

THE WEST

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THE MANAGER,
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WEDNESDAY, February 6, 1907.

WHO'S WHO

The joint letter by Hon. W. R. Motherwell and John Millar published in our last issue opens up a subject that the grain growers of this district are vitally interested in—that of ascertaining who the friends of the farmers are?

Mr. Motherwell has been associated with the grain growers' association, from its inception, but looking back over his career, can the farmer say that he is their tried friend?

Mr. Motherwell was patronising with his fellow farmers till he reached the chair of Minister of Agriculture. He suddenly changed, however, as was very noticeable when he presided for the last time over a meeting of that organisation. He was domineering and dictatorial, and as one of the farmers remarked, "felt his oats."

The Grain Growers' associations some time ago petitioned the Dominion government for a Royal Commission to enquire into the operation of the grain trade, and when the request was granted Mr. Motherwell succeeded in getting Mr. Millar, secretary of the Saskatchewan Grain Growers' association, appointed a member of the board and chairman of that body.

The schedule of sittings of the grain commission was announced but no date was set for Winnipeg where it was extremely necessary to get the executive operators of the grain trade before the commission early in the game. Did Mr. Millar object to the commission sitting at Winnipeg when asked by leading members of the Grain Growers' Association to announce an early date for that city? It is said that Mr. Millar raised strenuous objections, and when it was suggested that counsel be retained for the farmers, Mr. Millar refused to consider the proposal, using the term that this would "trench on the dignity of the commission."

The demand however for the procedure that was adopted was persistent and counsel was allowed on both sides, and with what result the grain growers of the country know from the published reports of the police court proceedings.

Three men have now been sent up for trial to a higher court who would be "Scott free" today had the contention of Mr. Millar and his advisers obtained, or had, as he now suggests in his joint letter, proceedings been suspended till the commission had reported to the government.

Had the prosecution been delayed the evidence could not have been brought out. As it was, certain witnesses could not be located and if given plenty of time to lay plans what chance would there have been for reaching the stage of conviction thus obtained? It was not the counsel of Mr. Millar or Mr. Motherwell that resulted in this satisfactory procedure, and if Mr. Partridge and the presidents of the Manitoba and

Saskatchewan Grain Growers' associations, assisted by other executive members had not got busy, the startling revelations of the Winnipeg sittings would never have reached the public ear.

Not only would the prosecution of the grain men not have proceeded if Mr. Millar had his way, but as it was, that would not have been a case made out had not a private prosecutor in the person of the president of the Manitoba association not taken the initiative, and as Mr. Millar admits, against his wishes.

Then in this connection and for the progress thus made, who are the friends of the farmers?

The president of the Saskatchewan executive assisted by Mr. Partridge and other members solicited the support of the sub-associations in this province and eminent counsel was retained. This action was endorsed by the central executive with but one exception. Then what right has Mr. Motherwell, honorary president, to rush into print to attack the president and the executive? What right has Mr. Millar to butt-in when he is chairman of the commission standing between the grain growers and the grain trade? Does he not think that this attitude is "trenching on the dignity of the legislation?"

It is freely stated that at the recent Moose Jaw meeting of the executive, Mr. Motherwell finding himself in such a small minority, resigned as honorary president, and if this is so, then what right has he to even in a letter, afterwards to assume that empty and irresponsible title.

Is the grain trade not capable of pulling their own chestnuts out of the fire? What, the farmers have a right to expect from both Mr. Millar and Mr. Motherwell is that they, if there was any trivial impropriety, overlook it owing to the fact that the prosecution in a case of that kind cannot stand too much upon ceremony. There was nothing improper however, and the conclusion then is that these men must have some motive in trying to create discord in the ranks of the grain growers at this time. The attitude of Mr. Millar as indicated by his letter, leaves little for the farmers to expect from the report of the commission. After all, however, the report will be for the purpose of influencing legislation, but the evidence revealed unlawful action on the part of the grain trade which the grain growers had a right to prosecute regardless of the commission's report, and which they did prosecute with good results.

It is not necessary to remind the farmers, who were at the sitting of the commission here, that the leanings of Mr. McNair appeared to be with the elevator men and the questions of Mr. Goldie indicated that he did not favor the objections of the farmers towards the railway companies. He stated with a very important air to one farmer, that if he (Goldie) were in business he would try to "familiarise himself with the principles of it and the law relating to it."

Then if those members had but little sympathy for the farmer who could the grain growers look to but to Mr. Millar? What do we find, however? Mr. Millar joins with Mr. Motherwell in abusing the only friends the grain growers have had in their important fight against allied enemies.

What attitude did Mr. Motherwell take at the Regina sitting of the commission? He, as those who were present know, appeared before the board as a farmer and under oath stated that he was not in sympathy

with the demands of the witnesses that day respecting government weigh scales and questioned the wisdom of reciprocal demurrage. His objection to the former was that "sufficient honest farmers could not be found to operate the scales."

The attitude of Messrs. Motherwell and Millar is certainly not what is expected of them at this critical moment, especially when the prosecution in the farmers' interests, and for the proper conduct of the grain trade is at the present stage, and what ever might now be said by Messrs. Motherwell and Millar, we believe that the friends of the grain growers struck the blow at the right time and in the right place, and if the veiled friends of the enemy come back to parley with the Saskatchewan executive, let them get one, in the neck also. It is coming to them.

PROGRESSIVE PLATFORM

The government ownership and operation of telegraphs and telephones.

The establishment of a state cable connection with Great Britain.

The extension of the Intercolonial to Georgian Bay and its operation by an independent commission.

