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From CHARLOTTETOWN for Pictou at 8.30 a. m., connecting there with day trains for CAPE BRITON HALIFAX.

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Charlottetown, P. E. I.

FROM SALISBURY TO LANSDOWNE.

(Montreal Gazette.)

The British press has been taking advantage of the nomination of Lord Lansdowne to the position of Secretary of Foreign Affairs to renew the charges of maladministration which his conduct of the War Office had provoked. Some critics affect to consider it incredible that Lord Salisbury should be so deaf to the demands of the nation as to place a colleague so distrusted by the people in a post so responsible. There are two sides to the question, and two modes of reaching a judgment regarding it. The popular and natural judgment is based on the checks that prevented the British march to Bloemfontein and Pretoria and the repression of the insurgent Boers from being accomplished within a reasonable time. What those checks were; how far, by different strategy, they could have been avoided, whether they were due in part to the nature of the country and the tactics of the enemy, and how far, in that case, the War Office and its generals were relieved of the blame for the delay, the mischances, the excessive mortality and other accompaniments of the war, we need not discuss. Every detail of the arguments pro and con has been gone over again and again ad nauseam. It may be admitted that in the first place there was strange ignorance as to the strength and equipment of the foe—an ignorance which the Boer general was not universal outside of the Boer ranks. These most concerned, however, seeming unhappily to be the best informed. The course of events since the occupation of the Boer capitals and even since the end of the war as a test of the capacity of the states to hold their own in a hostile resistance to the Empire's might, discloses, as nothing else could do, the true difficulty of putting down such adversaries. The guerillas of Spain during the Napoleonic occupation kept up for years just such a conflict as is being now waged, doing damage on every chance, coming together again after defeat, and altogether evincing a vitality only possible to desperate enemies similarly situated. Entrenched in their familiar fastnesses a mere handful is a match for an army. That the Government, as a belligerent power, knew less of the nature of Boer warfare, was less prepared for it and seemed less aware of the sort of troops most needed to meet it than ought to have been the case, cannot be denied. Blunders of prevision were followed by costly mistakes in execution. Even to a late stage in the war miscalculation, heedlessness, a defective intelligence system caused surprises always deplorable, sometimes inexcusable. Even the success gained by Lord Roberts and his subordinates was gained at a dreadful price, while Sir Redvers Buller, through a series of miscalculations, sustained grave losses long before victory crowned his plans. In fine, more than a year after the war began, the conflict is still being waged, and what some enthusiasts hoped might be over last Christmas may not be over even next Christmas.

All this the public sees and feels. Indeed, when Christmas comes, it will recall many sad vacancies in thousands of homes of the great, and the humble, all over the Empire. But, while the "man on the street" is hard on the War Office, he is wild over the men it brought together. Lord Lansdowne, as the head of that office has been severely criticized. Now and then he has said a word on his own behalf, but for the most part it is his deputy in the Commons, Mr. Wyndham, who has defended the administration in the public ear. Recently, by his permission, the Outlook Publishing Company brought out, in pamphlet form, several of Mr. Wyndham's

speeches,—the first, on the army estimates, having been delivered on the 2nd of March, and the last on the 20th of October, 1899. In the first he describes the army as a machine, indicates its purpose, and then goes into details as to each branch of the service. In another speech (June 21) he explains what Imperial Defence means, and what it requires. The third deals with the testing of the machine by the sudden outbreak of war a year ago. Certainly, the department found itself face to face with a gigantic task when it became apparent that the two states had engaged in a struggle for life, trusting to the nature of the country, their knowledge of it, and their long preparation for the war. Politically and morally, it was in England's favor that she was taken by surprise. That did not, of course, excuse those whose official raison d'etre was to make surprise impossible. But the circumstances being what they were, and a vast army having to be sent to South Africa, fully equipped with arms, tents, rations, medicines, and all that such equipment implies in men and material, what an enormous demand was made on the energies of the War Office! The transplanting of such a host, all equipped and provided, such long distances was a work that is for outsiders not easy to imagine. And yet from the start criticism by experts and non-experts has never taken breath. Is it any wonder that Lord Salisbury looks at Lord Lansdowne's merit from a different point of view to that of the multitude and its organs? He has seen the Secretary of War spend laborious days and anxious nights for more than twelve months. Even if we admit that his department was at fault, surely there is no other man in the Empire that has borne such a burden of care for the Empire's sake. Nor is there, we may suppose, a man who knows the Empire's real strength at this moment more intimately than Lord Lansdowne. Very painfully he has gained that knowledge, which is invaluable in a foreign Secretary. Not, indeed, that he began to study the Empire's military strength only a year ago. He has been a student of blue books all his life. The love of public affairs has been in his blood for two centuries. He is the least faineant of hereditary legislators. Knowing all this, Lord Salisbury put in him a confidence that he put in no other of his colleagues, when he made up his mind, as the cable advises, to surrender to the younger statesman the position on which he sets the highest value.

