

Daily Guardian.

MONDAY, DEC. 22, 1890.

Hon. Mr. Laurier.

The distinguished leader of the Liberal party is to address a mass meeting in the Market Hall this evening. We think we only voice the feeling of all Islanders, Conservative as well as Liberal, in saying that we are glad to see him and that he is welcome to Prince Edward Island. The meeting of this evening will result in much good provided the speakers discuss the wants of the Island on their merits, and not merely for the purpose of promoting party interests. So it is to be hoped that we shall be definitely told how the Liberals will definitely acquire power to deal with the leading important questions affecting Prince Edward Island. There are such questions so vital to this colony that our people would wish that speakers assume that Sir John's Government is in power with the Hon. Mr. Laurier as their leader—and that happy state of things being assumed let us ask the Liberal leaders "What do you propose to do to remove grievances that peculiarly affect P. E. Island?" As Mr. Laurier is a stranger among us, we hope it will not be considered out of place if we refer him to one or two of our principle wants and grievances.

The chief obstacle to our prosperity as a colony is our isolation from the continent by frost and ice during four and sometimes five months of each year. Our people always felt handicapped by this fact, but at the same time believed that the obstacle was removable, and therefore on our agreeing to enter into Confederation in 1873, politicians of both our parties stipulated with the Dominion Government, and (though this seems to be now considered obsolete) the Dominion Government stipulated with us, that it would assume and defray the expenses of "efficient steam service for the conveyance of mails and passengers to be established and maintained between the Island and the mainland of the Dominion, winter and summer, thus placing the Island in continuous communication with the Intercolonial Railway and the railway system of the Dominion." Mark you, continuous communication with the railway system of the Dominion, summer and winter. If our farmers had such continuous communication with the railway system of the Dominion in the farmers of Pictou County and Sussex Vale have, we could worry along under our present high tariff—although it is double our anti-Confederation tariff. We have the doubled tariff but winter communication not made more regular or frequent than in the old times—although improved in some respects; we have good lands, our farmers are industrious and economical, and farming is our chief industry, therefore, anything that cripples the farmers cripples our country at large. It is hard for strangers like Mr. Laurier and his companions to realize how seriously isolation damages the farmers of this Island. By the time the harvest is gathered in, winter is approaching, and the farmer must hurry off his surplus produce to market before the ice makes, at a time of the year when he should be ploughing and tilling his fields, when there is always a glut of agricultural products in the market and prices are low, with the result that he gets much less for his labor than his fellows in the neighboring Provinces. During the winter and early spring when prices of such articles as we export range high we are completely shut off from the markets of the whole world. Our merchants, again, must put in and carry heavy stocks for the winter because they cannot replenish them during the winter months except at expenses that leave no profits unless they charge our farmers more than farmers in N. S. and N. B. pay for similar goods. Want of access to market in winter results in this, that our farmers get about one half the price on an average for their produce that the farmers of the other provinces of the Dominion get for the like produce. Let us quote an illustration that already has been used, but is so striking that our people should learn it off by heart and cast it at Dominion politicians of every stripe on every possible occasion. The average price of potatoes, for example, in the various provinces of this Dominion for the year 1888 was as follows—

Table with 2 columns: Province and Price per bushel. Ontario: 62 cents per bush. Manitoba: 59 " " Quebec: 49 " " Nova Scotia: 47 " " New Brunswick: 48 " " P. E. Island: 26 " "

One can understand why, for obvious reasons, this article should bring more in the three first-named Provinces; but there can only be one reason why the farmer of P. E. Island should not get as much for his bushel of potatoes as the farmer of Nova Scotia or New Brunswick, and that is our isolation in winter and early spring. Farmers of P. E. Island, just think of it,—you toil and toil to raise your potatoes at a price of only 26 cents a bushel, while your fellow within sight of you across the straits get 48 cents a bushel for his. Why is this? Because the Dominion Government has not hitherto fulfilled its engagements with you to furnish continuous communication, summer and winter, with the railway system of Canada.

