

THE ELECTIONS.

The government of Hon. Richard McBride has secured a new lease of power. It will have a strong majority in the new legislature. For four years at least it will be absolutely independent of the allies which sustained it during the past three years and a half, and that is something all men regardless of political opinions will be thankful for.

Nor is that all upon which the people of the province are to be congratulated. Notwithstanding the assertions of supporters of the government that there was nothing in its record of which any administration need be ashamed, the fact remains that the conduct of the Lands and Works Department when under the control of the late minister, Mr. Green, was productive of a continuous succession of shameful scandals. The very fact that it was considered imperative to turn the minister forth just on the eve of the dissolution of the legislature is sufficient proof that the opposition was justified in all it said with regard to the administration of that important department. In point of fact, some of the ministers actually claimed credit for their hostile attitude towards Mr. Green and asked for a continuation of a vote of confidence in the government on the strength of their expressed desire to purge the party of its undesirable elements.

We do not believe the cry of better terms and of Ottawa domination was a very important factor in the campaign. The determining influence, in our estimation, was the undeniable fact of the present prosperity and the hopeful outlook for the province in the future. Political experience in Canada and the United States demonstrates that the people are very loath to make changes in governments while "times are good." Prosperity becomes associated in the popular mind with the men who are in control of the machinery of state, and only those with a fine discrimination take the trouble to analyze the situation with accuracy. One need not look very far below the surface of things in this province to see that the increase in business activity is due to forces operating for the most part without our provincial boundaries. It is a consequence of the rapid settlement of the fertile lands of the prairies, something to which the Dominion government has devoted itself with great energy and to which it has set apart a very large proportion of its growing resources. It is not only promoting immigration—it is preparing the way for increasing armies of settlers by procuring the construction of railways. The McBride government is consequently reaping a field it had no part whatever in sowing. And it will probably continue to grow in area and measure from the same field, as the next four years will be a period of great activity in the province through the active prosecution of the actual work of construction on the Grand Trunk Pacific, which will begin during the present year.

The influence which to a large extent determined the result in other sections were undeniably responsible to some extent for the remarkable turnover in the city of Victoria. There was nothing in the record of the four Liberal candidates that would have justified a single voter in withdrawing his confidence from them and bestowing it upon the representatives of the McBride government. They served their constituency faithfully and were at all times loyal to our interests, fighting the battles of our people while the members of the government were consistently and continuously hostile. But within the past year or so there has been a marked revival in business in Victoria. Our merchants have increased their business enormously, there has been steady and profitable employment for our industrial classes, and real estate, both without and within the environs of the city, has risen in value in a degree bearing some reasonable relation to its actual worth both speculatively and as an investment. Anyone who has taken the trouble to investigate and get the facts by the roots knows well that the McBride government has had nothing whatever to do with bringing about this result. But even those who realize the truth felt a delicacy about making a change, slight though they knew the chance to be of a change creating a reaction. But, notwithstanding the manifest advantage the government possessed, it is doubtful whether in a straight contest between the elements which supported the government and the forces which are known to be instinctively opposed to it, Victoria would not have ranged herself as decidedly as she has done of recent years on the side of Liberalism. The government strength here more noticeably than anywhere else in the province lay in the diffusion of the strength that was opposed to it.

While we regret the return of the McBride government, while we believe that the people of British Columbia made a serious mistake in returning it to power again in the light of the disclosures of the past two years, while we believe it will still be found that forces inimical to the true interests of British Columbia will manifest themselves as still controlling the administration, while we believe that a government under Mr. J. A. Macdonald could have rendered the province much better service during the prosperous era that appears to be before us, we still believe that the people are to be congratulated on having returned to

power Mr. McBride with a following that will relieve him of the disabilities which had hampered him during his first term as premier. Whatever occurs now, he will be responsible.

RIFLE SHOOTING.

As will be observed by a perusal of the report of the rifle association of the Fifth Regiment the marksmen of Victoria have achieved very creditable results during the past year. Some of the young men in the organization have gained distinction for themselves and added fame to this city as marksmen of the very first class. It would perhaps be needless for us to point out something that has frequently been commented upon by higher authorities, that there is nothing of greater importance to nations in these days of repeating arms of marvellous precision and range than the encouragement of marksmanship among young men. The fact has been demonstrated in the most practical manner possible that while drill and discipline in forces intended for any purpose, offensive or defensive, are of the highest importance, a knowledge of the use of the rifle is a prime necessity. While this lesson has often been inculcated in the abstract, it is very much to be feared that in the concrete it has not been acted upon in a degree proportionate to the value of the teachings of experience. It is obvious, therefore, that all who have either power or influence, whether private individuals or organized communities, such as municipalities and governments, ought to exercise that power and influence in promoting practice with the rifle. The progress the members of the Fifth Regiment have made in this art is highly creditable to them and to the city they represent. They have taken high places when competing against the crack shots of the province, of the Dominion, and of their comrades in arms from all sections of the Empire. We congratulate them on their successes, hope they may be encouraged in the most practical manner to persevere, and that they may add during the present year to the victories they have won.

