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ST. JOHN, N. B., TUESDAY, JANUARY 28, 1913.

MR. PUGSLEY'S DISCREDITABLE TACTICS.

On Thursday, December 15th, 1912, Sir Wilfrid Laurier spoke in the House of Commons on the naval question. During the course of his speech the ex-Premier, referring to his policy when Leader of the Government, said it was the intention to create a Canadian Navy. "We asked for tenders," said Sir Wilfrid, "with the intention of having ultimately a double unit; one on the Pacific Ocean and one on the Atlantic Ocean; we asked for tenders for four cruisers and six destroyers, which would cost $11,280,000. We did not choose to award the contract in view of the impending change of Government.

"Some Hon. members: Hear, hear.

"Sir Wilfrid Laurier: Yes; we thought as the general elections were coming on that it would not be fair, in a matter of this kind, which was an issue between the two parties, to award the contract in case there might be, as there was, a change of Government. I say now, that the Government in power would have been better advised if they had awarded the contract, and, had they done so, we would at the present time have under construction on the stocks in Montreal four cruisers and six destroyers. . . . I have reason to believe that the Minister of the Naval Service has actually an offer from one of the great British firms to build the largest possible plant in Montreal if he chooses to have it."

These were the words of Sir Wilfrid as reported in Hansard of December 15, 1912.

In glaring headlines and with a blare of trumpets, the echoes of which are intended to resound in the farthest depths of New Brunswick's densest forest, Mr. Pugsley announced in the Telegraph yesterday that the naval shipyard in which the new Canadian Navy was to be constructed was lost to St. John through the action of Mr. Hazen in returning the deposit of the lowest tenderer. Mr. Pugsley has made the assertion that the Canadian Navy would have been constructed in St. John under the Laurier Administration. Against this statement we have that of Sir Wilfrid Laurier that Montreal was the site chosen for the construction of Canadian warships. Which of the two are we to believe? Sir Wilfrid Laurier, the master of the Administration, or Mr. Pugsley, a member of the Cabinet, who, so far as this matter was concerned, spoke absolutely without authority?

The evidence handed out by the Telegraph, to prove the statement made by Mr. Pugsley is correct, was the tender of Messrs. Cammell, Laird and Co., dated Montreal, April 29th, 1911. In this tender it is set forth that several sites on the St. Lawrence and the Atlantic coast of Canada had been examined by this firm and that they decided on St. John as affording the most natural and advantageous site for the shipyard. When the tender was made the firm had not completed arrangements for the site and this fact was pointed ont to them by the Deputy Minister of the Naval Service. In a subsequent letter, dated May 9th, 1911, Cammell, Laird and Company notified the Deputy Minister of the Naval Service that they could make such arrangements with regard to the acquisition of such a site for shipbuilding works at St. John as would be satisfactory to the Department. Messrs. Cammell, Laird and Company were the lowest tenderer and when the old Government went out of power the deposit of $100,000 for security for the performance of the contract was not returned.

For one reason or another the Laurier Administration gave but little consideration to the tenders received for the construction of the so-called Canadian Navy. Tenders were invited, and they seem to have been received about the first of May. Certainly the name of the lowest tenderer was known as early as the middle of May, 1911, four months before the Laurier Administration appealed to the people and were defeated at the polls. If Mr. Pugsley had been as anxious to secure the shipbuilding plant for St. John in May, 1911, as he apparently is in January, 1913, he was in a position as a member of the Laurier Government to have done so. There was no talk of a general election in May, 1911, although one was held four months later and the wonder is that such a loyal and patriotic citizen of St. John remained silent doing absolutely nothing until his own opportunity passed. Why did he not act then? When Mr. Hazen came into power the whole situation concerning the naval question had been changed. The plan of Sir Wilfrid Laurier had been condemned by naval experts because the ships would be obsolete before they were launched. Hence it was decided to go no futher with Sir Wilfrid's plan.

Mr. Pugsley should be more above board in discussing questions of this character. When he was retired from office, through the defeat of the Laurier Government, the business which he had in hand, so far as St. John is concerned, was all in an unfinished condition. He had advertised for tenders for the Courtenay Bay works and a month before the election was in possession of full information as to who was the lowest tenderer, yet the contract for this important work was not let, although it was in his own department. Mr. Pugsley said it would be let and that he had the money at his disposal to carry the work forward. He repeated this announcement more than once during the campaign although he knew it was misleading and the facts were not as he stated. Now he is attempting to make it appear that Mr. Hazen, through negligence, has prevented a valuable industry from being established at St. John. The statement is wholly without foundation. Mr. Pugsley's assertion that the ships would be built in St. John was directly contradicted by Sir Wilfrid Laurier little more than a month ago, a fact with which Mr. Pugsley is conversant.

