

THE WINTER PORT.

Mr. Foster Makes a Very Important Statement.

What He Will Secure For St. John If He is in the Next Cabinet.

A Direct Service for a Term of Years with British Ports By Up-to-Date Steamships.

Harmonious and Continuous Co-operation Between Land and Water Freight Carriers.

As Traffic Requires Will Deepen the Approaches to This Harbor If Montreal and Quebec Be Made National Ports for Summer Traffic, Will Favor Same Treatment for St. John and Halifax in Winter.

Focusing Liberal Conservative Mass Meeting in the Opera House Last Night—The Speeches of Mr. Foster and Dr. Stockton.

Another packed house and numbers turned away, is the story of the crowd at the Opera House meeting Thursday night. Men were lined up all around the sides of the house and every chair on the stage was occupied. Union Jacks waved from the front of the platform and in conspicuous places on the walls hung banners bearing suitable inscriptions. They read: "Vote for Foster and Stockton and the rights of St. John." "Blair's winter ports, Boston and Portland." "France, my dear country—Tartie." "Turn the rascals out." "Preference for Canada in England's markets." "Steady work for our workmen." "The wigwag is lost." "Business is business." "Stand by our winter port."

Among the gentlemen on the platform were: Dr. Jas. Gray, Ald. Colwell, R. B. Emerson, Col. Markham, S. D. Scott, A. C. Smith, A. W. Blair, Dr. Harding, ex-quarantine officer; J. Huestis, J. Sinclair, J. deW. Spurr, G. Keator, Dr. Wetmore, A. S. Osborne, W. M. Jarvis, J. W. Forbes, Ald. Milne, H. N. Parlee, S. Schofield, Dr. Christie, Thos. Grimes, Dr. Quigley, Burt, J. N. Sutherland, Geo. McLeod, Ald. White, Mr. Miller, H. A. Austin, W. S. Barker, F. L. Potts, W. S. Fisher, Capt. Perry, W. S. Cody, I. Holder, F. A. Jones, E. C. Jones, Dr. Inches, D. J. Seely, Geo. A. Kimball, Thos. Patton, W. P. Hatheway, Dr. Quigley, F. Shaw, E. G. Nelson, Thos. Campbell, James Morrison, T. H. Crosby, Ald. Baxter, Wm. Ruddock, Ald. Seaton, S. Fitzpatrick, James Moulson, Dr. Johnson, D. Mullin, W. Watson, Allen, S. H. Belyea, T. L. Coughlan, H. C. Tilley, J. Moreland, L. A. Curry, Rev. Dr. Macneil, A. A. Wilson, Ald. Maxwell, F. A. Dykeman, Harris, Allen, Percy Hall, G. H. V. Belyea, J. E. Irvine, Dr. Gichrist, Rev. D. Long, Rev. B. H. Nobles, Dr. Alward, J. Irvine.

As Col. Armstrong entered with the speakers, the audience rose in masses and shouted and cheered with vigor that told of its enthusiasm. When the applause had subsided, Col. Armstrong briefly referred to the size of the audience, and introduced

HON. GEORGE E. FOSTER.

As Mr. Foster rose, the cheering recommenced with renewed vigor, and it was some moments before he could be heard.

Mr. Foster said, not much has happened since last we met. Mr. Blair has taken Carleton and has said things there; not of them, it is true, he said on this platform a few days before. Otherwise there is not much new. There have been a number of

canvasses used against the conservative candidate for the city during the present election. He made it a point not to say much in regard to the smaller falsehoods, but when they became more serious he simply called attention to them. The story was circulated that when in 1895, the proposition was made to subsidize steamers for a direct winter service, he (Foster) had placed himself in direct hostility to it, and it was only by the severest methods that he was induced to consent to the proposition. His only reply was to designate it as a campaign lie. (Cheers.)

The honorable minister of railways expressed on this platform the other evening a thankfulness for two things. The first was that he was the standard bearer in the city of St. John for the liberal party, and the second was that he had as his opponent the speaker, with whom he would be happy to discuss the subjects of the hour.

