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BOGUS PUBLIC OPINION.

The extent to which congress is being influenced on the reciprocity question is so light as to be practically invisible. That commercial bodies are not to be ignored goes without saying. But a good deal depends upon the manner in which they assert this power. Bodies which take up great public issues, which spend a great deal of time upon them, which understand them thoroughly, are worthy of the greatest consideration. When petitions and memorials are handed about for signatures, when the average man does not know what he is asked to support or oppose, when so many are so willing to sign anything as an act of obligation, congress or parliament cannot be expected to act. To do so would be to surrender before an assumed manifestation of public opinion. Congress has been bombarded with protests against the reciprocity agreement. They are believed to have been based on a misunderstanding of the subject, and President Taft advises that the house proceed without reference to them. Public opinion is all right, but the public opinion which is of some account is not the kind which men manufacture for a purpose from time to time.

THE OUTBREAKS AT OTTAWA.

It is time that Mr. Borden, at Ottawa, warned his followers that there is nothing to be gained by wholesale slander. It was a premeditated scheme for which Mr. Boyce was not wholly responsible that Mr. Fielding should be attacked because he, some time ago, accepted from personal friends a money gift. The insinuation was that it came from contractors and grafters, and one conservative print, more audacious than the rest, called it stolen money. Mr. Fielding's defence of his action was manly and courageous, and he had the consciousness of knowing that he had the approval of parliament, and by the largest vote that has been given on any party subject. The fact is that Mr. Borden accepted unreservedly every word Mr. Fielding said, but voted for a resolution of condemnation, because the list of subscribers had not been printed. Practically and essentially he endorsed the personal abuse of Mr. Boyce. Practically and essentially he endorsed the slander of H. Lennox, M.P., who said that P. H. Larkin, of Toronto, was a beneficiary of the government and a subscriber to the Fielding fund. He practically endorsed Col. Hughes who slandered Dr. Macdonald in a shameful and indefensible manner. The leader of the party must see that he is compromised by these outbreaks, and should put an end to them.

HOW THE PENSIONS GROW.

The Berger-Bill provides for the payment out of the United States treasury of \$12 a month to every person over sixty years of age, whose wages have not been more than \$3 per day and who has been a citizen of the United States for fifteen years. Mr. Berger figures that about a million persons would at the present time be entitled to such pensions, so it can be figured at once that the old age pension expenditure which he proposes that the United States government should provide for would amount to some \$144,000,000 annually. Added to the huge total of the war pension expenditure this would make a grand aggregate of close upon \$300,000,000 a year for pensions in the United States. There is some sense and justification in the old age pension proposal, but there is none in the addition of \$45,000,000 annually to the war pension list. The idea of caring for those who participated in the wars of the nation, and who imperilled their lives in the undertaking. But the pension account of the United States is the most extraordinary thing of the kind that has an existence. It covers so many freaks in legislation, and all growing out of the wars, that the wiser men in journalism have been surprised. The further one gets from the war the bigger its pension account becomes, until the conviction deepens that many of the beneficiaries are the political dependents of the nation and have suffered more from the wars of the party than the wars of the nation. The old age pension is another departure in the interests of the politicians who are on the hunt for something that will add to their popularity.

Some people in Peterboro protest against the oiling of the streets. They would rather, then, have the dust and the microbes that are wafted about with the wind. There is no accounting for tastes.

LIBERALS ON EASY STREET.

The reciprocity treaty is a trouble to the opposition at Ottawa. Of course its members must, on general principles, object to anything which is done by the government or any of its members, but the difficulty is to resist that which is approved by members of the party within and without the house. The fact has to be kept steadily in view that again and again both parties, liberal and conservative, have sought reciprocity treaties with the United States.

The conservatives will remember the last occasion on which their representatives journeyed to Washington. Sir John Thompson, Sir Mackenzie Bowell and Hon. Mr. Foster sought an agreement with regard to farm products, fish and lumber, and they sought it in vain. Mr. Blain talked the matter over with them, halfheartedly or reluctantly, and then declined to go further, presumably because his party, the republican, did not approve. The Canadian government did not rush eagerly into the negotiations for a trade agreement.

The proposition came from the United States and its earnestness has been exhibited by the desire to make sacrifices to a much greater extent than Canada. There have been various opinions with respect to the matter, and generally in favour of agriculture—it has been approved.

The conservative caucus has been unable to agree upon any course with regard to it, and for the very good reason that many of the conservative members are representatives of rural constituencies in which the electors will be affected by their action. The liberal government meanwhile is resting comfortably. Whatever the upshot it stands to gain in public favour. Its supporters can very well endorse the agreement, and leave to the United States the responsibility of neglecting it.

Whatever the result the farmers of Canada, who swing the influence and vote in an election, will realize that the government acted in their behalf and is entitled to their support.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

Col. Matheson fears that reciprocity will hurt the railways of Canada. Sir Donald Mann says it will not. Which is the better authority?

The revenue of Canada has increased ten million dollars in the past ten months. The amount that will be whittled off by the reciprocity deal will not be missed.

When a house is divided against itself there is bound to be a fall. The Borden party at Ottawa will probably think of this while they wrangle over the reciprocity agreement.

Dr. Cook again doubts that Peary reached or discovered the North Pole. Suppose we admit that both found it, or failed on their mission. Anything to end a controversy of which we are all sick and tired.

