

THE WEST

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WEDNESDAY, August 31, 1907.

Mr. Scott's Letter

Twice has Mr. Calder attempted to justify the cent an acre tax and now Mr. Scott himself has undertaken the task, but he cannot expect to meet with better results, for the law is a direct contradiction of his pre-election principles, and the farmers of the province should be the last source of revenue for provincial purposes, and not as the government has made it, the first.

One of the last appeals Mr. Scott made to the electors before the last election was: "If we had the lands we would not get a subsidy in lieu of lands. For the year 1905 this amounts to \$468,750. If deprived of this the province would immediately have to borrow money. DIRECT TAXATION WOULD BE STARING US IN THE FACE."

This was just the same argument as was made by Mr. Scott with regard to the police. He said: "If we get the lands we will have to maintain the police," but we have lost the lands and are paying \$75,000 per annum for the police. Mr. Scott is a lightning calculator, but he is never accurate. That is one of his chief faults.

The premier follows the argument of Mr. Calder and places the amount of unorganised lands in the province at the same figures as those computed a year ago. Yet the Saskatchewan Gazette tells us that since the session 1,446,400 acres have been added to the organised districts of the province, or in the year about 3,840,000 acres, which means that the whole unorganised territory will be rural districts in five or six years more. Then where will the money come from to pay for the agricultural college, the university and the high schools, except out of the hard earnings of the farmers, while the villages, towns and cities remain the same as now, without contributing a cent. It is all very well for Mr. Scott to figure on a basis of twenty-two million acres of unoccupied land with a minimum of organised districts, but that argument is a fallacy and will not obtain even this year.

Another phase of the question is the fact that, included in the unorganised territory is the large acreage until recently held by ranchers in the western part of the province. Mr. Wylie member for Maple Creek, told the house when the act was before the legislature that the ranchers holding land under lease from the Dominion would surrender their leases before they would pay the cent an acre tax. This they have since done and Mr. Scott must therefore deduct from the 22,000,000 acres the large tracts which have reverted to the Dominion under the new law. This will bring down considerably the unorganised lands available for revenue purposes.

Notwithstanding his two column letter he has fallen down, and the point has not been met with regard to his own position, for he promised the people that if they returned him to power they would not be confronted with direct taxation.

It is unfortunate that Mr. Scott was out of the House when this act was passed, but that is no reason why he should not be familiar with the proceedings of the legislature respecting this measure, and he should not misquote anyone in connection with this matter, for it is an important issue, as he realises, or he would not write such lengthy letters to Local Improvement Districts.

Mr. Haultain in speaking of "magnificent grants" said that the law already provided such, but the premier should not try to leave the impression that Mr. Haultain in using these words, referred to the grants under the supplementary revenue act. Our legislative notes remind us that Mr. Haultain regarded the special grants as illusive and indefinite in their most favorable aspect.

The premier states that the new act is "perhaps the first decidedly advance step taken by Saskatchewan since gaining full provincial status." That looks like brazening the thing out, but we mistake the disposition of the farmers of this province if they will stand for any such legislation as the cent an acre tax.

Of course there may be a small section of the farming community that will respond to the party appeal which the premier has made when he turned aside in his letter to attack the Provincial Rights principles, and in an official letter on an issue of this kind such a reference was uncalled for and altogether out of place, but we question if even with his own party these tactics will have the desired effect.

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The Beef Enquiry

Elsewhere we publish a portion of the evidence of J. T. Gordon, M.P., before the beef commission in Winnipeg, and from Mr. Gordon's statements, which is the only sworn information dealing with figures, it is apparent that much has been said without foundation concerning the alleged beef trust. Gordon, Ironside & Fares ship annually 75 per cent of the cattle exported from the Dominion, and if there is a monopoly of the one firm controls it. However, Mr. Gordon, has given to the public the figures from the company's private books and nothing has been withheld that would be of any benefit to the commission in arriving at a conclusion with regard to their mission.

Mr. Gordon says that the trouble with the meat market is that there is so much inferior stock offered for sale that they must pay what the farmers and small ranchers think low prices, but from the figures it will be seen that when his firm gets their hands on first class article they pay first class prices.

We believe that the only hope of the cattle or any other industry is in having a market where the best will command higher prices than inferior goods. That is the right and only kind of competition.

Mr. Gordon denies that his company ever received a cent in rebate from the C.P.R. in shipping rates and he challenges any statements to the contrary, and urges the commission to enquire through C.P.R. sources.

