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**RICHIBUCTO, N. B., OCT. 12, 1899**

WHOM WILL YE CHOOSE?

With the leader of the Opposition announcing his belief in a federal election before another session of Parliament, it becomes the people of each constituency to make up their minds as to the proper course to pursue when the election comes. Sir Charles Tupper is not always happy in his prophecies, but in this case whether he be correct or not, there must be an election before many months, and now in the quiet time preceding the tumult and excitement of the election, is a good opportunity for the unprejudiced voter to make up his mind as to which of the two political parties he will support. Two questions will come to him before his decision can be made. Has the Liberal Administration since 1896 been honest, wise and progressive in its conduct of public affairs, with a resulting national progress and prosperity to justify their retention of popular favour? Has the Conservative party any better policy or more capable leaders to offer the people, or will their Administration, if returned to power, be better for the country? All the petty issues which may be raised to favour either party by an appeal to local, race or religious prejudice cannot blind the thinking people of this country to the real issues which lie between the contending factions.

In answering the first question for himself there may be room for difference of opinion as to some particular policy carried into effect by the present government, but if considered broadly, the second part of that question is really an answer to the first. If the result of the past few years of Liberal Administration has been a general progress and prosperity on the part of Canada, then it would almost seem to follow that the government of the country was honest, wise and progressive, unless indeed we assume that the country is progressive in spite of, rather than as a result of, the Administration's policy and in that case we could only ask ourselves which party administration has been productive of least harm. But luckily for our country most Canadians are not so cynical as to take this latter view, so that our proposition will be generally accepted as fair and logical. Of the progress and present prosperity of Canada there is luckily no doubt or dispute. The country's trade in three years has increased ninety-five million dollars as against an increase of ninety-two millions in the 18 years preceding 1896. With an admittedly reduced taxation of our people of no less than three million dollars a year, the lower tariff has produced \$8,000,000 more revenue this year than the higher Conservative tariff produced in the last year of Conservative rule. This year our surplus

is \$5,200,000 as compared with a deficit under Conservative rule in 1895 of over four million dollars. In the last three years of Conservative government there were not only constant deficits but there was an increase of the public debt of over sixteen million dollars as against six millions added to the debt in the past three years. Nor is it only in the domain of trade and finance that the policy of the Liberal government has shown a marked success. Since 1896 Canada has broadened and expanded in every direction. It might fairly be said, Sir Wilfred Laurier and his colleagues found this country a colony without self-reliance, narrow in ideas, intolerant in expression, weak in its patriotism; in three short years Canada has become a nation. Let us briefly glance at some portion of this wide reaching and progressive policy. We are reminded of the preference given British imports as perhaps the most important and far reaching in its results. Is there a man in Canada to-day who is not proud of that piece of legislation? Nay more, can we not further congratulate ourselves that it was the administration of our brilliant French-Canadian statesman, Sir Wilfred Laurier, which gave expression to the first example of practical loyalty to Imperial interests from this or any other colony? It is not even the present advantage to the manufacturers of the home land which makes this imperial policy so important, but rather the suggestion contained in its practical loyalty that here in Canada we know no littleness of race bigotry, for our people of whatever tongue are Canadians all, loyal to the mother land under whose kindly sway our perfect freedom has been fostered, and ready if need be to make a sacrifice to maintain in its fullness of vigor the empire of which we form a part.

Akin to this imperial tariff preference, is the Penny Postage introduced a year ago. By the exercise of rigid economy the Postmaster General was able to reduce the enormous annual deficits to which our people were accustomed until the postal revenue was sufficient for the expenditure even under greatly increased postal facilities in every part of Canada. Then followed the introduction of penny postage within the Empire, a movement which not only met with the support and approval of all the people of this Dominion irrespective of party, but has given Canada a prominence in the eyes of the world. This has had its practical effect in directing to these shores an influx of British gold which was being used to develop other lands, so that besides making communication less expensive by one-third than it formerly had been, our people have reaped the benefit in the faith this measure has inspired in this country.

