

GREAT LIBERAL BANQUET.

Premier Gouin at Gathering in His Honor Discusses Provincial Demands for Increased Subsidies.

SIR WILFRID LAURIER'S DIPLOMATIC REPLY.

Montreal, Dec. 12.—A magnificent appreciation of the esteem in which Hon. Lomer Gouin, Premier of Quebec, is held by the Liberals of Montreal, was given last night in the form of a most elaborate and well-attended banquet held in the great dining hall of the Windsor Hotel.

More than 500 persons, prominent Liberals in this city, attended and the gathering was graced by the presence of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Hon. Geo. W. Ross, and Hon. G. P. Gamm, who was a member of the Ross cabinet. The chair was occupied by Mr. Honore Gervais, M. P., President of the Committee of Organization, which was composed of representatives from the various Liberal clubs of St. James' division, Montreal, the division for which Mr. Gouin occupies a seat in the Provincial Parliament.

The toast to the guest was proposed by Senator Casgrain and Mr. G. W. Stephens. Mr. Gouin, after receiving a splendid ovation, responded with a speech of an hour's duration.

PREMIER GOUIN'S SPEECH.

Mr. Gouin devoted his speech chiefly to education and the question of provincial subsidies.

After declaring that the government intended to do all in its power to give the province increased educational facilities, the premier dealt at length with the question of provincial subsidies, reviewing the arrangements arrived at at the time of confederation and embodied in section 118 of the constitution act. Mr. Gouin, asking if such an arrangement did justice to these provinces, said he had no hesitation in saying that a great mistake was made. He continued:

"I claim justice for my province; therefore all the provinces ask that section 118 of the constitutional act be amended. I am aware that certain political men are opposed to provincial subsidies, because they say it is a wrong principle for one government to collect revenues and for another government to spend them. I have no intention to discuss the truth or the falseness of the proposition; it would mean shifting the ground of the question. The whole matter may be summed up as follows: The principle of the subsidies to the provinces is to be found in the constitution of 1867, and it was put there to assure the working of the local government without their being compelled to resort to direct taxation. Now the subsidies paid by Canada to the provinces have become insufficient, they have been so for some time, and they will become more and more so. Is it not fair that such subsidies be readjusted, be increased?"

A DEFICIT FROM THE START.

"Allow me to give figures to show the incorrectness of the calculations made by the fathers of confederation. The Province of Quebec, as everybody knows, receives every year a specific subsidy of \$70,000. In the minds of the authors of the constitution act that amount was to suffice for the payment of our expenses of government and legislation. Now, in the very first year of the new regime in 1868, the Province of Quebec spent \$213,000 for those two services, or three times the subsidy granted. Today we spend half a million. In 1865 Sir A. T. Galt estimated that the administration of justice, public instruction, benevolent institutions and agriculture would not cost the two Provinces of Ontario and Quebec more than \$1,300,000. Well, in 1902, Hon. Mr. Ross, then Prime Minister of Ontario, stated that in 1901 those services had cost his province \$2,400,000. In 1904, they cost us \$1,800,000. Sir G. E. Cartier estimated the cost of administration of our province at \$1,300,000. As early as 1867 our budget amounted to \$3,901,576, or three times the amount estimated by Sir G. E. Cartier. Last year it reached the figure of \$4,978,930. It is not surprising that our expenses are increasing. It cannot be otherwise in a new country such as ours. Moreover, the expenses imposed on the Maritime Provinces are essentially progressive; they must necessarily increase with the number of our population and the extension of our territory. On the other hand, it is still less surprising that the subsidies paid to the Provinces should have become insufficient."

PROVINCIAL BUDGET CUT DOWN

"In 1864, when the amount of those subsidies had to be fixed, the Provinces were asked to state what sums they would need to meet their expenses. The Provinces asked about \$5,000,000, but it was deemed impossible for the central Government to pay that amount, and the Provinces were requested to reduce the figure of their probable expenses to its simplest expression. Thus the Provinces were brought to accept \$2,630,000 instead of the \$5,000,000 they had at first asked. Today we

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ask the Federal Government to pay us eighty cents per head of population, as determined by each census, to increase the subsidy for the maintenance of the Governments and Legislatures, and to assist the Provinces in defraying the cost of administration of criminal justice. Our claim is a fair one, and if the Ottawa Government accede to our request it will remove from our constitution a defect that already paralyzes, and will still further paralyze, the working of our administrative system.

DIRECT TAXATION.

"In the minds of the fathers of confederation the chief source of our revenues should be in a position to meet their needs without having recourse to direct taxation. There never was any idea of compelling the provinces to resort to direct taxation. Direct taxation—you know as well as I do—is not more popular now than it was in 1865. It is likewise objected that an increase of the Federal subsidy would lead the local Governments to extravagance. Such an objection is puerile. The Provincial Governments, like the central Government, are responsible to the people for the administration of the public moneys, and they must account to the electorate for every cent they spend, wheresoever the money spent may come from. And, finally, is it because we might squander what is due us that the payment of the same should be refused us? Has any court ever been known to refuse to render justice because he who claimed what is due him might afterwards make a bad use of it? The arguments against the just claim of the Provinces cannot be maintained."