That this has not been done every body admits. Why, in this very month of December, now past but a few days, we have had only about six mails from abroad, and between some of those days was an interval of four or five days. At this very moment there are dozens of vessels laden with produce

frozen in, in nearly every harbor of the Island to the great loss of our farmers and merchants; and if these cargoes escape total destruction from frost, not a bushel can be got to market for the next four months for want of the continuous communication with the railway system of the Dominion that was promised us on entering Confederation. We wonder that so many of our farmers' sons go abroad,—the wonder is so many of them stay at home. One of them who left this Island twenty years ago remarked lately that he returned across the straits in the very same boat that carried him off twenty years ago, and that he spent more time in coming from Truro to Charlottetown, than he did between the Pacific Coast and Truro.

The truth is there never can be efficient connection between us and the mainland for the purposes of our industries until the 63 miles of water between us and New Brunswick is tunneled, and the sooner we realize that fact the better. It is now made to appear probable, that such a tunnel can be built at a cost not exceeding five or six million dollars or less. If it can be built for any such sum the people of this Island should insist on having it built as a fulfilment of the Dominion's engagement to furnish us with connection with the Railroad system of Canada. The annual cost of the present inefficient service and the direct money loss each year to our farmers caused by our isolation, far exceed the yearly interest of the probable sum requisite to furnish us with the connection we are expressly entitled to under the terms of Confederation. Politicians should not be allowed to shirk this question. We now ask the Liberal Leaders who are to speak at to-night's meeting to express their views—their proposals—on this subject, directly and openly without hedging.

(a) Are you prepared when in power to make necessary surveys and get estimates from competent Engineers as to the cost of tunnelling the Straits?

(b) If the estimate for the work does not exceed five or six millions, will you agree to go on with the work?

(c) If the work is proved by competent Engineers to be impracticable—or if the work is too expensive to be undertaken, what do you propose to do in order to give the stipulated connection with the Railway system of the Dominion?

The people will be more anxious to hear the Liberal voice on this question inasmuch as they believe many influential followers of the Liberal party in this Island are deeply interested in the N. S. Company's boats, and that the tendency of leading Liberals is to hang on to the old method of communication with improvements, if improvements are rendered unavoidable by public discontent.

Free trade comes next and is an important question, but as far as P. E. Island is concerned is second in importance to a continuous, efficient connection with the Mainland. Under the snarl of battle over the trade question we do not wish the Liberal leaders to evade the discussion of winter communication with the railway system of Canada.

We thank Mr. Laurier and his distinguished associates for visiting us at a season when he can only reach us with difficulty and danger. We shall undoubtedly obtain from him as leader, an authoritative announcement of the Liberal policy with respect to our want of communication with the mainland in winter. If the Liberal leader promises to effectually remove this winter isolation of which we complain and from which we now suffer so much loss he will do much to assist his followers in P. E. Island to again return to the Commons.

Local Briefs. Mr. Higgins is very weak to-day. A suitable Christmas present, a Rink ticket. The mails are expected at the usual hour this evening. P. E. I. potatoes were bringing 75 to 85 cents in Boston a week ago. To-night—Regular meeting of Victoria Division No. 4, Sons of Temperance, at 8 o'clock. Secure your tickets for the rink as positively no allowances will be made for any money paid at the door when buying season tickets. THE PROTESTANTISM OF THE PRAYER-BOOK.—This excellent work of Rev. W. H. H. is for sale at the Diamond Bookstore. The Stanley went up the C-ridge river yesterday breaking the ice and opening a track for the produce laden vessels frozen in there. They have all got safely away. The ice in the skating rink is in very good order and if the weather turns colder it is expected that a large crowd will be present at the opening to-morrow night. The S.S. Colia left St. Louis via Sydney for the Boston market with a full cargo of potatoes. It is the intention of her owners to have her return and load again in St. Louis if the weather keeps moderate. Rev. J. A. Gorman and Rev. Mr. Sutherland preached able sermons in their respective churches last evening on the temperance question. Summaries crowded out to-day, will appear to-morrow. The young people of the Baptist Church in this city have organized themselves into a society called the Loyalists. Its object is the development of the social, intellectual and spiritual life of its members, under the direct control of the local church. The Sheriff's Proclamation for the Scott Act election has been issued. The Examiner says the Royalty has been excluded owing to a decision of the Supreme Court, which held that the Royalty was part of Queen's County and not part of the City of Charlottetown. Heretofore the electors of the Royalty have had an opportunity of voting in the city election.