The freedom of the franchise conferred on our people by the present administration is another act for which the Laurier Administration deserve support. The abolition of the Dominion Franchise Act, which justly earned for itself the name of being the most iniquitous piece of legislation ever placed on the statute books of Canada, has freed our people of their bondage to the political hack formerly known as the Revising Barrister. Here in Kent we felt the galling of the yoke to its full extent, for in this county it was the whim of the Revising Barrister rather than any franchise qualifications which determined the rights of the electorate. We have here felt in its thoroughness what it means for a federal party to control the electoral list through an irresponsible agent, and if the present government had done nothing more than correct this

abuse of the popular privilege, it would deserve the hearty support of our people.

If space permitted, we would refer at length to the lessening of the peoples burthens by the adjustment of the tariff which not only reduced the duties as a whole, but make the heavy reductions on the articles used as necessaries and by the substitution of ad valorem for specific duties lightened the tax on the cheaper goods used by the poorer classes as was fair and just. We could also call attention to the progressive spirit shown in the conduct of each and every department of the government, which has given Canada increased trade, postal and railway facilities, but enough has been said to show that the Liberal Administration since 1896 has been honest, wise and progressive in its conduct of public affairs with a resulting national progress and prosperity which might fairly justify their retention of popular favour.

Coming to the second question, if we are to believe the Conservative leaders, their party has no policy to offer the people of Canada, for they have been put to shame on their loyalty cry, their leaders have been proven to be mere tyros in the art of government, while they loudly assert the Liberals have stolen their trade policy. Whether this assertion be correct or not, there would seem to be no inducement in turning out of power an administration whose trade policy is so effective that their opponents claim the credit of having originated it.

Will Sir Charles Tupper offer the country higher protection or a free trade policy? The country wants neither and he knows it. He cannot promise a better revenue producer without stultifying his record. It would be difficult from a comparison of the record of the two parties in government to convince the country that the Conservatives should be placed in power at the present time. Indeed many assert, and with a degree of wisdom, that the Conservative party must be born again. Since the time of Sir John A. McDonald it has been a party living and claiming its right to govern on reminiscences of past greatness rather than on present performances. To-day the very leaders present themselves whom the people condemned in 1896. At that time they were divided against themselves, to-day their envy and disloyalty to one another is quite apparent. Canada wants no repetition of those memorable days when the rabble whom their leader termed a nest of traitors brought the blush of shame to all Canadians who regretted that the country's history must for all time be marred by the ignoble story of the political pygmies, who in 1896 strove to fill a position too big for them. A new race of leaders must be presented by the Conservative party before that party can hope to win popular approval, for the "nest of traitors" have not even shown sorrow for their double crime against their party and country. The history of their personal treachery to one another and of their double dealing with the country in trying to retain the reins of government on a religious and race question is condemned by all. In 1896 Canada was called to pass through a crisis which thanks to the patriotism of the electorate, was settled to the discredit of those men who in their eagerness for office had endangered the very existence of our confederation. To-day with that question settled and the business conditions of our country revived and enlarged, the people of Canada have no intention of taking a backward step at the next election. In New Brunswick this applies as forcibly as in any part of the Dominion, and we have no

doubt in this county as in every county in this Province, our people will show their appreciation of honest, wise and progressive government by their hearty and successful support of the candidates of the Liberal Party.

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**THE BLAIR BANQUET.**

The banquet tendered by the City of Moncton to the Minister of Railways on Monday, October 2nd, was a fitting tribute to the sensible railway policy introduced and successfully carried through by the Hon. Mr. Blair in the system under his control. As a railway centre, Moncton is more or less bound up in the successful operation of the I. C. R., and whatever benefits the latter has an effect in building up and increasing the prosperity of the railway hub. The extension of the I. C. Ry. to Montreal was carried through in the face of the most bitter opposition on the part of the Conservative Opposition, whose leaders made use of the most flagrant misrepresentation of facts in order to blind the public to the value of the proposed measure. It might naturally have been expected that the people and even the members of parliament from constituencies west of Montreal would readily believe anything detrimental to the already unpopular I. C. R., for up to 1896 that system was the bugbear of all western Canada. It was however surprising to think that any member from the Maritime Provinces and especially those representing constituencies through which the I. C. R. passed, should have so far forgotten the duties they owed to their respective counties, as to oppose the extension of a system whose successful operation is a necessity to the trade of a large part of these Provinces by the sea. Yet almost without exception the Conservative members from the Maritime Provinces were among the most bitter opponents of the measure, although it was so clearly in the interest of their respective constituencies. Of them all perhaps the most prominent part in opposing the extension of the I. C. R. to Montreal was taken by Mr. H. A. Powell, M. P., for Westmorland, and it is therefore most fitting that the industrial centre of that county should by its banquet show the marked disapproval of all political parties with the action of their member at Ottawa.