TIME FOR SETTLEMENT.

"For twenty-five years the local Governments have been waiting and suffering. It is not time to finish with this problem, whose solution is found?"

The Premier briefly referred to forestry, colonization and agricultural questions, and in closing said: "Dillon has written somewhere that institutions are but man's prolonged shadows. If that image be true, we may say that Sir Wilfrid Laurier will leave many shadows behind him. It seems to me, however, that he could not better immortalize his memory than by increasing the Federal subsidy, and thereby showing the citizens of this country that he is as fervent a partisan of Provincial autonomy, as at the time when on the Opposition benches, he fought so valiantly against the encroachments of the central power."

SIR WILFRID'S SPEECH.

The toast "Canada" was proposed by Senator Chouette and responded to by Sir Wilfrid Laurier and Mr. Ross.

When Sir Wilfrid rose the immense gathering stood on its feet and gave cheer after cheer. The Premier first paid a flattering compliment to Mr. Gouin and counted himself among that gentleman's most enthusiastic admirers. He acquiesced in all that Mr. Gouin had said respecting education, but, although his heart was always in his native Province, he could not, on a question touching the interest of the whole Dominion, give preference to any personal sentiment. The rights of the whole people would have to be considered, and while Mr. Gouin had claimed that it was the right of the Provinces to greater subsidies, Sir Wilfrid could not go quite that far. He felt that it would be a gratifying thing if the Provinces could enjoy the advantages that might come from greater subsidies, but the restrictions imposed by the British North America Act could not be ignored. After all, the question was one almost too serious for discussion at a dinner table, but he could not help admiring Premier Gouin's optimism in declaring that the Provinces would yet succeed in getting the increased subsidies.

CANADA'S FUTURE.

From that Sir Wilfrid touched upon the broader scope of the toast, and made a most eloquent prediction of Canada's future greatness. In this connection he said that while the great Transcontinental would be built, the duty of the government would not be neglected as regards the national waterways. Not only would the channels be deepened and made safer for navigation between Montreal and Quebec, but also between Lake Superior and the Gulf of St. Lawrence. (Loud and continued cheers.) Whatever difficulties would arise they would be faced, and every opportunity would be afforded for the development of the country's great resources. In enumerating what lay in store for the husbandman, Sir Wilfrid did not forget the two new provinces in the west, and in referring to them he observed that Alberta had already done her duty.

Hon. G. W. Ross followed, and in a most felicitous speech compared Quebec with Ontario, in which comparison he found many things in common. His remarks were presented in his most entertaining vein, and were the cause of frequent and hearty applause.

Others who spoke were Hon. Messrs. Turgeon and McCorkill.

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INJUSTICE TO COREA.

Statement of Rev. R. Grierson, Presbyterian at Halifax.

Halifax, Dec. 13.—Rev. Dr. Robert Grierson, Presbyterian missionary to Corea, who has come home on a furlough, in an interview says that the hope of the Hermit Kingdom is in the watchfulness of the United States as a sincere friend. "To give collateral proof that Japan has been disregarding the rights of the Korean people, allow me to quote from an interview with Marquis Ito by the Associated Press, November 28, when that statesman said: 'The American Government have already announced the withdrawal of their Legation, and others will follow, but America warns us not to abuse the natives.'"

"How does anybody acquainted with the traditional American foreign policy of avoiding interference with foreign politics unnecessarily suppose that President Roosevelt issued that plan warning for no cause? It is a matter of personal knowledge to me that appeal was made to President Roosevelt on behalf of the Korean people by messenger who left Yokohama for San Francisco on the same day that my family and I sailed for Vancouver. This warning from America is that noble-hearted statesman's answer to the appeal for his sympathy with a down-trodden people, and we may all be sure he did not issue it without possessing incontrovertible proof that gross injustice was being perpetrated."

Lemon is often served with fish and pancakes. The lemon should be taken in the fingers and squeezed upon the viands.

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D. POTTINGER, General Manager.

Railway Office, Moncton, N. B., 23rd November, 1905.

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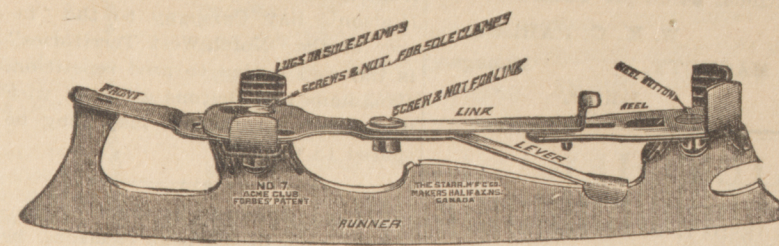
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