PRESS COMMENTS.

The Montreal Gazette remarks:— Looking at the results in all its aspects, it can be said, however, that while for the Conservative party, and too, for the country, there is much to regret, there is for the party little to be ashamed of. The Conservative policy was the same from British Columbia to Nova Scotia. Its leaders spoke the same words in Quebec as in the other provinces. The position it took was calculated to promote the great interests of the country, and of the Empire. It has suffered only a temporary defeat, and that even is due in large part to the fact that its opponents stand in many issues on its platform. It will look to the past without more regret than is justly caused by overthrow in a fight for a good cause. It will look to the future with the confidence that its vindication will come sooner, perhaps, than many imagine. * * *

The Little Englanders will rejoice over the result in Canada. They looked to a Liberal victory in this country as a blow at Mr. Chamberlain, the greatest statesman who has had a hand in directing the affairs of Britain's colonial Empire. MONTREAL STAR: Yesterday's election was a surprise. There will be various theories explaining the result. None of them are likely to have all the truth. That the French-Canadian Conservatives in Parliament are all but obliterated is regrettable on national grounds, but it should not provoke ill-feeling in the other provinces. The French-Canadians in Quebec, Ontario, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Manitoba and the North-West voted largely for a Premier of their own nationality as the first consideration. The appeal to them was clever. Mr. Tarte knows how to win elections. While Sir Wilfrid Laurier is to be congratulated upon his personal success and upon having election managers who know the French-Canadian people and the winning methods, much sympathy will be felt for the Conservative leaders, and many good supporters who went down in the fight. The campaign was characterized by good humour, and the result is likely to be accepted without rancour.

The Mail and Empire says: While Ontario and the West are to be congratulated upon the stand they have taken, upon the protest they

have made and upon the effort they have put forth to restore Government on honourable, and, indeed, British constitutional lines, the general result is deeply to be deplored. Much as it is to be regretted, that the entire country has not rebuked the persistent and brazen breaches of faith, the failure to do so encourages politicians to be unfaithful. It tells them that they can violate their pledged word with impunity. A great misfortune is it that while Ontario has declared that the extravagance and the boodling must stop, the rest of the country has condoned these evils. That condonation threatens us with an aggravation of the wrongs and foreshadows improprieties compared with which those of the past few years fade into insignificance. A disaster to the Imperial cause is it that this country, at this time, should be in the hands of men who are its enemies. The verdict is tantamount to a rejection of the British preference which would bring the Empire into closer union, and make it stronger and better as a power for good. Especially is it to be regretted that the Government has been successful in arraying one province against all Canada. The return of the Laurier Ministry to power is a bad day's work, not only for what has been excused, or for what has been rejected, but in addition, for what we may expect. All earnest Canadians must mourn the result, and must hope that our punishment will not be too severe.

THE LATE ELECTION.

CONSERVATIVE GAINS.

- Brockville.
- Cardwell.
- Cornwall-Stormont.
- Frontenac.
- Grey, South.
- Hamilton, (two seats.)
- Huron, South.
- Lambton, East.
- Leeds-Grenville, North.
- Lincoln-Niagara.
- Middlesex, North.
- Ontario, North.
- Ottawa (one seat.)
- Peel.
- Prince Edward.
- Toronto, Centre.
- Toronto, East.
- Victoria, South.
- Waterloo, South.
- Wellington, Centre.
- Wellington, North.
- Chicoutimi Saguenay.
- Nicolet.
- King's, N. B.
- Sunbury-Queens.
- Halifax.
- Hants, N. S.
- Prince, East.
- Macdonald, Man.
- Assinibolia, East.
- Saskatchewan.—Total 32.

LIBERAL GAINS.

