

REFLECTIONS

By THE EDITOR

And Manitoba Smiles.

WELL, Mr. Borden has done it—he has wiped out the Postage Stamp Province. He has substituted for it a province worthy to rank in territory and possibilities with Ontario, Saskatchewan and Alberta. The little Selkirk settlement, the later Red River settlement, the still later little prairie province is now a country with a coast line, two ocean ports and a tremendous future. And all because it produced one great fighting man, Rodmond Palen Roblin by name.

Beginning with July next, it will have a yearly donation from the Dominion Government of \$1,349,345. And that sum will grow. The "Million for Manitoba" club will look to that. In addition, Premier Roblin receives from his friend Premier Borden certain arrearages amounting to a little more than two million dollars. And last and least, one or two more senators.

There is only one feature of the settlement which I regret. Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec get much and the Maritime Provinces get nothing. The latter should have got Gaspe and a slice of Ungava. Of course they couldn't have got it with deciding first on Maritime union, and that they wouldn't do. They prefer their little legislatures and their petty systems of petty patronage because their fathers had them—and this is a free country. Nevertheless I cannot but feel that they missed a golden chance. The time to take cake is when cake is passing.

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The Military Tunic.

SOME militia officers, meeting at Ottawa last week, took the opportunity to denounce the military tunic which for a hundred years has been a trial to the Canadian soldier. It is ugly, heavy, cumbersome, uncomfortable, inconvenient and expensive. If you know any more adjectives add them on. A few years ago they made men wear them and equally unsuitable head-dress during their camp work. Now men are allowed to drill in shirts and straw hats, a more suitable garb for the warm days of June and July. But the tunic remains for ordinary parades.

After all the tunic is only typical. The whole Militia Department is filled with similar material. The personnel of the staff is heavy and cumbersome—men who know no rule except "That is the British regulation." The whole equipment from top to bottom is as ill-suited to practical needs as the tunic is to a Canadian soldier's requirements. The military waggons are so ill-constructed that they are abandoned in favour of the ordinary farm wagon whenever the inspecting officer is out of town. The military harness costs twice as much as ordinary farm harness and is utterly unsuitable. And so it goes all through the service, which is "British" instead of being "Canadian."

If we must stand by and see our beautiful militia horses disfigured and destroyed by unsuitable equipment, the Militia Department might at least let us have the pleasure of seeing our soldiers dressed in the loose serge instead of the uncomfortable and unsanitary tunic.

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British Columbia Elections.

BRITISH COLUMBIA is to have another general election. The last one was held in November, 1909, so that Premier McBride is not wasting any time. Two and a half years is long enough for him. It used to be that they had an average of one new government every year, but now the people must be satisfied with one new government every ten or fifteen years, and a general election twice every five.

In 1909, Mr. McBride swept the Province on the question of aid to the Canadian Northern Railway. When the smoke had cleared away he found himself with thirty-nine Ministerialists, two Socialists and one Liberal. The opposition had dwindled from a certain thirteen to a possible three. This year, the question will again be that of aid to a development railway—one which will not be in league with the C. N. R., the C. P. R., or the G. T. P. It will be an independent road under the control of the British Columbia Government, whatever they may mean. It is intended to open up the centre of this vast province.

That Premier McBride will be again returned to

power, everyone admits. The chief interest centres in the Socialist candidates who are expected to number about eight. There is no other province where the labour unions are so strong or so ambitious, as in British Columbia, and no other spot on the continent where the Socialist element so largely dominates trades unionism.

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Ambitious Ottawa.

OTTAWA is an ambitious and progressive city. Its western competitors must look to their laurels if they are to maintain their reputation for "percentage of increase." The growth of the country is enlarging the activities of the government and this means more buildings and more population. The railways are very busy enlarging their entrances and in providing for the increase of traffic. All this has had an effect on real estate values, and prices are rising rapidly.

The customs collections show an increase of ten per cent. This is not large, but it indicates steady growth. The receipts of the Ottawa Electric Railway give a much better idea of civic expansion. This year the city gets the \$50,000 grant for a Dominion Exhibition, and great things are looked for in this connection.

Lastly, the city is ambitious to become a federal district and thus have its beauty enhanced by direct aid from the government. Some assistance has already been given, but Ottawa is not yet satisfied. It aims to be the most beautiful city in Canada, and the aim is worthy of national consideration.

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The Single Tax in Kelowna.

VANCOUVER has abolished the tax on improvements and personal property and taxes nothing but the land. But it is in the little municipalities of Chilliwack, Summerland, Penticton, and Kelowna that this system has worked with most satisfaction. Indeed, so great is its success that a Royal Tax Commission will report in favour of its universal adoption in the Pacific Province.

Kelowna has assessable land to the extent of about twelve square miles. Every street, roadway, town house and farm house has electric light. Even the farmers have side-walks running past their wonderfully productive fruit farms. And the schools are central and graded. No little one-roomed, cheerless, badly-taught school for these progressive people. They have consolidated schools, with carriages to carry the children in the summer and sleighs to transport them in winter.