Strict assertion of public authority over all coal mines which are still under federal control.

The reorganisation and reinvigoration of the department of trade and commerce.

Securing legislation enforcing reciprocal demurrage.

The above suggestions are from the Toronto News as fitting planks for the platform of a progressive federal party, and we believe that they represent the wishes of the people of the west as they embody the very issues which are being canvassed by the grain growers' associations at the present time and about which there is much discussion, and which the farmers will heartily endorse.

The government ownership of telephones is now well under way in two provinces, viz: Manitoba and Alberta, and one of the important matters at the annual meeting of the Saskatchewan Grain Growers' convention which meets here on the 20th inst, will be the consideration of a resolution calling upon the provincial government to pronounce themselves upon this issue. Admitting the principles respecting the telephones is to concur in the application of that principle to the telegraphs, and while for the moment there would appear to be a few more obstacles in the way of the latter, it is only a question of adjustment and is after all within the realm of practical politics.

The establishment of a state cable connection with Great Britain would serve useful national purposes, and would be an enormous benefit to the commerce of Canada and the press of the Dominion.

Bringing the Intercolonial to the Georgian Bay would be to add to the solution of the transportation question, and place that road in a position to help itself financially and managed by an independent commission, would become an important factor as an artery of trade and commerce. The run is so short from the head of the lakes to Georgian Bay that with adequate storage or transportation facilities congestion can be avoided at Port Arthur and Fort William.

The fourth plank of this platform is the one which at present would be adopted unanimously by the western provinces. This does not venture so far as expropriation but as there are immense areas of coal land yet unalienated the retention of these by the government will be to recognise a public right, and if not actually operated by the state they could be regulated to accomplish the same object. The people of the west will hold up both hands for the "assertion of public authority" over mines.

The deepening of the Welland canal is an urgent public need and it would do more to facilitate the transportation of the western grain crop than the building of another railway system. The deepening of this waterway would immediately save the farmer two and a half cents a bushel on his wheat and it will be a long time before the railways reduce the cost of transportation to that extent. Every boat now going through the Welland canal has to lighten to less than four-foot feet, and the haul from Port Colborne to Port Dalhousie for 22 miles by railway is a delay, an additional cost, and an inconvenience

that the western farmers pay dearly for, and there is no reason why this obstacle to commerce cannot and why it should not be removed.

This canal is the throat of our transportation system which will choke to death if something more is not done than building railways, much as we need the latter. Every mile of railway extension in the west means so much more wheat to pass through this waterway and the enormous growing traffic cannot be accommodated, and the whole country and especially the farmer is as a loss.

With regard to trade and commerce further development will only embarrass us unless we get coal to operate our industries and a transportation system that can handle our products. It is of little use to find foreign markets if we cannot get our products to the seaboard.

The last plank of this platform is a new one to the people of Canada, but one nevertheless that is engaging the attention of the people of the west at the present time. Railway companies must respect their obligations to the people from whom they get their franchise, and if the shipper must pay a penalty for inconveniencing the railways who not make the railways pay for putting the shipper at a similar loss? This is "reciprocal demurrage," and the people will demand remedial legislation dealing with this matter.

Of course there are matters of Provincial Rights that seriously affect four western provinces and which cannot be ignored, but every item of this platform seems particularly directed in the interests of the west and if acceptable to the east, we believe that the tariff issues could be mutually arranged to give whatever party takes this policy the best proposals that could be submitted to a Canadian electorate.

COMMENDABLE IMPULSE

We admire the impulse that actuated the city council in their decision with regard to the fuel question on the north line, and the generous offer to supply men to shovel snow. We believe however that this offer should have been made by the provincial government, as such a matter is rightly in their province. If it was right for the department of agriculture, to incur telegraphic expense in this connection, then why

not at any rate, duplicate the kind assistance of the city council. It was a very empty part played by Mr. Motherwell in writing to Manager James that he ought to accept the city's offer.

We certainly think that the mayor and aldermen deserve much credit, but the cold telegram by Mr. Motherwell—well that was wasting money and butting-in at the wrong moment and in the wrong place.

The council has shown the way in a practical manner and we trust that the Government will profit by it.

McBRIDE'S VICTORY

The great victory which Premier McBride has just won in the British Columbia elections is a distinguished triumph for provincial rights. There was only one issue without appeal to party politics by the premier, although the Opposition, assisted by the Dominion Government made strenuous efforts to carry the country on federal lines. Governor McInnes of the Yukon, resigned his position to attempt to defeat the McBride Government, but he got his reward from the electors of Victoria where his political remains can be found in the Liberal wreck.

The whole Dominion watched with intense interest the fight in British Columbia for Provincial rights. The attitude of Premier McBride at the Ottawa convention is well known and his withdrawal from that body was severely criticised by certain newspapers outside his own province and by the Liberal press at the coast. On his return to Victoria, Premier McBride in a very able review of the situation said:

"There is nothing to compromise in this case. We are either right, or we are wrong. It is your duty now to see that your claim calls for special recognition and you spare no effort to make it good, and I am quite satisfied you will make it good."

In a "Better Terms Edition" of the Week of Victoria and Vancouver on November 3rd said:

A crisis has been reached in the history of British Columbia. The whole province is awake to the fact, and by no amount of political dexterity can the issue be clouded. The crisis has been precipitated by the action of the Ottawa conference, and emphasized by the attitude assumed during, and since reiterated by Premier McBride. The issue is not,

(Continued on page 5.)

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Julius Cominsky in a cell in the where he was held of felonious assault troman Zerkow ropes of strips hanged himself to

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