

OTTAWA LETTER.

bate, or rather an informal talk, in the commons on Friday on tobacco growing and food adulteration that skinned the surface and left untouched the most important part of the growth of respect to food sophistication. The Hon. Mr. Brodeur, minister of inland revenue, initiated the debate and Hon. Mr. Foster in his incisive questions and brief remarks did not put his words into new ground, contenting himself for the time with following the trench in which the representative for Rouville, Quebec, waded. Foster could have Brodeur in a hurry to get his items passed, especially so as he had to admit an increase of \$15,000 in salaries in his department. This increase he justified by dwelling on the growth of Canada's tobacco crop in the counties of Essex and Kent, in Ontario, and in the Quebec counties of Montmorency, Berthier, Joliette, L'Assomption and Rouville. Pressed by Mr. Foster, the minister admitted that it was the government's policy to make Canadians smoke this home grown tobacco. Mr. Henderson of Halifax, Ontario, scored a point that smokers will appreciate, when he asked the minister if his department, with the technical knowledge it had amassed, was competent to so instruct the manufacturer and producers that they would be able to assimilate the Canadian product in flavor and appearance to the imported article. Mr. Henderson truthfully remarked, "While the Canadian tobacco may be as good as any in the world, still its flavor is sometimes repugnant to a smoker who is accustomed to using the imported article." Mr. Clements of West Kent, Ontario, agreed with Mr. Henderson that there was much to be done in the way of properly curing Canadian tobacco and it would displace the American article.

Hon. Mr. Brodeur admitted on this occasion, as he had done last year, that he was not a tobacco user, and therefore had no personal knowledge of the subject, but as a minister of the crown he felt that it was his duty to reason why good plug smoking and chewing tobacco could not be made from the Canadian leaf. Mr. Henderson, in his direct and incisive remarks, pointed out that the department succeeded in getting a flavor similar to that of the tobacco manufactured by Sir William Macdonald, but that it was not possible to do so at all, it could not expect people to drop the use of the American article.

From tobacco to food is not a far cry to a large portion of the common talk. Brodeur while a good feeder, to judge by his appearance, seems to know as little about the impositions practiced by food manufacturers as he does about the cause of the rankness of Canadian grown tobacco. He was all at sea when interrogated by Mr. Foster as to what practical returns the country would get from the grant of \$30,000, now asked, for the cost of fighting and exposing food adulterations. He lamely admitted there were food inspectors in different parts of the country whose duty it is to collect samples whenever so requested by the government, but could not point to any practical work of their doing. They had carried out the duties of the act, but he said that the department had analyzed some samples, most of which were found to be adulterated, but he would not say their names, as they had been stopped. Analyzes had also been made of jams and jellies with no productive results. Maple sugar and maple syrup were adulterated on a large scale in the province of Ontario, Mr. Barr of Dufrin, Ontario, forced the minister to acknowledge that several establishments in Montreal had been detected in shipping to the old country maple products which had never seen the sugar maple tree, to the ruin of legitimate trade in the legitimate article. A painful evidence of the incompetency of the department was afforded when Hon. Mr. Brodeur acknowledged that it was not until a few days ago the chief analyst received instructions to look into this question. Mr. Barr, following up the advantage, made it clear that despite the existence of an "adulteration of food act" for some years, little or no progress was being made in exposing food adulterations. The minister replied these threats with polished generalities, each one weaker than its predecessor. Mr. Brodeur is a plausible talker, but who knows about the workings of his department will not fall a bushel measure.

Mr. Lalor of Haldimand, asked the minister how he would interpret the term "adulteration of food" in the case of so-called raspberry jam, in which apples had been used as a filler, and Mr. Brodeur replied that under the act in which the word was found not to be true to its name, but contained something injurious to health, it was not considered to be adulterated, but it should be labelled "compound," else the manufacturer laid himself open to a stiff penalty. "Comp" had been used to sell an article as raspberry jam if there is no raspberry at all in it. The minister added that strawberries being scarce, the manufacturers of jam were using currants as the bulky base of the article, which was in direct violation of the food act. Mr. Lalor took issue with the minister for the apologetic tone he had adopted in discussing food adulterations and contended that there was plenty of fruit in Canada. There was no excuse for the factories not producing a pure article of jam. The jams and jellies imported from England were found to be absolutely pure, but the Canadian manufacturer was not properly protected against the cheap competition of the sophisticated and United States products, that looked attractive, were put up in neat packages and afforded the retailer a swell profit.