IF MR. BLAIR is of the same mind now, he (Foster) was ready to accommodate him. (Cheers.) And without putting too great strain upon the courage of his colleague, he felt that Dr. Stockton would consent to meet Col. Tucker. (Cheers and laughter.) They would accommodate the pair at one and the same time. (Cheers.)

Before entering upon the main subject, continued Mr. Foster, there are one or two things that may be touched upon, and one is that there is no need to be frightened by the ingenious election yams which the liberals are retelling. (Cheers.) They tell an innocent young conservative that when the county was special news from Carleton that Mr. Hale is going to be beaten. (Cheers.) They tell him that Mr. Hale is as solid as a church. (Cheers.) They tell him that down in Charlotte, Mr. Ganong is put to his wits' ends by his opponent, the editor of the St. Andrews Beacon. On November the 7th you will see Mr. Ganong the representative of that county in the next parliament. (Cheers.) Up in Montreal they say that Mr. Blair is going to sweep New Brunswick, and they bring down the news that Laurier is to have in Quebec a majority far greater than before. Don't think for an instant that in the next parliament Mr. Blair will be a cabinet minister. (Cheers.) Up in Ottawa the most studious civil servant has figured it down to a minimum, and he gives the liberal conservatives a majority of seven in the next house. More enthusiastic run it up to fifty. He ventured to state that the party would come up from the maritime provinces to Quebec with a majority, swing out of Ontario to the west, with a substantial majority, and for on through the west, like a snowball over wet snows. (Cheers.)

Turning then to the matter of THE WINTER PORT.

the speaker asked whether the people of St. John wanted the winter port. (Cries of "Yes.") He had met a man over in Carleton who had said that the city council was to blame for the way matters now stand. Finally, being cornered, he remarked that "We have lived here before there ever was a winter port, and we could live here after it was gone." That man was a Blairite. (Cheers.) The people of St. John do want the winter port business, and they desire earnestly to have it continued. (Cries of "Hear, hear," and cheers.) Admit that and the next question to be asked is: "Is the winter port in danger?" To look at and to listen to certain people who formerly used to be enormously active, one would think it was not. The editor of the Sun had an article in the day's issue with the caption: "Sleepers, awake." It was not known whether the voice had penetrated to the ears of the slumberers. Some days ago, however, but a leaf on the tree of the winter port business shake in the breeze, these very sleepers would be out in the streets, crying for a meeting in the institute. Today while the wind shakes it in every branch and threatens to uproot it, they sleep on. Is there no danger? Who says there is none? Mr. Blair. He knows. That's what he is paid for, and afterwards he's paid to tell us. Generally more is asked than the simple categorical statement. Only favored individuals get off with simply making the assertion: Mr. Blair in this is highly favored and it is a case of facts against Mr. Blair. He says that the traffic is going on as before. Mr. Shaughnessy, president of the Canadian Pacific Railway, says no, except under certain conditions. But Mr. Blair, who is not president of the C. P. R., says, "Yes." You pay your money and you take your choice. Well, Mr. Blair thought that his bald assertion might call for a little proof for some people, so he says "of course the ships are coming here; their contracts are signed." Half of this is true. The other half

IS NOT CORRECT.

There is the Manchester line. It has a running contract for three years, signed one or two years ago. It is not a new contract signed this year. The same is true of the Elder-Dempster steamers. A contract has been signed by the Finesse line. None has been signed by the Head or Donaldson line. This contract is not a contract to carry freight, but is the formal arrangement for the lines to accept subsidies from the government, provided they perform the service. Anyone who knows what an infinitesimal part the subsidies play in comparison with freight receipts, knows that not one steamer would come for the subsidies. The signing is mere writing on paper. The essential point is that not one single line that came here last year has made a shipping agreement or contract with any land carrier in the dominion by which it is certain to get cargo.

Mr. Blair says that the city council should take action in the matter. That was a lovely report received from the committee which waited on Mr. Blair, full of his tender solicitude for the winter port and even for the city council. The city council, he said, should prosecute the C. P. R. for breaking its contract. When could the council prosecute? When the contract has lapsed, when the C. P. R. has failed to do what it promised. Mr. Blair says that it has not lapsed and that the C. P. R. is coming. In one word he says the council should prosecute the C. P. R. because the contract has lapsed, and in another he says the C. P. R. is coming. (Cheers.) I, A. G. Blair, say it. (Cheers.)