We are glad to note that the banquet was a success in every way, nearly two hundred guests attending the dinner, while in addition over 1000 others listened to the speeches of the Minister of Railways and the other speakers. In his speech, Mr. Blair explained clearly his position with regard to the I. C. R. He exposed the misrepresentation used by his opponents, showing that he had obtained for \$140,000 a year, running rights over the Grand Trunk Ry. and the Victoria Bridge into Montreal City, together with the half interest in unexcelled terminal facilities there which would otherwise have cost the country at least \$20,000,000 to acquire by purchase, or at 3 per cent. the sum of \$600,000 a year. As he reminded his

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heaters the best proof of the wisdom of the action taken on the extension of the road was the fact that this year the I. C. R. had paid all running and maintenance expenses together with the payments to the Grand Trunk and Drummond County Ry., and for almost the first time in its history had a substantial surplus. Mr. Blair also exposed the unfairness of the charge that to arrive at this surplus the I. C. R. accounts had been cooked. "If," said the Minister, "the I. C. R. accounts were cooked in 1898, then they were cooked the previous year and every year since it has been a railway, for the same method of bookkeeping has been employed in the last year as in all former years. I do not make up the accounts, but accept as correct what the officials of the road announce to me."

**THE FINAL EXPOSURE.**

The speech of Premier Emmerson at Codys, Queens County, last week in reply to Mr. Hazen's remarks at the same place a month ago, gives the explanation in full of the reasons for the withdrawal by the latter gentleman of the bridge charges in the Provincial Legislature last winter. It appears that Mr. Hazen finding himself unable to substantiate the charges was forced, in order to save appearances before the country, to appeal to the generosity of the man whom he had most foully slandered. After making the charges in the House he refused to move for an investigation by a committee, and Premier Emmerson himself made the motion. The Committee was struck and met several days, finding Mr. Hazen on each occasion unprepared to name any witnesses. The leader of the Opposition finding himself cornered, sought the intervention of government members, asking them to urge upon the Premier the lateness of the session and the necessity of an early adjournment. Mr. Emmerson remained firm, notifying his followers of his intention to remain until Christmas if necessary in order to clear his name of the foul stain of dishonesty which must remain on it so long as Mr. Hazen's charges were on the record unanswered. Poor

Mr. Hazen, who up to this time had drifted along with the stream, saw that he might as well drink the bitter cup first as last and offered to withdraw all charges of dishonesty or corrupt motives on the part of the Premier if the latter would consent to the Bridge charges standing over, which as Mr. Emmerson pointed out, meant ending them. When it is remembered that the charges made were not against the government's policy in building these steel bridges without tender, but were made against Henry R. Emmerson as Chief Commissioner, charging him with paying an excessive price to personal and political friends and implying dishonesty and corrupt motives, the full measure of Mr. Hazen's action in humiliating himself rather than face the investigating committee is understood. Last winter when the events occurred, the mouth of the Premier was in honor closed and the full meaning of the affair was not known; but the action of foolish Mr. Hazen in persisting in discussing the questions and making further mis-statements, has released Mr. Emmerson from any obligation to keep the facts secret. Those poor deluded enthusiasts who were willing to stake their all on Mr. Hazen's sincerity, in making the Bridge charges, will be slightly disgusted at the knowledge of his betrayal of them. The country has already vindicated the good name of Premier Emmerson, being unwilling even in ignorance of the facts to accept the slanders so freely circulated at the instance of J. Douglas Hazen, the Modern Moses of the Local Opposition. After this exposure we should fancy Mr. Hazen was not likely to get even in sight of the promised laud of government control.

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