As regards the retail prices in Regina, consumers know that it is very difficult to get good beef this season the trouble being that the past winter was so severe on stock that good market cattle have been at a premium.

Conversing with J. F. Bole, M.L.A., Manager of the Regina Trading Co., The West learns that he bought in competition on the ranges with Gordon, Ironside & Fares for his abattoir here, and the highest bidder got the cattle.

A perusal of Mr. Gordon's evidence impresses upon the public the fact that when the farmers offer good cattle they will get good prices.

"Lest We Forget"

Regina is waiting patiently for the Grand Trunk Pacific. The two years will be up in December since the last election, and the two years will then have expired in which the government and their chief organ said the G.T.P. would be built to the city. They even went further than this and stated in black face type just before the provincial elections: "A Liberal defeat would jeopardise the Grand Trunk Pacific" and in another article stated—"Grand Trunk Pacific to enter Regina within two years."

Yes, the time is nearly up and we are still waiting.

In his address to the electors of Lumsden on October 4th, 1905, Premier Scott said with regard to the C.P.R. exemption: "I succeeded so far as to obtain the promise from the Prime Minister that the government will either by negotiation or expropriation bring about the cancellation of these exemptions."

The last session of the present parliament will be called this fall and nothing yet has been done by Mr. Scott to get Sir Wilfrid to implement his promise with regard to the C.P.R. exemption. At Sir Wilfrid's "promise" stands for anything more than we stated when this announcement was made, it is about time that both Mr. Scott and the federal premier were getting together to make good.

The West has referred to these matters at the present time, "lest we forget; lest we forget."

PRESS COMMENTS

(Toronto Telegram)

Laurier worship is an appropriate expression of political credulity by sympathisers with the race and creed ideals that Sir Wilfrid exploited in his introduction of the autonomy bills.

Admirers of Sir Wilfrid Laurier cannot reconcile the spirit of that one speech with the fine theory that their hero is all that fancy paints him.

They are anxious that the speech should become "To dumb forgetfulness a prey."

The insensate intolerance of a proclerical, anti-national school speech was no temporary eclipse of a broad mind and tolerant spirit. It was a flash of lightning that revealed the real size of Sir Wilfrid Laurier's mind, and the real quality of his spirit. The Laurier speech should be remembered as the authentic utterance of a real character.

Conservative folly forced Sir Wilfrid into an heroic pose in 1896. Never in his whole career until after the general elections of 1904 could Sir Wilfrid Laurier feel himself strong enough to boldly proclaim his genuine opinions.

Glorification of the clerical ideal in education, the denunciation of national schools, were the sentiments the sentiments that celebrated Sir Wilfrid Laurier's final deliverance from the limitations that had forced him to be discreet. Overwhelming success at the polls in 1904 made Sir Wilfrid arrogant. Circumstances had compelled him to temporize and conciliate. At last he was able to rise in the night of his supposed strength in the country and say exactly what he thought.

Accordingly, Sir Wilfrid Laurier arose. His speech is on record. The sentiments he uttered should never be forgotten. The real soul of Sir Wilfrid Laurier spoke in that speech. His utterance was a genuine, authentic revelation of the heart and mind of a public man whom circumstances had forced to maintain a show of respect for principles he at last defied, for ideals that he finally triumphed under foot in that one never to be forgotten speech.

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CABINET RE-ORGANIZATION
(From Toronto News)

In view of the fact that any announcement will be made shortly by Sir Wilfrid Laurier respecting his reconstructed cabinet the following editorial from the Toronto News is very interesting:

In the reorganisation of the government Sir Wilfrid faces a very difficult undertaking. In filling cabinet vacancies it is not very easy for the leader to go outside the parliamentary party. The man inside has the advantage of position. Moreover, Mediocrity pushes hard for recognition, while Capacity stands aside, indifferent or reluctant.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier must know that his government is very much weaker than that of 1896 or 1900. Mowat, Blair, Tarte, Sifton and Mulock were men of exceptional ability. Mowat indeed was a leader of great prudence and sagacity. Sifton had a genius for administration and political management. Blair was powerful in New Brunswick. Tarte had courage and energy and a long schooling in electioneering methods. Mulock was a superb administrator with a radical temper which gave him great influence with certain elements. All these have gone. Now only Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Mr. Fielding and Mr. Aylesworth have outstanding distinction in the cabinet.