FEDERAL RESPONSIBILITY.

The question of provincial or state rights, of which we have heard something of late in British Columbia, is intruding itself threateningly in the commonwealths of the United States and of Australia. President Roosevelt has warned California that she has the power, if she persists in exercising it, of forcing the republic into war with Japan. The president is possibly somewhat of an extremist. Nor is he always as discreet in his utterances as one occupying a position of tremendous responsibility ought to be. Great nations do not go to war over trivialities in these days when national strife is so costly in life and treasure and paralytic in its effects upon business. Statesmen realize too realistically their tremendous responsibilities. There is no probability of the United States and Japan going to war for the vindication of a principle of state rights as between the central and the federal authorities in an American republic. But the trouble between California and Japan accentuates the necessity, a necessity which has been apparent in other disputes between states and sovereign powers, of an amendment to the United States constitution which would clearly define where federal authority begins and state rights end. It is not safe to permit individual states to set at naught, in some cases to defy, the provisions of treaties solemnly entered into by the federal government, and ratified by the federal legislatures, with foreign powers.

Australia as a united commonwealth has but entered upon her career, and yet she is already experiencing some of the troubles which seem to be inherent in the federal system. The trouble there is becoming acute, according to authentic advice. Mr. Carruthers, the premier of New South Wales, in speaking recently of the colonial conference to be held in England in April next, said it seemed strange that the Imperial government should exclude the individual states of Australia from its proceedings. The Australian federal constitution, he observed, provided that the rights of the states should remain intact, except where otherwise expressly stipulated. The British government proposed to go further—to take away the right of the states to be heard on questions purely within their purview, and to enlarge the scope of the operation of the commonwealth constitution, apparently confining the commonwealth with the Canadian constitution, which took over everything and empowered the relegation of certain matters to the individual states. The Australian states, on the other hand, controlled everything except what they relegated to the commonwealth. He was not anxious, he said, to go to London. He did not regard it as a personal matter. He held that it was a mistaken idea on the part of the Imperial government to belittle and rob the Australian states of their absolute rights. The Australian states declined to permit Mr. Deakin, representing the commonwealth, to speak on their behalf. Therefore, any resolutions concerning state matters would be ignored as worthless if passed behind the backs of the representatives of the Australian states.

WHITE PLAGUES.

Of all the ills that afflict humanity, not even, we believe, excepting the "white plague," the most dreaded, and the most defiant of all man's efforts at treatment, is cancer. The disease has engaged the attention of scientific men since the not remote day when the art of curing or alleviating disease may be said to have been reduced to a science, as yet far from exact. Progress has been made in the treatment of tuberculosis. We can all remember the time when the case of the consumptive, even in the first stages, was regarded as hopeless. That a change has come over the situation and the old fatalistic theory been banished forever is due entirely to the investigations of the medical profession. The methods of treating cancerous affections, while still confined within surgical lines, are progressing also. We are told that France will soon have a special institute for the study of cancer similar to the Imperial Cancer Research Fund in England, and corresponding institutions in Germany and the United States. In an important paper read at the Paris Academy of Medicine, Dr. Poirier recalled the fact that a league for combating cancer was founded in France in 1882, of which the celebrated surgeon Verneuil was the principal member, but that after doing good work it ceased to exist, owing to lack of support. He then proposed the establishment of an organization to unite the efforts of inquirers in France, furnish them with materials and help them to carry on their labors. Dr. Henri de Rothschild at once handed over a check for \$20,000 as a contribution to the funds of the new league against cancer. In the same paper, Dr. Poirier dwelt upon the importance and increasing success of early surgical intervention. During the past quarter of a century, he said, the percentage of those cured has, according to statistics, risen from 20 to 40 per cent. Since 1901 he himself has performed thirty-two operations for cancer of the tongue, mostly in an advanced stage, and in a condition usually regarded as hopeless. His method consists chiefly in the complete excision of the lymphatic ganglions on both sides. Out of twenty-seven cases there were eight recoveries which promise to be permanent.

THE ATHLETIC CRAZE.