A QUIET CHAT With Laurier and Fisher.

THE TWO STATESMEN ARE INTERVIEWED.

Mr. Fisher Strong for the Scott Act.

The Georgetown Special, which arrived here Saturday afternoon, brought among its passengers the Hon. Wilfred Laurier, leader of the Opposition in the Dominion Parliament, and his Secretary, Mr. Choquette. Mr. Fisher, the member for Brome, Quebec, and Mr. L. H. Davies. The party left Halifax the day previous, and joined the Stanley at Pictou. Arriving here they drove at once to the residence of Mr. Davies, whose guests the visitors will be during their stay here. On Sunday, Mr. Laurier attended Mass at St. Dunstan's Cathedral with Hon. A. A. Macdonald. In the evening he attended St. Peter's with Mr. Davies. Mr. Fisher attended St. Paul's in the morning. The party will remain here until to-morrow evening. A reception will be given to-morrow evening. Knowing that the public would be interested in hearing any remarks which our visitors might make, at the earliest opportunity a representative of THE GUARDIAN called at the residence of Mr. Davies, by whom he was courteously received, and presented to his distinguished guests.

THE LIBERAL LEADER is a gentleman of striking appearance,—tall, slight, smooth-shaven, dignified and courteous. At first sight he gives one the impression of the polished man of letters, rather than the man of politics,—of a poet, rather than a statesman. He speaks in measured, quiet tones, and has just enough of the French accent to render his pronunciation of English clear and musical. No one can be with him many minutes without realizing that he is a man of power and authority, and born to lead. To the question, "I presume Mr. Laurier that in coming to Prince Edward Island you expected to leave the interview behind you?" he smiled, and said he was always pleased to meet representatives of the Press, but it was not his custom to permit interviews. He had never granted more than two before, and he was so miserably reported and his remarks were so misrepresented by the interviewers, that he rather objected to the proceeding. However, he kindly consented to give me a few minutes of questions, which might be of interest to readers of THE GUARDIAN. The following conversation then took place:—"Do you think the general election is likely to come off soon?" "I do not know. I may refer to that at the meeting. If the rules of parliamentary government are followed, I will not have an election until we have the annual revision of the electoral lists. Last session the government asked parliament to dispense with the law which specified the month of June as the time for the revision alleging that there was to be no election before that time. Parliament did so. Therefore, should an election take place under the old list, many would be disfranchised, and it would be looked upon as a breach of faith on the part of the Government. But we have seen so many extraordinary things in this country that I am not prepared for anything and everything. I have asked my friends to act accordingly."

"In your tour through the Provinces how have you found public opinion in relation to the Liberal party?" "If I were to judge the rest of the community by the feelings of those with whom I came in contact, the feeling is overwhelmingly in favor of the Liberal party. But I do not pretend to say I have seen enough of the country during my hurried tour to form an opinion. I base my hopes on the soundness of our policy, and the soundness of the people's common sense."

How do you explain the defeat of the Liberal candidates in the recent by-elections in Quebec? In Naperville the Conservative stole our programme. Their candidate came out strongly for Unrestricted reciprocity,—that is with no restrictions expressed. I don't know whether there were any restrictions mentally reserved or not. But no man could have been elected there on any other ticket. "You spoke of the soundness of your policy." May I ask what is the platform upon which the Liberals will appeal to the country? "I will refer you to my speech on Monday night. Unrestricted reciprocity is the main issue."

But is that an issue over which the Liberal party have any control? "It naturally requires the consent of two nations. We believe that what has taken place before will take place again. We have the example of the German Zollverein. At this very moment negotiations are going on between Germany and Austria for a similar treaty. We say it can be done. We know, too, that many in the United States are favorable to such a policy."