Toronto proposes, through the city council, to close the saloons at nine o'clock on five days of the week, and from one o'clock on Saturday till Monday. Is this the preliminary canter of a prohibition campaign?

Jane Addams, of Hill House, Chicago, is opposed to the women's franchise. It will be time enough, in her opinion, to give the women votes when they know what to do with them. The political education of the women has been shamefully neglected.

J. W. Johnson, M.P.P., is persuaded that living is made expensive by the overcapitalization in which so many great corporations indulge. So he proposes to make it illegal, and has a bill for this purpose before the legislature.

Speaker Cannon is not in favour of the reciprocity agreement. It is not a good bargain for the United States. He represents the stand-patters who have put the republican party in a box and would, apparently, accomplish its ruin. Taft is not taking any advice from him.

Because the local deputation on harbour and bridge improvements did not have Dr. Edwards as a leader a grievance has been expressed. The deputation was introduced to the members of the government by Hon. Mr. Hart, and he appears to have been quite equal to the contract.

For the land's sake! Mr. Foster is very anxious that the members of the federal government should have very

tender consciences. What about the members of the opposition? What about Mr. Foster himself? His conscience may have been tender; but it was a long time ago.

"Clear Grit," writing to the St. Thomas Journal, and referring to the annual meeting of the liberal party, says something is wanting in order to stir things up. He suggests the use of a little dynamite. It might kill some one, or hasten his demise prematurely, and that may be the aim of the writer.

Mr. T. M. Daly, Winnipeg's police magistrate, while on a visit to Ottawa, declared that the city from which he hailed had been greatly maligned. "Winnipeg's morals," said he, "have been always the very best." That is, the morals of some of the people. Mr. Daly must be more exact or explicit.

Did Mr. Beck hold up Sir James Whitney and demand that he recede from the proposition to transfer the power question from the Hydro-Electric Commission to the Ontario Railway and Municipal Board. Sir James would have us believe that no one can humble him, but Beck can do it. When Adam commands the premier obeys.

Robin and Rogers, of the Manitoba legislature, are in Ottawa conferring with the premier and finance minister with regard to the boundary question. Both, in Ottawa, are as modest as two men can be. They are tame enough to eat off the hand. It is only when away from the capital, and in the woolly west, that they become politically abusive.

The Hamilton Herald has no fear that free exchange of natural products would check the development of Canadian nationhood. We do not believe that national sentiment in Canada is so feeble that it must decay and perish if we buy more from our neighbors and sell more to them. Our trade with them has been increasing "by leaps and bounds" in the last dozen years, and the growth of Canadian sentiment has been increasing at the same time.

The deputation of the city council visiting Ottawa this week returns full of praise of the admirable manner in which Hon. Mr. Hart looked after all the details in connection with the interviews with the cabinet ministers and in other ways showed loyalty and interest in the visitors. The official report elsewhere shows what was accomplished and if the deputation failed to find Sir F. Borden it was due to the same cause that delayed Mayor Graham and Ald. Hoag—all were snowbound. The Standard's advice from Ottawa were far astray as to the real facts. No deputation has ever gone to Ottawa that has not had the personal and unstinted support of Kingston's worthy member.

The Man On Watch.

The Lampman has no use for the Peace Society, adherents in the town, who raise their voices in protest against the inculcating of any military spirit among the boys of the public and grammar schools. It is in the schools that a little military spirit should be taught, and it will be helped along by teaching patriotism and flying the Union Jack on every school house. The Lampman thinks the town educational board is very slow about deciding upon the cadet corps question. He would have a cadet or boy scout corps, not only in the Collegiate Institute, but in every school of the town, even if the present over-loaded curriculum had to be cut in two. Better boys would be turned out of the schools if they had a couple of years' training in a boy scout corps. He is quite sure that the youth of Kingston would gladly spend half of Saturday manoeuvring.

Surely it would be no compliment to his worship, Mayor Graham, to have called Wade's Lane after him when the name of that alleyway was changed, the Lampman says. Town Councillor Ross thought it would be fitting to name that by-way after him. The Lampman says no. Wade's Lane, now called Elgin street, should have retained its old name. It is not a street, for it has not the recognized width of a street, or half of it. To have called it Graham street would have been awful. All right to call it after Lord Elgin, but to name it after "Christy" Graham—never!

The Lampman is opposed to road tolls and market tolls and if he had a vote at the town council, he would cast it in favor of collecting no more tolls on the produce mar-

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ket. But he would not vote so just because the county council freed the Frontenac roads of tolls. These roads were not freed for Kingston's benefit, he says. They were freed because the county people became disgusted with the system of taxing themselves for the benefit of a company. They found that it was cheaper to buy up the toll roads, free them and keep them in repair out of township taxes. The difference between county road tolls and town market tolls is that both rural and town people paid the former, while only the ruralists are required to pay the latter. However, the adjoining townships have not a very great grievance, when it is remembered that Kingston has just paid \$6,500 for "moral support" to a railway subway which is wholly in Frontenac.

Judging by the trouble western Ontario towns are having with Hydro-Electric power the Lampman thinks that the best thing Kingston can do is to retain its steam plant. A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush, he says.

The Lampman is convinced that the Yankees will easily get the better of the trade agreement with Canada. For that reason there is hope of the agreement being passed at Washington. You have to get up early in the morning to beat a Yankee in a bargain. Kingston will lose by the trade agreement going into effect. Only the farmer will reap much benefit, and in the long run the land will suffer.

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