There is no likelihood of the English-speaking Jack becoming a dull boy for lack of opportunities for play. In Great Britain close upon a hundred thousand persons have been known to attend football games. Last winter the progress of the New Zealand football team received more attention in the press than the proceedings of parliament, the legislative body which guides, directs and superintends the affairs of the nation. This winter the South Africans were the heroes of the day. In a few months the football players will retire in favor of the cricketers, and new athletic heroes will be created for the entertainment of the sport-loving multitude. On this side of the water practically similar conditions have been developed. In the United States the football season has come to an end; but the interest in the various tests of popular athletic heroes is not permitted to wane. The baseball season is a few months in the future. Still plans are being laid for the coming contests of these mighty men of modern times—the successors of the knights of old whose swords are rust. College professors, viewing with disfavor and distrust the peculiar trend of the times, have done their best to stem the tide of sentiment and to turn men's thoughts to things that really matter; but their efforts have been unavailing. The champion in the athletic field still commands a higher salary than the distinguished statesman, the scholarly college professor, the writer who propounds, original theories, the physician who devotes his life to the alleviation of the miseries which bear so heavily on humanity, or the inventor whose devices go far towards lightening the burdens of life. The classes which furnish amusement for the multitude live in affluence and sport themselves in merriment. As it is in Great Britain and in the United States to-day, so it will be in the Canada of the future. We must first get the population; then the popular idol will be added to our list of celebrities also. But we must first get the people; the people will accumulate the wealth; and the modern hero will be developed to appropriate it to himself under the pretext of furnishing us with the amusement we must have, and can have provided we pay the price.

INDIA'S DEMAND FOR SELF-GOVERNMENT.

The humiliation of Russia by Japan has removed for the time being, possibly permanently, the long-prevalent British fear that the Muscovite bear was determined to sneer his ambitious claws within the vitals of our Indian Empire. We shall hear no more for some time stories about Russia intruding in Afghanistan for the purpose of reaching the doors of India. But a new fear has taken possession of the sensitive British mind. The people of India are being educated, and with education has come an aspiration for self-government, and it self-government is being demanded. The British Liberal tradition, for which the Campbell-Bannerman government stands,

what is likely to follow? The fact has been pointed out by a newspaper correspondent that the resignation of Sir Bamfylde Fuller, the lieutenant-governor of Eastern Bengal, attracted a good deal of attention last summer, in England, as well as in India. It has now become the subject of a published parliamentary report. It appears that Sir Bamfylde held that the masters and students of two schools at Sirajganj had been guilty of seditious action in connection with the organized political agitation, directed from Calcutta against the division of the old province of Bengal, and that, in the interests of good government and public order, they ought to be punished by "disaffiliation" from the University of Calcutta. He officially requested the registrar of the university to propose such action to the syndicate of that body. The government of India did not question the facts on which the action of the lieutenant-governor was based or the existence of the rebellious spirit. They questioned, however, the expediency of his remedy and asked him therefore to withdraw his application to the registrar. This he declined to do. He bowed, of course, to the decision of the viceroy and offered to execute his orders; but declared that, if these were confirmed, his authority would be so

greatly weakened that his usefulness as a public officer would cease. Accordingly he tendered his resignation when the viceroy refused to reconsider his instructions, and it was accepted. The Indian government acknowledges that the conduct of the students was scandalous in the extreme, and the rebellious spirit which they manifested mischievous and dangerous. It appears that they organized themselves into a regular corps, of which the masters were the officers, for rallying the stores of merchants dealing in British goods. The refusal of the viceroy to support Sir Bamfylde Fuller, who has had a most distinguished career, is justified on the score of expediency.

Of course we are delighted to welcome our old friend A. E. McPhillips back into the Legislature. But what an exchange for the Islands to make. Paterson, a man of few words, strong common sense and intense personality, McPhillips nothing but words. Brewster of Alberni is to be congratulated on the great fight he has waged against the government forces reinforced by the prestige of a cabinet minister. His election seems to be certain.

Now will the people keep their eyes open and see who has to pay the piper? When a public man's time has come he has got to go. That which Mr. Pooley, late of Esquimalt, would probably describe to-day as the "rabble," is as inexorable in its decrees as death. Length of service does not count. With the retirement of Mr. Pooley the Legislature loses one of its most familiar figures. We are sincerely sorry his time has come, although we really believe Esquimalt is to be congratulated on the discernment it displayed in comparison with other constituencies where we would have no difficulty in naming. Talk about the fierceness of the election contest. There are two vacancies in the cabinet, with our dear friend Mr. Bower and Messrs. McPhillips and Eberts, not to speak of others, already fighting for the portfolio. Watch and see the wool fly. The news of the death at Ottawa of Lady Victoria Greenleaf, daughter of Lord and Lady Grey, will be received with the deepest regret by the people of Canada. As Sir Wilfrid Laurier has said, their Excellencies have mingled very freely amongst Canadians. Whenever they have gone they have achieved a popularity that is remarkable. West will join with East in hoping that the weight of the terrible blow may be lightened as some appreciable extent by the knowledge of the intense sympathy of all Canadians. Now that Premier McBride has won a decisive victory, we suppose he will lose no time in laying the case of British Columbia at the "foot of the throne." We have a right to expect him to fulfil all his pledges, and as the case for better terms was his strong card, he will surely play it as soon as possible. "Is better to have fought and lost than never to have fought at all.—All the defeated ones."

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