As before remarked the minister and his critics only skinned the surface of food adulteration. They could have said more and said it in a more business-like way. It is a matter of common notoriety that the sale of adulterated articles is increasing in Canada by leaps and bounds and that a large percentage of the products of Ontario factories are not true to their names. The complaints are being poured in from England as to the careless manner, almost amounting to actual dishonesty, in which orders are filled, and a ready-made excuse to be offered. A ready-made excuse to be offered is to be kept in her low position as compared with the other provinces as a punishment because she chose to vindicate her provincial rights. She is

words of condemnation for the wealthy corporations which manufacture raspberry jam from unmarketable apples and strawberry jam from turnip pulp, the excuse being that these bases are nourishing foods. All this may be true, but it is poor satisfaction to the consumer who pays the price for strawberries or raspberries, to get only cheaper apples and turnips.

Not one word did any speaker say with respect to the coloring and flavoring of these jams, which as everybody knows are chiefly composed of dyes and essences. The coloring of apple jelly is flavored with butiro ether, and the odors of raspberries and strawberries are counterfeited from the same laboratory. For ten cents a man can buy enough of these dyes and essences to color a ton of jam. The coloring comes a little higher. Were it not for the Portland, Maine, and Boston jam and jelly factories, St. Andrew's turnips would not command the high prices they have sold at by school-cargo for many years. Better turnips are not grown in North America, but they come very dear to the New Brunswick farmer who exports the name of American jellies or preserves. There is one thing to be said in favor of the American article over its Ontario competitor, namely, that it is not affected by the eye-searing redness, the presence of sticks, leaves, bits of peel and pieces of cores, which form quite a "horrid" part of the contents of the cheap turn and palm jams sent down to the market. The Ontario article, the apple peninsula and its initiators, Mr. Brodeur might say that these things are in themselves healthful food. So, too, possibly, are the hayseeds that "to using the colored apple peninsula to make it look like strawberry jam."

OTTAWA, Feb. 28.—Mr. Martin of Quebec, P. E. I., is a man of an investigating turn of mind, and his questions are pointed and pertinent. He is not a novice, having had some preparatory education in a preparatory school, although this is his first session in recent years, he is treading on familiar ground. Some members fill up the notice paper with questions because they are too busy to make their own investigations. No so Mr. Martin. When he gives notice of an inquiry it is to supplement or qualify some fact he has well in hand. These things worry the cabinet ministers. Hence orders have been issued to the local grip press to belittle Mr. Martin. In their anger the government hacks have fallen into the error of depicting rather than distinguishing the conservative member for Quebec, P. E. I. It goes without saying that subsidized ink and paper are not thrown away in attacking opposition. Mr. Martin's inquiries have caused trouble. Had Mr. Martin held his tongue the full cry of the pack would not have been turned upon him. His constituents will be pleased to know that his labors in the behalf of his district have not been in vain. He has drawn down on his head the wrath of the maritime grip members. So long as Mr. Martin is marked by the liberal press, the grip members will be found faithful to his anti-entirement platform. And so long as grip misrule holds sway in Canada will Mr. Martin be found in the front rank of its opponents.

The oil portraits of old Canadians, including the fathers and grandfathers, which formerly graced the lobbies of the senate, have been subjected to a modernizing process. The good old oil frames are now blazing with up to date gold paint; the oil pictures have been varnished with the latest glaze and to enhance the enormity of the offence, a sheet of glass has been placed over every portrait. The corridors now look like the show window of a ten cent store when it vomits forth a picture display. And this is the fruit of high art as it is taught in the Ottawa schools.

OTTAWA, Feb. 28.—Pending the publication of the full text of the autonomy bill the house of commons is merely marking time. Everybody wants to know what is contained in this bill beyond what has already leaked out, and Mr. Maclean of South York, better known down by the sea as the head and front of the Toronto world, voiced a pretty general feeling yesterday when he told the premier to his face that before two weeks are over, he (Laurier) would be singing another tune with regard to the provincial rights of Manitoba. Sir Wilfrid can turn a sharp corner gracefully, albeit the act may not redound to his lasting credit or reputation for consistency. Mr. Maclean is an audacious man, and he has been passing on his speeches on the floor of the commons are even more snappy than his World editorials. His theme yesterday, the provincial rights of Manitoba, was not new ground. He has said it and his handling of it was not of the kid glove pattern. Mr. Maclean began by expressing regret that neither Mr. Sifton nor Mr. Greenway, who were in the seat of honor, had given any attention of the house to this matter, in which they had formerly taken a very pronounced stand, and followed this retraction by quoting an article from Le Soleil of Quebec, dated Feb. 15th, which claims to be under the personal control of the prime minister, and to speak for him, in which Manitoba is warned that its wings will be clipped whenever possible by the present federal government. Le Soleil's declaration of "inspired authority" was made in these words: "We declare once for all that Le Soleil is the organ of the liberal party, and by that fact is under the direction and absolute control of Sir Wilfrid, and those who affirm themselves to be such are begged to take notice of the present declaration."

