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**THE MORNING GUARDIAN**

FRIDAY, DEC. 4, 1903.

**THE OPPOSITION LEADER.**

The visit of the Opposition leader, Dr. Borden, M. P. to Prince Edward Island has naturally awakened considerable interest, and has enabled our citizens in our principal centres to hear for the first time the present leader of the Conservative party in Canada. His exposition of the principles, policy and aims of his party has been instructive, and was clearly and definitely stated. Withal his addresses have been singularly free from declamation, or clap-trap utterances, while his treatment of political opponents was uniformly courteous and gentlemanly. He impresses his hearers as a man of sincere convictions, thoroughly devoted to Canadian interests and eminently loyal to the Empire. We are therefore led to believe that the impression Dr. Borden has created has been a highly favorable one, and that whenever he may again find occasion to visit the Island he will receive a very cordial welcome.

It is gratifying to know that during his visit the Opposition leader has entered most sympathetically into all questions affecting the federal services in the Island. In regard to the winter steamship service the matter of through rates, the telegraph service and our postal needs he has shown himself not only well-informed but has spoken with no uncertain sound. This will have a good effect. The Government cannot afford to continue the obvious and long-continued neglects of the past in the face of the attitude so manfully taken by Dr. Borden. They have had many faithful warnings from this journal in the past, and we need not repeat them now. It is inevitable that farther delay in righting these wrongs must seriously imperil a loss of support. The time for promises is past. The time for prompt and specific performance has come.

With the larger federal questions which divide the two great parties in Canada it is not our intention here and now to deal. Those questions must be mainly determined by the great electorate of the Mainland Provinces, among whom our small population will count, but as a small fraction in voting power. We are none the less interested in them, in the great transportation problem and the methods proposed for solving it, in the question of protecting native industries, and also in the still broader question now agitating the Mother Country, of inter-imperial preferential trade. On these questions Dr.

Borden has stated his position clearly. The position of the Government in regard to Mr. Chamberlain's proposals is one of marked reticence. This attitude cannot very long be maintained. There is a strong, and we think a growing feeling throughout the Dominion, especially outside of Quebec, in favor of a closer and more efficent bond of union between the Colonies and the Mother Land. It is unfortunate for Sir Wilfrid Laurier that the great bulk of his majority in Parliament is drawn from the one Province that is least in sympathy with closer imperial union. How far this has been the cause of ministerial reticence on a question of very vital importance does not yet fully appear.

Mr. Borden's visit brings all these questions into the thoughts and minds of our people and gives them an opportunity to consider them in the calm which precedes the excitement of an election campaign. In due time we shall hear what the ministers and the candidates supporting them have to say in regard to these larger issues of the time. We believe our people will give a fair and candid consideration to the facts and arguments presented on both sides, as they ought certainly to do, but they will be disposed to insist that the leader whom they support shall be in accord with the loyal and patriotic feeling of the progressive portion of Canada.

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