Mr. Blair says that it is politics and inordinate greed that is pushing the C. P. R. to the destruction of St. John. On the eve of the election, he says, the C. P. R. has taken me by the throat and pointed a pistol at my head. Is it a dignified position for a minister of the crown, who has the interests of the country at stake, to be about on the different platforms and say that he is being taken by the throat and try to arouse the ire of the people against an imaginary enemy? There is a dignified and honorable way of expressing his contention. Mr. Blair has forgotten his position and has put himself in a position to attack an interest which at the least deserves fair and honorable treatment. (Cheers.)

WHY DOES MR. BLAIR say the company has waited until the eve of an election? It is a misrepresentation. The C. P. R. had an agreement with the late government. Mr. Blair denounced it in 1897. In 1898 it came to an end. The C. P. R. notified Mr. Blair that unless an agreement of a fair and reasonable nature was obtained, it could not continue the business. In 1899, Mr. Blair and Mr. Shaughnessy corresponded voluminously concerning the matter. There was no election on then. The question was raised when the old contract lapsed. It was raised in 1899, and on the 14th of September a temporary agreement was made. It stipulated that the freight and passenger arrangements then existing should not be disturbed, and granted the C. P. R. certain rights to obtain freight in I. C. R. territory, and further stated that the whole subject should be further discussed with a view to a permanent arrangement before the next season (the present one.)

Yet Mr. Blair says that now on the eve of the election, this great corporation has put a pistol to his head. Mr. Blair ought to be more concerned about his own honor in respect to that agreement. Twenty-four hours after it was made, the C. P. R. made arrangements with the steamers. Eight days afterwards, Mr. Blair's

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traffic manager notified the C. P. R. that the arrangement could not be carried out. President Shaughnessy telegraphed Mr. Blair, and the minister suspended the action of his traffic manager until the 9th of October, and then issued instructions that the agreement should be void concerning any principal feature. Mr. Blair denies now that there was an agreement at all. Why does he deny an agreement which he initiated with his own hand? Why does he deny an agreement concerning which Mr. Shaughnessy wired him, and the action of his traffic manager, an agreement which he suspended until the 9th of October. It was at the time that he received the telegram from the president of the C. P. R. that Mr. Blair should have denied the existence of the agreement. (Cheers.)

LET US NOW LOOK

at some more facts. There is Mr. Shaughnessy, who said positively that unless a reasonable traffic arrangement was made with the I. C. R., he could not carry on the winter port business in St. John. He took his ground in 1898, he reiterated it in 1899, and he has taken no other ground since. (Cheers.) Here we are today, the 25th of October, when contracts should be made, without one signed. And further, they can show no evidence that a single line has contracted with the C. P. R. or the I. C. R. to carry freight. Mr. Blair says the Elder-Dempster people have made a contract for 3,500 standards of deals. But that is not a contract for winter port freight. Do you suppose that the government would give a subsidy to carry deals? This is a contract that the Elder-Dempster made weeks ago, believing it to be justified in taking a few standards of deals, not more than two cargoes with its other freight. Can any man claim, basing it on this, that the Elder-Dempster line is coming here to do winter port business? Because it has forestalled a few standards of deals, it is going to carry on winter port business. Outside of that not a single contract has been entered into, and the agents of many lines have been notified that these lines will not come here until the railway difficulty is settled.

Import and export traffic are daily refused and passed on to other ports, Boston and Portland, freight that would have come here. These are facts and against Mr. Blair's bluff which will you have? (Cries of "Facts.") Take the bluff and remain easy or take the facts and realize that there is a crisis in the winter port business of St. John and of the whole of Canada. (Cheers.)

Suppose that Mr. Blair's bluff gives way and the C. P. R. does not come here, of which there is danger, what is involved? It would be amusing if it were not so serious to note how cavalierly Mr. Blair treats the whole matter.