Fortunately for St. John, Mr. Hazen was able to do what Mr. Pugsley failed to accomplish. There is strong evidence that the ex-Minister of Public Works was unable to obtain the consent of his colleagues to sign the contract for the Courtenay Bay works. So far as St. John is affected it makes little difference whether Mr. Pugsley was turned down by his colleagues or not. When Mr. Pugsley went out of office the Courtenay Bay contract, which he said he had the money to go on with, was not signed and it was due to Mr. Hazen's influence in the new Cabinet that this work was undertaken without delay.

From 1908 Mr. Pugsley talked of what he was going to do for St. John. The Courtenay Bay works were to have been completed in three years and traffic was to have been passing over the wharves and through the warehouses which were to have been constructed during the interval. In 1911 there were neither wharves nor warehouses and there had not been a dipper of mud removed from Courtenay Bay nor a bushel of concrete mixed for the wharves he promised to have completed. Things were just as they were when Mr. Pugsley became Minister of Public Works, save the preparation of a new set of plans. Five months after Mr. Hazen became a member of the Borden Government the Courtenay Bay improvements were taking practical shape. It hardly lies in the mouth of a man who so completely failed as did Mr. Pugsley to make good the pledges to his constituency, to charge Mr. Hazen with the commission of an act by which St. John was deprived of a great industry.

Mr. Pugsley will have to greatly strengthen his case and produce much better evidence than he has as yet furnished before he can convince the people of this constituency that even had the Cammell, Laird contract been accepted, the Canadian Navy would have been built in St. John. In the face of the statement of Sir Wilfrid Laurier that Montreal was the site chosen for building the navy Mr. Pugsley has a formidable barrier to overcome, and it is noteworthy that his organ, the Telegraph, makes no reference to the plain statement of the Leader of the Opposition. The passing of the Cammell, Laird deposit to the new Government has the appearance of a mere political trick intended to serve just such a purpose as Mr. Pugsley and his organ are now endeavoring to make it serve.

BRITISH POLITICS.

The political situation in Great Britain continues to present new features of interest. The Asquith Government have, apparently, abandoned their pledge to pass the Franchise Bill in deference, it is said, to the Speaker's ruling that the form and substance of the measure would be so materially altered, if the amendment granting the vote to women were adopted, and that it ought to be presented in the shape of a new bill. By this decision one embarrassing situation appears to be avoided. There will be no split in the Cabinet, but other difficulties may have to be met. This electoral reform measure has been urged upon the Government by their allies of the Labor party for years. Withdrawing the bill will probably give rise to strong resentment in the Laborite ranks.

Of the parties in the coalition supporting the Government each has a particular measure in view. The Home Rule Bill has ensured the co-operation of the Nationalists; Welsh Disestablishment has appealed strongly to the Radical element; the Labor party had pinned its faith on the Franchise Bill. If this bill is wrecked and abandoned the influence of Labor may be strongly against the Government. In the history of British politics the stirring events of the present session are unique.

The Unionist party has also been threatened with a controversy from which Free Traders expected to profit. The Unionists wisely took counsel together and their differences regarding Tariff Reform have been satisfactorily settled. The party now stands in a stronger and more unassailable position than it has previously occupied. The controversy regarding the imposition of what are called "Food Taxes" instead of disrupting the party, as the Free Traders fervently hoped, has served to bring all sections together on common ground.

The whole question turned upon the proposal that at the next general election a mandate should be sought from the country for the imposing of "certain low duties on foodstuffs," in anticipation of an Imperial Conference that would be summoned in the event of the Unionists being returned to power. The imposing of such duties obviously could only be done by direct authority of the electors, and the wiser heads in the party saw plainly that such a course in the next election would raise a vital issue which would distract attention from the record of the Government then to be submitted for the approval or condemnation of the people. Nothing would have pleased the supporters of the Government better, but in the Unionists' view the situation demanded a change in their programme. A memorial was accordingly presented to Mr. Bonar Law, Leader of the Opposition, expressing complete confidence in him and in Lord Lansdowne, as leaders of the party, and requesting an alteration in the method by which the policy of Imperial Preference could be most effectively carried out.

The modification requested was that if when a Unionist Government had been returned to power it proved desirable, after consultation with the Dominions, to impose new duties on any articles of food, in order to secure the most effective system of Preference, such duties should not be imposed until they had been submitted to the people at a general election. After consultation with Lord Lansdowne Mr. Law wrote a reply to Lord Balcarres, the Chief Whip of the Unionist party, assenting to the modification which, as he stated, did not involve any change of principle but a change of method. Both Mr. Law and Lord Lansdowne, at the earnest request of the Unionist members, will remain leaders of the party. Mr. Bonar Law's declaration has been welcomed by the Unionist press throughout the country.