In the same issue, in an editorial discussing the rights of the province of Manitoba, Le Soleil said: "The finances of Manitoba in their actual state are not made to attract the free residents of the district. Manitoba has a debt of \$4,000,000. The school legislation of the little province is not of a nature to attract the immigrants who people the districts. The North-west has its separate school. Manitoba has abolished them. Every good act has its reward; every bad act its chastisement. Manitoba will remain lowest with her pretentious law."

Mr. Maclean contended that a threat was here held out by the Quebec organ of the first minister that Manitoba is to be kept in her low position as compared with the other provinces as a punishment because she chose to vindicate her provincial rights. She is

to be led territory, and even worse things than that are to befall her. It was clear from the remarks of the premier a few days ago, that the Dominion lands act is to be changed, and that the province of Manitoba, the school lands, which are now conserved to public schools, not to separate schools, are to be sold and the proceeds distributed in an entirely different way. On behalf of Manitoba, Mr. Maclean protested against any such change in the law or any such change being meted out to that province as was proposed by the Quebec organ of the government, and then went on to show that if any injustice had been done to the Roman Catholics of the prairie province by school legislation, the responsibility therefor rests mainly on the shoulders of Mr. Sifton and Hon. Mr. Greenway of Lisgar, then the premier of Manitoba. It was the liberal party which passed the Manitoba school legislation, yet the government have the audacity to blame the Dominion government, of which Sifton is an incontestable part and of which Mr. Greenway is a stalwart supporter, threatening with its leading Quebec organ to withdraw from the Dominion of the province of Manitoba because of that very legislation.

Sir Wilfrid replied to Mr. Maclean in a very angry frame of mind. Of course he denied all personal responsibility for the utterances of Le Soleil in particular and liberal organs generally, and assured the house that the government had no intention of introducing any remedial act affecting the school lands of Manitoba. He said that the Dominion Lands Act in any particular, Mr. Maclean accepted the premier's denials at their face value, but maintained that the government would find it very good indeed, to get some documents respecting the early history of New Brunswick, and I went to the archives department and in a very short time got copies of just what I wanted. They had not the originals, but they had copies which had been obtained from the offices in London. Therefore, I think we ought to feel somewhat proud that we are getting along as well as we are respecting the archives of Canada." R. A. P.

OTTAWA, March 1.—Nero added while Rome burned. Yesterday Sir William Mulock and Hon. Mr. Fisher talked flippantly concerning the abuse of the printing press and the connection of paid office with the agricultural department with a private company that under its association can sell seeds in competition with the favored concerns. Manitoba, at that very time the premier and Hon. Clifford Sifton were closed together discussing the matter of the resignation of the minister of the interior. It was found that there were wires on the ground. Sir Wilfrid and Mr. Sifton gathered out of the chamber soon after three o'clock and left the duty of leading the house to Hon. Mr. Fisher's hands. Mr. Fisher did not remain very long, but turned the job over to his minor cabinet associates and went out to see what was going on. Mulock and Fisher having been there with the premier, so did Fitzpatrick. They were a gleeful trio. Whatever excuse of Sifton, or who would fill his job did not worry them, did not concern them. They had seen the game and they were in it. They went out into comparative political obscurity, and they would hold on to office even if Sifton and some others of the old guard disappeared, for Sir Wilfrid and Mr. Fisher are not opponents. They are stayers and will draw their salaries for a long time. They are not envious as long as Sir Wilfrid holds the helm and does not discharge them. Mr. Greenway, for obvious reasons, cannot take Sifton's job, and the most able man from the opposition, Mr. Fisher, was returned at the general election by the biggest majority piled up by any member of the house.

Hon. Mr. Fisher mixed and muddled his explanations of the seeds at his own summary way out of the chamber. He discussed in despair and passed a crop of verbal amendments that nobody, not even the minister himself, understood. This unsatisfactory stage of the matter has been passed over and then treated by Sir William Mulock to some very pronounced views with respect to the official ignorance of his department in this matter as abuse of the printing press and the advertising grip campaign literature broadcast over Canada. It is perhaps hard to say which had been the greater sinner in this regard, the conservative or the liberal administration, so far as the early history of confederation goes, but the fact is patent that after the house rose last session the government paid help in many departments made up of great packages, tens of thousands of sheets of campaign literature, and sent it free through the mails under the stamp-book of ministers and heads of civil service sections. 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