"Did you enjoy the winter navigation of our Straits?" "The experience was more pleasant when over than at the time. The sea was very rough. I could wish the means of winter communication were better, but do not know how it can be made so. The Stanley is certainly a good boat, and the Captain a very prudent and effective officer."

MR. FISHER OF BROME was interviewed at the same time. This gentleman is an earnest and devoted temperance worker—one of the few politicians it is said who is prepared to sink party and everything else if need be, to further the good cause. He was particularly frank, affable, and courteous, and impressed one as being a gentleman of broad and liberal views—a credit alike to the party with which he is identified and the army of temperance workers whose cause he has done so much to further. The constituency which he represents is Brome, on the borders of Quebec. Our conversation immediately turned to the subject of temperance and the Scott Act. Are you in favor of the Scott Act Mr. Fisher? "Yes I am thoroughly in favor of it. We adopted it in the county of Brome in 1880 I think. The largest village in the county has something less than 1000 inhabitants. The Act has worked on the whole very satisfactorily. Of course I do not mean to say no liquor is sold, but we have very rarely any more."

pretty successful in our prosecutions. We have a branch of the Dominion Alliance in the county, and the Secretary has assumed the responsibility of all prosecutions. At first we had a difficulty in raising money to carry on the work, but now the finest impost supply a fund for this purpose. Under the present arrangement the fines go into the hands of the County Secretary-Treasurer to be applied for the purposes of the Act. We got our County Council to pass a resolution directing that those fines be available for any body who undertook to prosecute successfully."

Why, that is just what we want here. The City Council dismissed the prosecutor, paid the Marshall \$5 a year not to enforce the law, and the W. C. T. U. took hold of the matter, appointing a prosecutor themselves. They are now asking the Council to pay that they expended in his salary. Don't you think that request is fair? "Certainly—perfectly fair. That was the ground I took in Brome. The resolution passed by our Council specified no one in particular; but that the fines should be available for any one who prosecuted successfully, in which case when at any time they chanced to be unsuccessful the fines were applicable for the expenses incurred."

You have the Dunkin Act in force in Quebec also, have you not? Yes, it is in force in one county. We have also a local option law under the municipal code of the Province, applicable only to municipalities. The Council has the power to pass a by-law which must be submitted to the people for their approval. But the Scott Act is much superior to both measures. Is there not some doubt as to the constitutionality of a Provincial local option law? I believe it has been challenged but not yet tested. But in Quebec we have nothing to fear inasmuch as both the Dunkin Act and the municipal local option law were in force previous to Confederation and were never repealed. How do you account for the defeat of the Scott Act in certain counties in Ontario?

The success of that measure in those places in the first instance was due to a momentary enthusiasm which was not substantial. The temperance sentiment was not advanced as far as many supposed. In fact the Scott Act was found to be more effective than some of them thought. But in many of those counties to-day the people would be glad to go back to the Scott Act. They have seen the difference. Now that they have a license law they appreciate the Scott Act. What are the prospects for Prohibition?

I do not think a majority could be got in the whole of Canada, with the cities and towns. Quebec is a barrier in the way. While many of the French temperance people are in favor of Prohibition many others are not. Mr. Fisher then went on to speak of the contest in this city. He said:—"We have always looked upon you people on the Island as being very fortunate in having no part of the Province under Liege se. In our country we do not reap the full benefits of the measure because the adjoining counties are under Liege se. If you should lose the Scott Act here it will expose the counties to all the evil effects which we fear and fight against."

Respecting the liquor question in the North-west Mr. Fisher said:—"Great harm has been done by the issue of the old-fashioned permits, and allowing the sale of 4 per cent beer. The Dominion Alliance passed a strong resolution condemning this matter. I looked into it very carefully and received requests from the Northwest to take it up. I came to the conclusion that it was quite within the power and the duty of the Dominion Government to look after this matter. Governor Royal is their agent and appointee. If they chose to interfere they could. Last session I moved a vote of censure—not as a party man, but as a temperance man. Mr. Laurier arose after that and distinctly declared, without taking a prohibitionist's standpoint, that he believed it was the duty of the Government to see that the law was enforced while it remained on the statute book. Every Liberal voted for it, and every Conservative voted against it, excepting one—Mr. Jamieson. I believe the Liberals have done and are likely to do more for temperance than the Conservatives; that is one reason why I am in their ranks."