In a recent issue the London Daily Telegraph gives a clear and explicit statement as to the position in which the Unionist party stands. "The situation is today," it says, "that Tariff Reform is the policy of the whole "Unionist party; that every man who follows Mr. Bonar "Law is supporting a policy in pursuit of which the next "Unionist Government will do three things; it will set "up a moderate tariff on manufactured goods. It will in- "stitute all such preferential trading arrangements with "the Dominions as can be made, apart from the imposing "of any new food duties. It will call the Dominions into "conference to examine the fiscal facts with a view to "extending those preferential arrangements; and if these "facts are found to favor—in our own and the Empire's "interests—the imposing of new duties on food, a defin- "ite scheme will be put before the country at another "general election, for each man to accept or reject as "seems good to him.

"This, then, is the policy of the united party; but we "point now to the common sense of it rather than to "the accomplished fact. We hold that the task of sav- "ing the country demands it. Unionists, under the in- "spiring captaincy of Mr. Bonar Law, will fight the battle "of Preference when the time comes with a clear field "and a free hand. Today the work that lies before them "is one of destroying and rooting out. They have their "orders from the spirit of sanity and honesty that guards "the destinies of Britain."

Current Comment

She Scorned to Be Taxed.

(Buffalo Express.)

Mrs. Harriet Stanton Blatch is in a towering rage because she was obliged to pay a $4 head tax when she landed in New York the other day. And, at that, she didn't pay it. She turned it over to her husband who was perfectly good-natured about it. Is that the way the suffragettes are going to do with all their taxes in the days of equal rights?

More Deadly Than the Male.

(Ottawa Journal.)

The enterprising female who was formerly assistant secretary to the Vancouver school board, confesses that she padded the pay roll to the extent of $31,000 and spent it. Suffragettes will be able to point to this as another proof of female competency.

Hopeless!

(London Free Press.)

The president of the Dominion Grange is opposed to rural mail delivery and the telephone. The same gentleman favors Reciprocity. Thus we see how hopeless is the Dominion Grange.

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INDUSTRIES BIND COUNTRIES TOGETHER.

Establishment of New Atlantic Sugar Refineries, Limited, Creates Another Tie Between This Country and Jamaica.

Although sentiment in Jamaica is not strong in favor of the proposed policy of the island becoming a part of the Dominion, as has often been suggested, there is very much sympathy towards Canada in Jamaica, possibly more than in any of the other West India Islands, and the natural trend of events is bound to bring the two countries closer together in trade and commerce according to the Hon. E. A. H. Haggart, of the Jamaica Legislature, who is at present visiting this country.

Jamaica's staple articles of export are bananas and raw sugar, both of which come to Canada in large quantities, a very large percentage of the latter being sent to Halifax yearly. Owing to the great increase in the consumption of sugar here during the past ten years, and to the establishment of the new Atlantic Sugar Refineries, Limited, at St. John, N. B., considerable impetus is being given to the sugar trade and shippers, brokers and refiners are showing better profit than ever before. In fact the time is considered most opportune for the establishment of a new sugar refinery in Canada, as it is over a quarter of a century since the last one was erected.

It may be stated that practical sugar men consider St. John an ideal site for a refinery, and that the Atlantic Refinery has the pick of locations on the water front. Open water all the year around, with excellent rail and steamship transportation to all markets, and no differential in freight rates are the most cogent economic reasons advanced in support of St. John. Economies in the refining and handling of the sugar, made possible by the most modern methods of planning and constructing, will also tend to lower the cost of production in the new plant.

N. B. Stark & Co., of Montreal, to whom is mainly due the credit of founding the new company, are watching the progress of the plans closely, and have spared no pains in getting the best possible expert advice. The refinery, it is expected, will be shipping refined sugar at the rate of over 2,000 barrels a day some time during May, 1914.

ENJOYABLE PIE SOCIAL HELD AT WHITEHEAD.

Whitehead, Kings Co., Jan. 26.—A pie social was held in the Orange Hall Friday evening in aid of the Church of England and it was largely attended and proved most successful. During the evening an instrumental and literary programme was carried through which was greatly enjoyed. The programme was as follows:

Chorus—Greeting Glee.
Dialogue—Imaginary Possessions.
Recitation—Sing Tot, Alma Megaw.
Trio—The Misses White.
Dialogue—The Quack Doctor.
Recitation—Cecil Giggey.
Solo—Miss K. Northrup.
Song—The Basket Maker's Child.
Recitaiton—Alma Megaw.
Solo—Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep, Mrs. Megaw.
Dialogue—The Pantaloon Fight.
Tableau—The Flower of the Family.
Dialogue—The Flower of the Family.
Solo—Miss Northrup.
Dialogue—A Valuable Neighbor.

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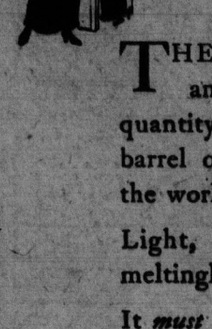

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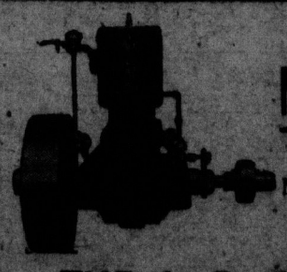

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