittily said that apparently the line of cleavage passed right through the Duke of Devonshire, since sometimes he seemed to speak on one side and at other times on the other side of the question. It appears from a published letter of the Duke to Mr. Balfour, in which he gives the reasons for his resignation, that he does not object to the proposal to impose retaliatory duties under certain conditions, but he thinks that the Prime Minister has gone too far in cutting loose from the doctrine of free trade as a principle. "It was unnecessary in my opinion," writes the Duke of Devonshire, "to assert that the controversy of 1846, which you describe as the great lawsuit between free trade and protection, is of no interest whatever to us except from an historical point of view. Nor can I think that it was necessary to assert that you desired to reverse the fiscal tradition, to alter fundamentally the fiscal tradition that has prevailed during the last two generations. I had hoped to have found in your speech a definite statement of adherence to the principles of free trade as the ordinary basis of our fiscal and commercial system and an equally definite repudiation of the principle of protection in the interest of our national industries. But in their absence I cannot help thinking that such declarations as those which I have quoted cannot fail to have the effect of materially encouraging the advocates of direct protection in the controversy which has been raised throughout the country and of discouraging those who, like me, and I hoped yourself, believe that our present system of free imports, is on the whole most advantageous to the country, although we do not contend that the principles on which it rests possesses any such authority or sanctity as to forbid any departure from it, for sufficient reasons. . . . You have in your second speech said that this subject could no longer be left an open question among the members of the government and I think I have said enough to prove to you that there is no such agreement between us on the general question as to make it possible for me to be a satisfactory exponent of your views and those of the government in the

debates which must inevitably take place in the next session of parliament."

Mr. Balfour's Reply to the Duke.

That the Duke of Devonshire's resignation took Mr. Balfour by surprise, is evident from the contents and the tone of his letter in reply to the Duke's letter intimating his decision to resign. The Prime Minister does not conceal his feeling that the Duke's final action was not, under the circumstances, what he (Balfour) had a right to expect. He says that he had with perfect frankness discussed with the Duke of Devonshire all the details of his policy, that on Sept. 16 the Duke informed him of his intention to remain in the Government, and Mr. Balfour holds that he had a right to consider the decision final. The Duke had been consulted in regard to filling vacancies in the Government, had given the Prime Minister the benefit of his judgment on delicate matters submitted to him and had even initiated proposals of his own, which Mr. Balfour had willingly accepted. Their last communication on these subjects was in a letter to the Duke dictated by Mr. Balfour on his way to Sheffield, and less than 48 hours thereafter he received in Edinburgh the telegrams which first announced the Duke's intention to resign and his desire to see the process of resignation consummated without delay and without discussion. Mr. Balfour is not willing to accept the Duke's explanation that the reason for his unexpected resignation was the Prime Minister's Sheffield speech. He holds there was no doctrine in that speech which was not in his Notes on Inland Free Trade and in his letter to Mr. Chamberlain, with the contents of both of which the Duke of Devonshire was familiar. There appears indeed to be a general feeling that the Duke's resignation is not adequately explained by his reference to Mr. Balfour's Sheffield speech, and it is surmised that his really insuperable objection to remaining in the Government was the appointment of Mr. Austen Chamberlain to the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer. Be this as it may, there is no question but that the resignation of the Duke of Devonshire is a serious disaster for the Balfour Government and probably may be justly regarded as presaging its speedy downfall.

Mr. Chamberlain's Glasgow Speech.