Single tax hasn't done it all, of course. Single tax is but one feature of their progressive system of local government. Indeed, they might have had all these glorious local services if they had never heard of Henry George's pet theory. Nevertheless it is interesting to notice that in the west progressiveness and the land tax go hand in hand in many municipalities.

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How to Save the Wheat.

IF you owned the western wheatfields you would put granaries and storage elevators all over so that a bushel of the golden grain would not be lost. You wouldn't have thirty or forty million bushels rotting in the fields because there was no place to store it. Now would you? Neither would I. Yet those wonderfully important people, known as the Grain Growers' Association, have allowed this state of affairs to occur. So have the three provincial governments. So has the Dominion Government.

The wheat wasted this season would have built enough elevators at Saskatoon, Regina, Moose Jaw, Indian Head, Battleford, Wetaskiwin and Edmonton to store fifty million bushels a year. And the elevators would have been good for twenty-five years' service.

The West must have storage elevators in the West—not alone at Fort William and Port Arthur. Not the little toy kind that line the railways and hold a few thousand bushels; but the kind the Canadian Northern, Grand Trunk and Canadian Pacific have at the head of Lake Superior. The C. N. R. elevator at Port Arthur will hold about five million bushels, clean it, sort it, air it and tranship it. That is the kind they should have at the big centres throughout the West.

Then when the crop is big, the railways can gather it up quickly, rush it into their storage elevators, and then move it later on at their leisure. Under our present system a railway car loaded at Lloydminster, say, must travel all the way to Fort William to be unloaded and then go back again to Lloydminster for another load. Such a car makes only a few trips in a season. Hence the shortage of rolling stock when there is a bumper crop.

The idea is not mine. Many people in the West have it. Mr. McMillan, of the *Moose Jaw News*, improves on it by saying that these elevators should be mated with big flour mills when the surplus grain could be ground. The people need the offal to feed to their cattle, their poultry, their hogs and their sheep. He says that the Western farmers are buying their butter, eggs and poultry in the cities instead of producing these items.

Such a state of affairs as now exists seems un-businesslike. The Dominion Government proposes to build more terminal storage elevators at Fort William. It is not terminal elevators that are needed so much as internal storage elevators.

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Settling the Marriage Que tion.

THE test case as to whether the Dominion or the Province have the right to say who is competent to perform a marriage and what constitutes a valid marriage is ready for reference to the Privy Council. Judge Charbonneau's decision in the Hebert case that a Protestant minister may legally marry two Roman Catholics displeases the Archbishop of the Province of Quebec. That decision, after a probable review by three judges of the Superior Court of Quebec, will be appealed to the Supreme Court and ultimately to the Privy Council.

The appeal of the Hebert case is most advisable. This point should be settled definitely so as to remove all ground for friction between Protestants and Catholics. The Charbonneau judgment is not decisive, since there are other judgments in the Province of Quebec which contradict it. *La Presse*, of Montreal, discussing the judgment, says, "There are seven judges of the Supreme Court on one side and three on the other." The larger number are in opposition to Judge Charbonneau. For this reason, the Hebert case should not be left in its present condition and the Catholic authorities should make sure that an appeal is carried to the Lords of the Privy Council.

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Forgetting South Renfrew.

EVERYBODY is trying to forget South Renfrew. That by-election was something of which no one is proud. It decided nothing. It proved nothing.

Before letting it slip into the limbo of forgotten events, it may interest the public to read some of the remarks made by the one Conservative paper which favoured Mr. Graham's candidature. This paper, the *Renfrew Journal*, says:

"The outsiders who invaded the riding with their low brands of machine politics have been taught a lesson. It has been surely shown that the booze, the bunkum, the bluster and the buckskins of the north riding cannot buy the honour of South Renfrew. The carnival of corruption, organized and attempted to stampee this riding failed utterly of its purpose, and for the money, the whiskey and the effort so generously expended the interfering outsiders have nothing but some rich experience. When the full facts of the case are fully known the meddlesome heelers from outside will be the laughing-stock of politics in Canada, and will go down in South Renfrew history as the simplest marks that ever lost good money for insulting decent men."

No Canadian can be very proud of that paragraph as a record of what occurred. Let us hope it is a highly-coloured description. If it is even approximately true, then Canadian democracy has far to travel before it reaches even moderate perfection.

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The Insane and the Decrepit.

SOCIETY has a huge task in taking care of its insane and its decrepit. In the Toronto jail there is one poor old woman, moderately sane and not a criminal, who has spent three years and nine months in that institution during the past five years. This is not humane to say the least, and it certainly reflects no credit upon our social system.

There are also in the same institution, fifteen men and two women committed during the past year on insanity charges. The Associated Charities strongly condemns the practice and suggests that these poor people should be sent to the insane asylums or to the jail farm. They believe, and quite properly, that a jail is no place for those who are merely insane, decrepit, or friendless.