- Bothwell.
- Bruce, North.
- Glengarry.
- Haldimand-Monck.
- London.
- Northumberland, West.
- Renfrew, South.
- Welland.
- Wellington, South.
- Beauharnois.
- Champlain.
- Montcalm.
- Montreal,—St. Anne's.
- Pontiac.
- Stanstead.
- Terrebonne.
- Three Rivers-St. Maurice.
- Gloucester, N. B.
- Kent, N. B.
- Restigouche, N. B.
- Westmorland.
- York, N. B.
- Annapolis, N. S.
- Cape Breton (two seats.)
- Pictou.
- Richmond, N. S.—Total 27.

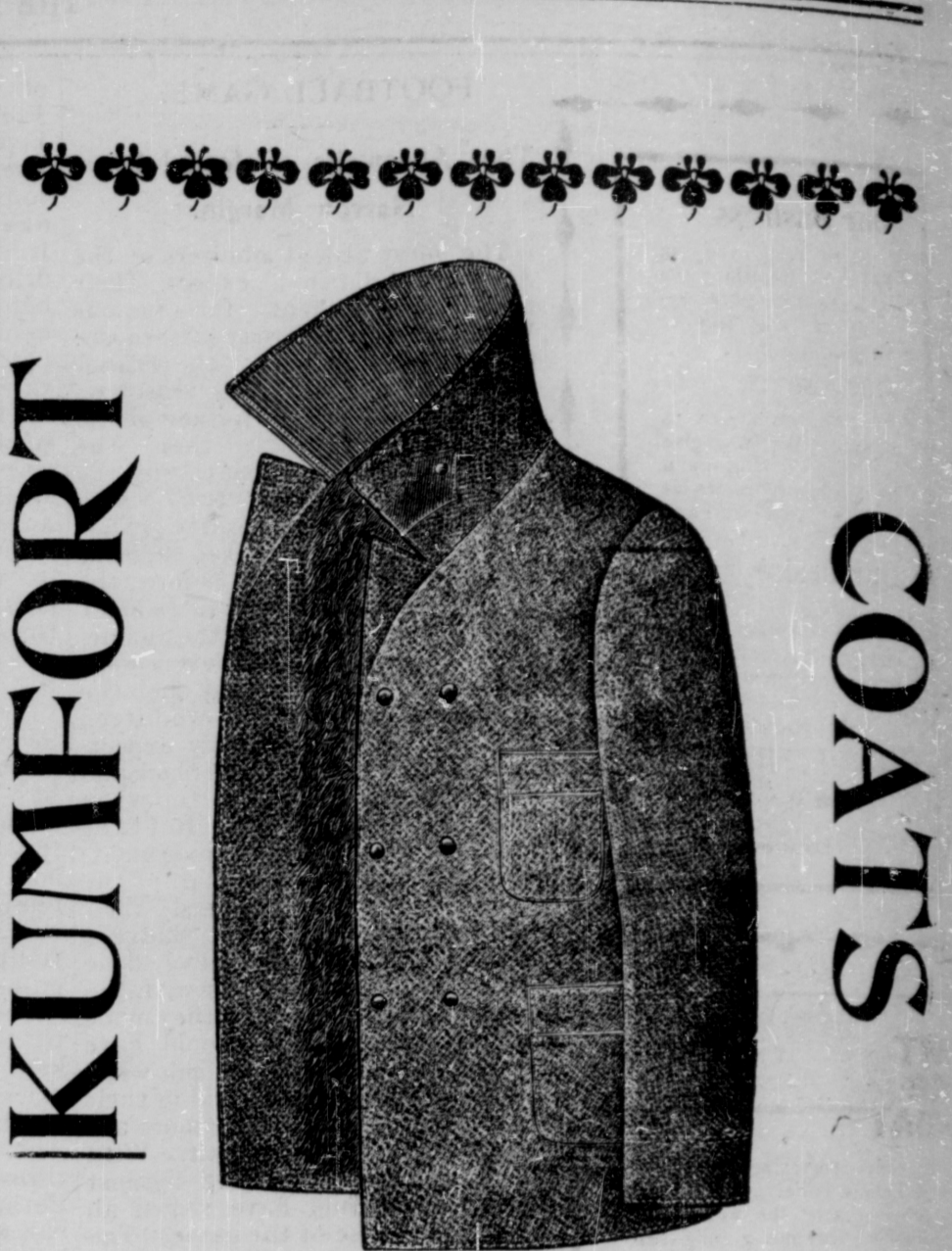


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