At Glasgow on October 6, Hon. Joseph Chamberlain, the ex-Colonial Secretary, delivered his speech in exposition of his fiscal policy—a speech which had been for sometime awaited with great interest. Apart from any consideration of the merits of the policy set forth by Mr. Chamberlain, his speech is generally regarded as a grand oratorical effort. He showed that the increase of Great Britain's export trade in the last thirty years had been small in comparison with that of the United States and Germany. British exports to protected countries during that period have even shown a considerable shrinkage, and this would have been much more perceptible if the loss in these quarters had not been offset by the large increase of trade with the British colonies. But the colonies also have adopted protective systems, and under their influence the tendency will be more and more to develop home manufactures to the exclusion of British manufactures, and thus still further to cripple the export trade of Britain. Mr. Chamberlain believes that a system of preferential duties could be arranged between the United Kingdom and the colonies, which would save British export trade from further loss in that direction: "We can say to our great colonies: We understand your views and aspirations. Let us exchange with you for your productions; do it because we are kinsmen, because it is good for the empire as a whole, and because we have taken the first step and set you the example; we offer you a preference and rely upon your patriotism and affection that we shall not be losers thereby." What then does Mr. Chamberlain propose by way of encouraging the colonies to grant preferential treatment to British manufactures in colonial markets. He does not propose to tax anything which is a raw material of British manufacturers, but he proposes to place a small duty, not exceeding two shillings a quarter, on foreign wheat, and a corresponding tax on flour, also a small tax of five per cent. on foreign meal and dairy products, and lastly, he would give a substantial preference to the colonies on wines and fruits. On

the other hand, for the relief of the British tax payer, he proposes large reductions in the duties on tea, sugar, coffee, and cocoa, and he seems to have argued that the proposed readjustment would result in a reduction of the cost of food both for the artisan and the agricultural laborer. The loss to the exchequer he estimated at £2,800,000, but that and more he proposed to find in another branch of the policy of fiscal reform, sometimes called retaliation and sometimes reciprocity. A moderate duty of 10 per cent. on manufactured goods, varying according to the amount of labor in them, Mr. Chamberlain argued, would give to the exchequer £9,000,000 a year, and were he chancellor of the exchequer, he would make use of that sum for the reduction of taxation.

Russia and Japan

The present situation between Russia and Japan is one of high tensions. Relations between the two countries have been strained to the danger point, and evidently, in the view of either nation, war is not a remote contingency. Russia seems determined to push her schemes for enlargement in Manchuria—and perhaps also in Korea—regardless of every consideration but that of war, and possibly she is even willing to venture upon war with Japan rather than relinquish her purpose. In Japan there is a jingo element eager for war, but the Japanese Government will hardly be led into hostilities with so powerful an antagonist unless diplomatic resources fail of securing what it considers the rights and dignity of the nation. There is no reason to suppose that Russia desires war with Japan, but evidently she has made extensive preparations with that contingency in view, and the outbreak of hostilities would find her ready with large naval and military forces in the East. In withstanding Russian aggression in the east, Japan would probably have the moral sympathy of Great Britain and the United States—it is not believed she would have more in these quarters—and the other powers would probably maintain a neutral attitude. A Berlin despatch of Oct. 11 in reference to the situation says: "Russia and Japan act as though either would fight if the other should hold immovably to the position taken up in the last exchange of communications. This is the actual situation as understood officially from reports received from the German Embassy in St. Petersburg and the German Legation at Tokio. Yet this mutual attitude with hostile preparations by both countries, is still regarded here as not excluding an honorable arrangement. Neither government has gone so far that it must fight or be humiliated, but either cabinet by a single step can put the other in that position. This delicate balance, may, of course, be violently disturbed any day, though no ultimatum has yet been thrown on either scale."

The Alaskan Boundary Commission.

The end of the argument before the Alaskan Boundary Commission was reached on Thursday last with the completion of the argument of Mr. Dickinson, counsel for the United States. At the close of the argument Mr. Foster, the United States agent, expressed the thanks of his Government for the courtesy and general hospitality of his Majesty's Government. No word, he said, had been spoken to mar the cordial and friendly character of the proceedings, and he trusted this might be a happy augury of the tribunal's decision. To this the president, Lord Alverstone, made a fitting reply, and the Commission adjourned until Monday when it would hold its first private session to consider the verdict to be rendered. The outcome will of course be awaited with great interest. Mr. Dickinson's argument is generally regarded as a brilliant and forcible exposition of the case in the interests of the United States. The British-Canadian side of the case appears also to have been handled with much ability, and now that the whole case has been set forth before the world by able counsel on both sides, it seems pretty clear that the issue involved is one for adjustment by mutual concession, or failing that, for arbitration before an impartial tribunal. The contention of many United States newspapers that the British-Canadian case was so absurd as only to deserve to be laughed out of court has certainly not been sustained by investigation.