What chance are there to have the Scott Act improved? The chances are not very good under the present Government. Mr. Mills of Bothwell, moved a few years ago declaring it was the duty of the Government to amend the Scott Act, and to make it more workable. He did this in consequence of its repeal in several places, believing it was largely due to the Act not being so perfect as possible. Every Liberal supported that resolution, and every Conservative voted against it. How would you improve the Act? It could be improved in some of its details. One great reform necessary is the appointment of an officer by the Dominion Government to enforce the law. I consider it as being an Act of the Dominion, and only to be amended or changed by the Dominion Parliament, and therefore they should enforce it. Could Parliament be induced to allow a municipality or county where the Act is in force to prevent the importation as well as the sale of liquor? No, that is impossible. There is no machinery for such a purpose. It must be remembered that the Scott Act does not forbid the drinking or possession of liquors; only the traffic in it. We would have to change the whole tenor of the Act to make it prohibitive, and allow the seizure of liquor in a private house."

This closed the interview, and in parting Mr. Fisher expressed his earnest hope that we would be successful in retaining the Scott Act on the 8th of January next.

LETTER TO EDITOR.

A Query. Sir:—Will the Secretary of the Benevolent Irish Society, (pro tem or otherwise) inform the public if their is a Sectarian Institution and under control of the church? Recent events lead me to that conclusion, but I fail to see how the Protestant members of the society can submit to such domination. Yours, PENCH.

S. S. "WILLIAM." ANY PERSON having unexpired claims against the above Steamer previous to December 31st, will please furnish same at once to the undersigned. R. McWILLIAM.

Farms and Mills APOTHECARIES HALL

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DesBrisay's Corner, Queen Square, Charlottetown, P. E. Island, THE LEADING DRUG HOUSE ON THE ISLAND. GEORGE E. HUGHES, Proprietor. OUR STOCK is now complete, comprising in part—Pure Drugs, Chemicals, Patent Medicines, Trusses, Elastic Stockings and Bandages, Toilet Articles, Hair Brushes, Nail Brushes, Tooth Brushes, Combs, Sponges, Hand Mirrors, Dressing Cases, Odor Cases, Perfumes—all the most popular kinds. Diamond Dyes, and all Dyeing Requisites. Cigars (40,000) in stock, at all prices, the best assortment of fresh goods on the Island. Tobacco, Pipes, Pipe Mounts, Fixings, and all Requisites. Horse and Cattle Medicines—All kinds, including the popular Harebury's Veterinary Specifics. Dealers can save money by buying from us, as we have the largest stock, bought from the best Houses, in wholesale lots, with best cash discounts. Remember the oldest and most reliable House in the trade. Dec. 20, 1890. APOTHECARIES HALL, DesBrisay's Corner.

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In Gold and Silver for Boys, Girls, Ladies and Gentlemen. In Marble, Imitation Marble, Antique Oak, Walnut, Ash and Nickel, etc. In all the newest and best designs. In Solid Silver and Silver Plated Goods, we have almost everything imaginable. We have also added a fine assortment of GOLD and SILVER CANES, which make a suitable Present for Gentlemen. We have placed a BARGAIN COUNTER in our Store filled with Vases, Lustres, Flower Holders, etc., which will be sold regardless of cost. A Special Discount will be allowed Cash Customers for ten days from this date. W. W. WELLNER. Ch'town, Dec. 20, 1890.

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P. E. I. RAILWAY. CHRISTMAS EXCURSIONS. RETURN TICKETS will be issued at one first-class fare to and from all Stations on this Railroad on December 24th and 25th inst., good to return up to and on January 5th, 1891. J. UNSWORTH, Superintendent. Railway Office, Ch'town, Dec. 20, 1890—td

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