TAKE THE CALCULATION

made up by Mr. Schofield from the books. It divides the beneficiaries in

three classes, the first consisting of the stevedores, laborers, carpenters, machinists, blacksmiths, tinmiths and others. That class of labor interests many vitally. From the sixty-three vessels last year that class had from 138,000 to 140,000. Does that mean anything? There is a navy that it interests. Their day's labor depends upon the solution, their bread and butter depend on it. It is a mighty important question to them, though Mr. Blair, with his back against the wall and the pistol to his head, does not think so. (Cheers and laughter.)

The next class consists of the pilots, tugboat men, port wardens, customs officials, lawyers and doctors. It last year had from 20 vessels, \$6,279, and from the 63 would have had from \$18,000 to \$20,000. That is another party that would have some interest, though Mr. Blair against the wall, and threatened by the pistol, might not think so. (Cheers.)

From 20 vessels there was left for coal, provisions and other supplies, \$26,000; from 62 there would be about \$75,000 or \$80,000. There is another party interested. If Mr. Blair had not put his back to the wall that port warden, the gateway to the winter port, for that's where he is, these classes would receive these amounts again. (Cheers.)

This year in the natural order of progression you would have had 75 ships, and they would have left for the first class, \$182,000; for the second, \$23,500; and for the third, \$35,500; a total of over \$241,000. This may not be much to Mr. Blair, with his back against the wall and the pistol to his head, but it is a mighty large amount to the people of St. John. (Cheers.)

If Mr. Blair put his back against the wall and prevented its opening, what gateway would be opened? What right had he to prevent the distribu-

tion of \$281,000 among the people of St. John without showing us another gateway?

HE OUGHT TO BE ABLE

to open one, as he had been given plenty of money with which to do it. (Applause.) Three years ago, when Mr. Blair started in, he took sums of money which capitalized would amount to \$7,000,000, and in addition to that he had expended \$6,000,000 on capital account to put his gateway into operation. It ought to be ready. He should have the sluice way he proposed to use in readiness. There were his elevator and wharves, the latter capable of accommodating two steamships. Three years ago Mr. Blair declared in parliament that his main object was to get a route for through traffic. What was the matter with that route? The root of the matter was not in it. This was the situation. Let us face it, not as politicians, not as men who worshipped Mr. Blair. Let us get out of partisanship and look at it as citizens. (Applause.) Facing the situation, let us ask ourselves why did we ever have the short line built to St. John. In 1885, at the time the agitation in favor of that line commenced, the I. C. R. ran down to St. John. Why did the people of this city and the shippers of the province, why did the loyal people of Canada come to the conclusion that although we had a line, this other railway must be built? It was to turn 740 miles into 431 miles, from Boston was 321 miles distant from Montreal, Portland 287, and St. John 740 miles away. Every level headed man in Canada said the shorter route was necessary. (Applause.) That 740 miles

COULD NOT COMPLETE

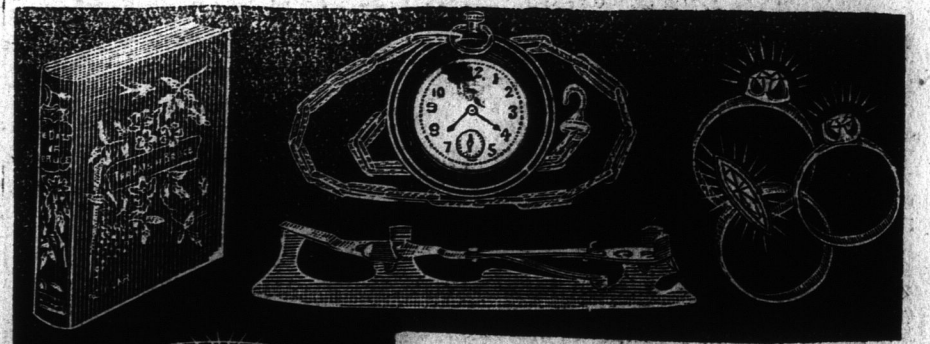
against 287 miles. That was the conclusion the people came to. (Continued on Page Four.)

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