This is not to say that all of their colleagues are incompetent or discredited. Mr. Fisher is a satisfactory minister of agriculture. He is growing in the confidence of the farming community. In the management of his department he is capable, energetic and progressive. Although his work constitutes one of the best chapters of the Laurier administration. The militia department has not been badly managed by Sir Fredrick Borden. Mr. Brodeur is a fair departmental head and a trustworthy public servant. Mr. Paterson is either so far as general public policy is concerned, but no other man in the government has his knowledge of business or his mastery of the tariff. His withdrawal from the administration would greatly reduce its efficiency. The business interests would lose a sympathetic and prudent counsellor, and the fiscal system something of its steadiness and soundness. It is as much due to Mr. Paterson as to Mr. Fielding that the government has handled the tariff with so much political shrewdness, has broken the combination between the protected interests and the Conservative politicians, and practically has taken the tariff out of politics. One of the curious facts of our politics is that Mr. Fielding, who was introduced into the cabinet in order to curb the revolutionary fiscal tendencies of Sir Richard Cartwright, is a more zealous free trader than the minister of Commerce.

Of the other ministers not much is to be said. Mr. Lemieux has the temper of the orator, but he is of the academic type and is not likely to show exceptional business ability. Mr. Oliver is peevish, perverse, narrow and self-necked. He is a bad learner and an impatient teacher. It is doubtful if his administration will be either vigilant or systematic. His land bill was a capital mistake. He excites no enthusiasm among western Liberals. He has neither the power which commands nor the charm which persuades. Under his hand the Liberal party in the west may be expected to decline in vitality and fighting efficiency. Mr. Scott earned superannuation long ago. Sir Richard Cartwright is broken physically, but it is easy to understand that the veteran never will be disturbed by Sir Wilfrid Laurier. It is said that Mr. Fielding grows less keen and resolute as he grows older, and whatever may be Mr. Aylesworth's natural force of character he seems to be wholly under the domination of the Prime Minister.

The truth is that Sir Wilfrid Laurier is supreme. The influence of the English speaking provinces at Ottawa steadily declines. The reactionary and anti-Liberal elements which the Rouges fought for a generation shape certain vital phases of public policy according to their interest and ambitions. The situation has profound significance for English-speaking Liberals. It may be worth their while to see that in the reorganisation of the government the balance of power is measurably restored.

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PREMIER PUE
Writes Lengthy Decisions

Deciding to countment respecting the Premier Scott has loving letter to a district and through other districts:

Regina
Wm. Granville, Esq.
Seely, L. J. D.
Dubuc, S.

Dear Sir,—I beg to receipt of minute past of local improvement condemning the feaplementary Revenue empts town and v from the operation convey the assurance consideration will government to the with other stitions which have ment.

In the meantime council to consider statements with subject:

Before the passage question the total in this province w from sums which the able to vote out of enue for education h which grants are not by the area of land the organised school ly calculated a eleven million acres, as great or roughly, lion acres, outside tricts was liable to legislature but was of the cost of edu plementary revenue to make the whole (thirty-three million load instead of leav the area under ent new tax will yield hundred thousand de of which were form taxation. Therefore than two hundred will be got from source, so to speak, our schools, and no sum goes under and rural schools. Is the lessen the load no land in rural school seems as plain as ty ing four. Next year districts themselves the fund. The rural themselves will have third of it or a litt hundred thousand de million acres) and v eighty per cent. of from thirty-three mi can then cut down school taxation by a three hundred thous they are, therefore, the act directly in p \$20,000. If we have and rural schools, e by the act make a hundred dollars, the total taxation (after cent an acre tax an school tax) will be lars less in amount has to raise this ye Is it a good thing o pass a law to save school districts an hundred dollars? T new act will do. I it can fall to do. I will take something hundred thousand twenty-two million which formerly paid excepting a compa quential percentage goes to rural sch draw practically tw dollars, more in they are drawing t sum is not coming school districts no is coming out of t acres of corporatio land. Every dollar lands within the rura towards the new fu the rural schools, a hundred thousand de Now admitting for ment that there ma to complain against act, will not every vastly better off by as it stands than before the act was calculation is not rural district will t of two hundred doll I can see no Loree as to towns and vil and villages are ex Public schools in te draw not a cent fro then is there room The institutions wh from the fund are college, the univers schools. They will located in or near no body will argue bemaingained for th fit of the town pe open and for the p province. On this still open to convic sent I confess that unfairness in the s portioned from this fund towards the institutions. When are in operation mo