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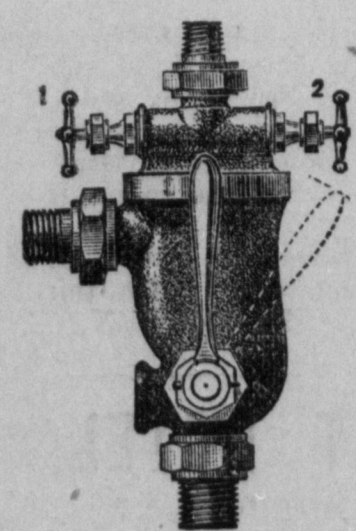
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WESTERN WA

THE DEBATE REMEDIAL BILL

McInerney's Magnificent Effort.

That the course of events at the House has since the termination of the crisis and the election of Sir Charles Tupper, been rather monotonous must be candidly confessed. Perhaps the very great excitement of that momentous time has led to a natural cooling off in the nervous system of the House, and in fact of the country. One reason of this feeling is no doubt the very evident intention of the Opposition to delay the progress of business, and to waste time in trifling disputes. They can claim with good reason that the Govt. was responsible for a large share of the delay in the beginning of the session, by the quarrel resulting in the crisis. However the argument used by the fighting boys of "Your another" does not seem very dignified in the mouth of the Great Liberal Party. If the Govt. by their mistakes caused a loss of time it is surely not necessary that the Liberals should duplicate that loss.

The real reason would appear to be that they are anxious to prevent the Remedial Bill, if possible, coming to a vote this session. It appears to be the almost unanimous opinion of the authorities on these matters here that the house will expire by effluxion of time on April 25th. If they can keep back this vote till then they will in another way dodge the issue. It is no longer a secret that the Opp. is much worse broken up in relation to the Remedial Legislation, than is the Govt. party. While Laurier and Tarte take the ground that the bill does not go far enough, and that it does not give all that the Catholic minority claims, and are entitled to, and that they will insist on a much stronger measure in case that Manitoba refuses to pass one, on the contrary the Ontario wing of the party, led by the Toronto Globe, refuses to consider the grievances of the Catholics as being in any way worthy of the consideration of the House. They insist that Manitoba must be left to settle the matter in her own way. This is, as all the world knows, that the Catholics shall either send their children to Protestant schools, or else pay for their own schools, while supporting by their taxes the schools in which such religious exercises are held, as prevent them attending. With but very few exceptions, however, the position taken by the Govt. has secured them the support of their followers. The evident desire to carry out the requirements of the constitution, and give the Catholics of Manitoba the same measure protection as was given to the Protestants of Quebec, under similar circumstances when they appealed to the parliament for protection, has shown the Catholics that the laws of Canada and the decisions of the courts of the empire will be respected by the Conservative party, while the clauses of the bill which remove the schools from the control of the priests, and place them entirely in the hands of the Provincial authorities has shown the Protestants, who were so afraid of clerical domination, that no danger to the great principles of the Reformation is likely to accrue from the passage of this act. In fact many of the ultra Protestants are surprised at the moderation shown by the Catholic clergy in accepting the bill as at present prepared. They seemed to think that the hierarchy were determined "to rule or ruin the Dominion."

The result has been that while there has been a terrible split in the ranks of the Liberals, and many of them will vote with the Govt. on this question, there is still a lessening number of the Conservatives who will desert their party in the hour of trial. The number of revolvers at this point is estimated now at from eight to twelve. A few weeks ago it was set down at from twenty to forty, and was generally accepted at about twenty-five. The opinions of such men as Rev. Mr. Grant, Principal of Queens College, and one of the staunchest of Protestants, and most famous of educators, backed up as it is, by that of Sir William Dawson and Rev. Dr. King, Moderator of the Presbyterian Synod of Manitoba, has greatly influenced the thinking men of the party. There is now no doubt, apparently, but that this vexed question will be disposed of in some way. It is said here with some appearance of truth that Greenway has agreed to pass a similar bill to that now before the House of Commons. The writer does not place much reliance on these rumors. He has seen too much of Greenway's duplicity. He knows quite well that Greenway sees, that this is his only mode of escaping being kicked out of office, with the shortest possible notice, by the people of Manitoba. Notwithstanding that thousands of voters, who were known Conservatives, were disfranchised in the last election, yet but a small majority remained to Greenway. It is true that he carried three-fourths of the constituencies, but the most of them by very small majorities. Had the people of Manitoba known that the Remedial bill was going to be of the moderate and conciliatory nature of that now introduced, it is very doubtful if Greenway could have by any means succeeded.

