

they really are. A rate of wage is demanded that cannot possibly be paid. It would be well for the daily papers to take this matter up and try and make it plain to employees that they had better work and wait patiently, and not try to force matters. Strikes never do good, but they often do harm to the strikers.

The session of Parliament which has just closed at Ottawa can hardly be said to have been fruitful in new measures, although some very good and useful work was done. The budget speech was the first of any importance in the House. It was long and elaborate, but not very clear. Still it was as clear as could have been expected, for Sir Leonard Tilley had to dabble in a great deal of what was merely fanciful and prophetic. But the debate which followed was an absolute waste of time. Sir Richard Cartwright and his handful of henchmen posed again as the indignant *doctrinaires*, endeavouring to prove that no tariff could be framed which would help the development of our industries, while the friends of the National Policy spent their strength and time in the vain attempt to demonstrate that an increase of taxes brought a corresponding increase of prosperity. For all practical purposes the discussion might have closed when Sir Richard Cartwright had spoken in answer to the budget speech.

Undoubtedly the event of the session was the debate introduced by Mr. Blake in proposing a resolution to postpone the building of the railway to British Columbia. On reading the speeches I find it difficult to say which was the better, that of Mr. Blake, or that of Sir Charles Tupper, the Minister of Railways. On the whole, considering that Mr. Blake led an attack, and had a good deal of vantage ground, and that Sir Charles had to defend some very indefensible positions, I am disposed to think that the latter came out of it with most honour. But Mr. Blake proved, what every sane man in Canada, who takes the trouble to think about these matters, and does not put faith in the political gospel of *laissez aller*, has long since believed, that this enterprise is utterly beyond our powers. It is all very well for Sir John A. Macdonald to read, and the *Globe* to repeat and exaggerate glowing predictions about enormous immigration, and for the *Journal of Commerce* to chide me for treating solemn compacts with British Columbia so lightly, but what are we to do when we find that recklessness and not solemnity characterised the compact? that it was entered into when no surveys had been made, no estimates given, nothing calculated on any reasonable basis? and that we promised what it will ruin us to perform? I should say we had better confess our sins and break the solemn compact which was based on ignorance and folly. The *Journal of Commerce* tells us that we are "annually piling up a gigantic debt," that we are "drifting into bankruptcy," and that "the day of reckoning is assuredly near," and yet solemnly supports the solemn and sad tomfoolery of the railway to British Columbia.

What prospect is there of the arrival of this million of immigrants so glibly talked of? Very little. There is a tremendous emigration from Europe, but it is mainly to the United States. The Provinces of Quebec and Ontario are being depleted to an alarming extent—some are going to the North-West, but more are going across the lines into the United States. But these Provinces will have, for a long time to come, to bear the enormous outlay involved in the construction of the Pacific Railway. Indirect taxation can be pushed no further; the limit is reached, but the burden goes on increasing. And with the burden poverty is increasing. Say what we will about it, trade is not more prosperous to any appreciable extent; and yet we are plunging into fresh enterprises as wildly as ever. When will the age of practical common sense dawn upon us? Not until we have learnt to put political considerations and partizanship under some others which are more important just now.

Mr. Blake's assumption of the leadership of the Liberal party is significant. If he could command his own temper, and defer a little to others, he would have a splendid chance of achieving a great success; for owing to the inevitable growth of a really liberal opinion, and a strange and sadly deplorable fatality, the influence of the *Globe* is

broken and must fast disappear. While the leading spirit was able to wield his baton, the chorus had to follow, however unwillingly; but an accident which all parties and every right minded person must deeply regret, has put an end to that, and the disaster to the Hon. George Brown may be reckoned as the death-blow to Gritism in the Liberal party. Mr. Blake has an opportunity to introduce a new era. At present the Conservatives of Canada approach much more nearly to the Liberalism of England than do the Liberals. Sir John is more after the mind and heart of an English Liberal than Mr. Mackenzie—but Mr. Blake can, if he will, adopt Liberalism out and out, and "dish the Whigs." Will he do it? Judging from his speech on the Pacific Railway matter, I should say, he will not. So far he is not a success.

A serious consideration of the Finance Minister's action with regard to the currency can only make it clear that he has taken a step toward irredeemable paper money without intending to do so. I regard this as the most ill-considered scheme the Government has supported.

The Senators have had attention called to themselves just three times during the Session. The first was on the appointment of their Speaker, the Hon. D. L. Macpherson. It was in every way fortunate, and no one thought of cavilling against it. When it was known that he was to be a member of the Cabinet as well, all parties were pleased; for Mr. Macpherson has won his way to this distinction, and when his sudden illness occurred, the country hoped for his recovery. The second time in which we had to notice the Senate was because of a very discreditable row among its own members, of which the least said is the better. The third is very recent. They have thrown out M. Girouard's Bill by a majority of one, thus once more giving an argument against their own existence. Why have they thrown out this Bill? They cannot tell; nobody can tell. Fossilism has been galvanized into action once more; that is all. But fossilism is doomed.

The *Montreal Gazette* was a little bewildering in its Tuesday's article on "Commercial Union with the United States." On careful reading I could come to no other conclusion than that the *Gazette* does not exactly know its own mind about the matter. It is opposed to a commercial union on the grounds that, being a part of the Empire of Great Britain, we cannot discriminate against the mother country, and commercial union would inevitably lead to political union. The answer to the first statement is our N. P.; and the answer to the second is that it is merely a political guess. But what does the *Gazette* mean by saying: "So from our point of view, as loyal upholders of British connection, we desire such a treaty as will extend reciprocal advantages to each country, enabling us to build up a powerful, independent nation, as an integral part of the Empire, rather than embrace a system which must speedily weaken and ultimately sever our political relations with Great Britain." How can Canada be an "independent nation" and yet "an integral part of the Empire"? At present it is neither the one nor the other—nor can it be until some radical changes have taken place; but both it cannot be. The *Gazette* may as well face that fact and make up its mind which it shall be in so far as it can influence matters. This kind of talk keeps two contingencies before the public, and suggests that well known and much-used political "fence," but nothing more. Surely it is time for us to have something more definite.

The third termers are manifestly losing ground in the United States, and General Grant's chances of returning to the White House are being rapidly reduced. The plea is made on every side that Washington's example has passed into law by the right of custom, and that, no matter how good and efficient a President may be, he ought not to be nominated for a third term. And to those outside of the States who think of these things, the sentiment seems a good one. Men may be kings under other names, and in the history of the world it has often happened that a dictatorship has been established under the guise of a prolonged term of Presidency. If Grant return to office it will be the beginning of evil days for the great Republic, for it will be admitting the thin end of the wedge for a change in the form of Government. It is difficult to see in what General Grant succeeded so