

DEFENDS BLAIR.

Toronto Liberal Organ Repels Aspersions of Borden and Foster.

MEANESS OF STRIKING A MAN BEHIND HIS BACK.

(Toronto Globe Editorial.)

Neither Mr. Foster nor Mr. Borden thought it unfair to attack Mr. Blair at the recent Conservative meeting in St. John. The late Minister of Railways now fills what is to all intents and purposes a judicial office. It is a matter of custom as well as courtesy, after a statesman has been transferred to a non-political position, to treat him as exempt from partisan criticism. Mr. Borden and Mr. Foster are not above striking at a man who never shrank from repelling attacks while he was a member of parliament; now that he is stopped from defending himself his assailants feel quite courageous in bombarding him with sneers and insinuations.

Mr. Blair was a thoroughly competent Minister of Railways. Under his management the Intercolonial was raised to the standard of a high class road. Its track and rolling stock were improved, it was extended to Montreal, its net annual deficit was reduced, and it was taken out of the rut of party politics in which it had been for many years imbedded. Mr. Blair is now a thoroughly competent Chairman of the Railway Commission, and that commission is doing its varied and extensive work so well as to surprise and gratify the whole country. He handles with decision, celerity and freedom from bias every case brought before him, and the findings of the court are rarely objected to and still more rarely appealed. Neither Mr. Foster nor Mr. Borden found fault with Mr. Blair as Chairman of the Railway Commission.

The late Minister of Railways took a view of the Transcontinental Railway problem different from that taken by his colleagues. Their positions were so irreconcilably divergent, in Mr. Blair's opinion, that he could not with self-respect retain his portfolio. After his resignation he made a vigorous speech in opposition to the Government plan, and in the course of it supplied the Opposition with all of the arguments and most of the facts they subsequently used in the House of Commons discussion. In spite of this action, he was offered by the Government the Chairmanship of the commission. His acceptance of the position shows how fortunate the country is in having in public life two men, who with a single eye to the public welfare, could thus act toward one another in such a crisis.

The explanation of the hostility to Mr. Blair manifested by Mr. Foster and Mr. Borden is not far to seek. When he left the Cabinet and made his Parliamentary attack on the National Transcontinental Railway scheme the Opposition expected him to join them. Instead of doing so he treated Mr. Borden's alternative proposal with contempt, and for the disappointment he inflicted upon them the members of the Opposition have never forgiven him. Fortunately their petty animosity matters little either to the Government or to Mr. Blair. He will go on discharging effectively his onerous duties, and those who put him in a position to do so will share with him the credit.

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fectively his onerous duties, and those who put him in a position to do so will share with him the credit.

Curious Old Carriage.

Herbert Legin of Fredericton was driving about the city yesterday in what is looked upon as a curiosity in the carriage line. It was an English chariot and is said to be 103 years old. It has been on this side but four years. Its shape is a mething like an undersized baroncle, and the wheels are so small that the body of the conveyance is but a short distance above ground. Much of the upper and side construction is made of wicker painted a vivid yellow. The wheels and axles—very stout and strong appearing—are red.—St. John Sun.

G. I. P. SURVEY.

Engineers for N. B. Section Are Being Selected.

Ottawa, Sept. 14.—The selection of engineers and formation of the various parties for the New Brunswick district of the Grand Trunk Pacific railway survey, is nearly completed.

Selection of engineers and formation of crews for the district between New Brunswick and Clear Lake will be taken up in the course of a day or two, as well as for the district between Clear Lake and Lake Abitibi. There are a large number of applicants for positions on the surveys, between 1,500 and 2,000 being already on file. The majority of the applications are from young men who are desirous of gaining some knowledge in engineering work.

EARTHQUAKE AT OTTAWA.

Two Distinct Shocks Were Felt—It Lasted About 11 Seconds—No Damage Done.

Ottawa, Sept. 13.—At 8.52.15 o'clock tonight an earthquake was felt in this city. It lasted about 11 seconds. Two distinct shocks were felt, the first being the more severe. Objects in houses were shaken and even displaced. On Sandy Hill people were so much alarmed that they ran out of their residences. The vibrations were in a southwesterly direction. No rumbling noise was heard. These occurrences are not infrequent along the north shore of the Ottawa. About fifty miles from this city there is a hill to which the name of "Trembling Mountain" has been given, by reason of the very frequent earthquakes which take place in that neighborhood.

Montreal, Sept. 14.—An earthquake was felt here at 8.55 tonight. The disturbance was brief and slight.

Twelve Miles an Hour.

At the beginning of the last century the royal college of Bavarian physicians sought to forbid steam railway travel because it would induce delirium furiosum among the passengers and drive the spectators crazy, while an English quarterly said that it would as soon expect the people to suffer themselves to be tied to one of Congreve's rockets as to trust themselves to the mercy of a locomotive going at the prodigious rate of twelve miles an hour.

Doukhobors Are Doing Well.

Prof. James Mavor, of Toronto University, gave an account recently at Winnipeg of the phenomenal progress made by the Doukhobor colonists since his first visit, made to them five years ago. "The leader of the Doukhobors, Peter Verigin," said Prof. Mavor, "is indeed a remarkable man. He has been in the colony just eighteen months, having come in November, 1902. In this short time he has altered the character of the community, has changed their mode of agriculture, gradually introducing modern methods, and has built up an organization out of chaos."

Several thousand acres of land have been broken, and the area under cultivation this year will be greater than that sown last year. Verigin is determined to have first-class horses and cattle. Just now he is negotiating for the purchase of some high-class stock.

In the past year or two the colony has expended \$60,000 in the purchase of land, and invested largely in farm machinery. The north and south colonies, comprising the villages to the north and to the south of Fort Pelly, are moving forward to great prosperity.

The Doukhobors near Rosthern, whose settlement was also visited, are more individualistic. They do not hold their land in common, and only to a small extent co-operate with their brethren of the north and south colony.

"If," said Prof. Mavor, "Verigin succeeds in organizing the labor of the large body of men he has to deal with, and in holding them together, there is no doubt that in a few years the Doukhobor lands will be among the most productive in the Northwest. By his wonderful management he has already saved the community at least \$40,000."

Goose Dancing.

Goose dancing, in which men wear women's hats and women men's coats, is the Christmas amusement in the Scilly Isles.



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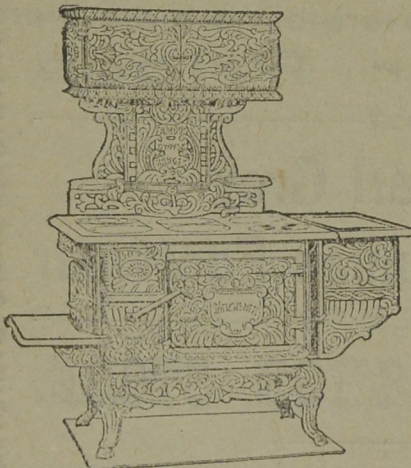
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