While the matters affecting the Dominion at large will always have a most important interest for us, yet to us people

of Kent the matters affecting ourselves and our own representative will of course always claim the first place in our thoughts. The truth is that among the somewhat long, and in many cases, prosaic and monotonous speeches on the budget, the speech of Mr. McInerney came as an eye opener to many. He is fortunately for himself, and county, wise enough to know, that all that is necessary to do in order to command attention in the House is to prove, on a few important occasions that one can speak and that they have ideas and possess knowledge of affairs sufficient to give weight to their opinion. They are not expected or desired to speak on all matters that come up for discussion. It will weary the House and lose them an opportunity of impressing the busy legislators, when they are wishing to press something of prime importance to their county, or to the country at large. Some of the ablest and cleverest men in the House have split on this rock, notably the orator and poet of Regina. Again Mr. M. showed a happy mean between the man who load-down their speeches with cumbersome masses of figures, that are to most people very wearying, and those who simply appeal to sentiment. This is at once Laurier's great forte, and his weakness. By a few well turned, and bewitchingly beautiful sentiments, he tries to set aside the powerful arguments of his well posted and well trained opponent. Mr. McInerney gave an admirable illustration of how it is possible, to so balance argument and statistics as to present at once an impregnable fortress ornamented with beautiful flowers, and from that to powerfully assail more rudely built, and pretentious masses of cumbersome artillery. Mr. M. was fortunate, or unfortunate it may be, in being called on to follow one of the most prosaic and wearisome speakers of the House. A man who can be relied on to empty the House at any time, in this case he has done so pretty effectively. However, as soon as the news spread in the corridors that Mr. McInerney was speaking the seats began to fill and kept filled till the speech was ended.

After paying due respect to the speaker who had preceded him, Mr. McInerney called attention to the fact, that the great crash in the States had followed right on the heels of a change of policy, and in some degree a change of Govt. The party whose long rule in the States had been associated with a great degree of prosperity, professed principles of similar nature with those of the Conservative party. Their opponents, who professed somewhat similar views to those of the Opposition had no sooner got hold of the controlling power of the country, than down came the financial institutions of the States, with a crash such as had never before been witnessed in any country, since the bursting of the South Sea bubble in Scotland. He might have asked the obvious question, would not similar results follow a change of Govt. in Canada? The inference is self evident. A change of policy has brought ruin to the States. Would it bring prosperity to Canada?

Mr. M. then called attention to the standing theme of all Grit orators. The National debt, he proved from statistics that not even the most rampant Grit disputes, that the debt had been incurred, first by taking up the provincial debt, which existed and was incurred long before confederation, and some readjustments made since to the extent of one hundred and nine millions of dollars. These debts had been incurred in building railroads, digging canals and providing things absolutely necessary for a new country. The debt since incurred amounts to nearly one hundred and forty-four millions. If this sum had been squandered or needlessly incurred, the parties doing this would have a heavy account to render to the country. If, on the other hand, the amount had been borrowed, and so expended as to increase the value of property in the country and to make life more desirable and so add to the assets of Canada a sum equal or superior to the amount expended, then no one could say that the expenditure of the money had been in the nature of impoverishing the country.

He then showed that we had expended for the Northwest six millions, for the Intercolonial fifty millions, for the C. P. R., sixty-three millions, and for canals, forty-two millions, in all over one hundred and sixty-one millions. Would we agree today to do without these conveniences for much over that sum? Would any one say that our canals and our railroads had not added immensely to the value of every acre of land and every other kind of property in Canada? Therefore, the silly talk so often indulged in by opposition orators was, either not sincere and intended to deceive the people who had not the opportunity to investigate for themselves, or else showed how unfit these men were to deal with great national issues. He then showed how, in fact, the Grits did not really believe their own assertions, for when in power they added to the debt at the rate of eight millions a year, while under Conservative rule and a more economical Govt., the expenditure had been only five millions more than the income, although the great works of the country had been all planned and carried to completion by the Conservative party.

(Continued on page 6)

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