

The West

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WEDNESDAY, DEC. 16, 1906.

The Convention

The convention of Conservatives of Saskatchewan held in Saskatoon last week is considered by the leaders of the party to be a success. Only questions that affect the party in federal politics were discussed. The convention proved that the party still has unbounded confidence in its leader, Hon. R. L. Borden and in its entire sympathy with and endorses his Halifax platform. The convention also proved that while the party is united as to its policy, it is far from being organized as it should be. In fact it was this disorganization which was primarily the cause of the convention being called. Discussions on all subjects were freely allowed, and the opinions of the many from the different parts of the province will no doubt prove very useful to those officers who have been selected to guide and guard its interests.

If an organization worthy of the name rises out of the present disorder, the convention will have been of great benefit to the Conservatives of the province. If, however, party interests are allowed to drift as they have in the past five years, the party may look for no progress in the advancement of their policy which they believe to be the advancement of the country's interests.

Besides endorsing Mr. Borden and the Halifax platform, the convention re-affirmed the position of the party on the subject of the public domain. It also put the party on record on the question of the ownership of grain elevators. The position taken on this subject proves that the Conservative party is one of progress. Strong ground was taken on election corruption. Deferred elections also received consideration, and a protest was entered against the practice of abusing the crown's prerogative in dissolving legislatures at will in order to secure party advantage. Several other matters of policy were also discussed.

As we have said the policy of the party is what is desired. What is now wanted is the carrying out of the plan whereby this policy may become effective. What is the use of a splendid platform if no attempt is made to convince the public that it would be to the country's advantage to have it put into operation? That the necessity for organization exists was realized by the convention and they have done what they could to put the party on a better fighting position.

The Session

Let us hope that out of the poor start the government has made with the first session of this legislature much good may come. So far we have not had any reason assigned for the strange course followed by the government in calling the members together at such a time of the year.

The members of the government must have known that very little work could have been done before Christmas. Then why was the House called until after New Year's? It must have caused a good deal of inconvenience to the private members. Some important legislation may be introduced before the recess, but government bills might just as well have been sent to the members for their consideration before the house was called. Then again two of the ministers will be unable to take much part in the business of the house before the recess, because their elections have not been announced. Altogether the reasons for calling the members

together requires some explanation.

There are many new faces in the present assembly, and no doubt the house has been enriched by the added numbers. Though the sessional program, as outlined in the speech from the throne, is supposed to be a short one, there will likely be some good debates. The opposition have not the assistance this session of J. T. Brown, Dr. Ellis or Dr. Argue, each a valued member of the last house. However, it has several recruits which are well qualified to discuss the questions which arise from broad patriotic standpoints. The government will miss Sanderson and Neely from their forces this year, but they still have the irrepressible Langley who can take up as much time of the House as seven or eight members.

Far above all questions which affect the country which will come up at this session will be the bill respecting rural municipalities. It is to be hoped that much wisdom may be obtained from having a much larger house than that of last year when the question first came up.

University Again

The bye-election in Saskatoon has again brought up the vexed question of the location of the Saskatchewan University. His pledge to have it located at Saskatoon secured Mr. McNab's election in August. He promised the electors of that city that if he could not deliver the university to Saskatoon he would resign. Time has gone on and the location of the University is as vague as ever.

Now, Mr. McNab when he goes back to be endorsed as Municipal Commissioner in the Scott cabinet finds that he has to show the electors of Saskatoon something more than a mere promise or go down to defeat. The only way the question can be settled before the bye-election is by legislation passed this week. Will the government dare do it or will it sacrifice Mr. McNab?

Press Comment

(Mail and Empire.)

Complaint is made that the election protests in Ontario are not sufficiently numerous. There are but eight, four on each side, and it is claimed that the situation is the result of a "saw-off" or bargain, under which petitions have been reciprocally withheld. The comment deserves sympathetic consideration, for no compromise with evil ought to be tolerated or excused. It may be pointed out, however, that a "saw-off" should such be attempted, cannot be effective if those who know that there has been corruption do their duty. The right of petition is open to everybody. It is not restricted to any party or to any individual. The very agencies which complain of the paucity of protests were entitled to enter petitions and to carry on litigation. If the protests are few, these parties, seeing that they neglected to take action, are not less responsible than the candidates whom they blame.

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Were it possible to get at the truth with regard to election petitions it would no doubt be found that the ruinous expense of these proceedings renders it impossible in many instances, to go on with them. An election is costly. After a candidate has paid his expenses, and been defeated the question of a protest possibly comes to him. If he is a wealthy man he may take action. If, as is the case with every candidate of the Ottawa government, he has the machine and the money behind him, he may also file a petition. But should he be a man in moderate circumstances he will consider the costs before he commits himself. His first expense is the deposit of \$1,000. To this has to be added the preliminary legal charges. Then he must prepare for evidence and the marshaling of witnesses. Several thousand dollars can be expended in this operation. The trial proper requires the employment of counsel. It is said that every day a trial is in progress costs on an average of \$1,000. That the proceedings will move smoothly is quite improbable. The other side, if well equipped with money, will make appeal after appeal, thus adding to the costs. In the Halifax case the member petitioned against carried appeals on technical points through all the courts to the supreme court three times, and thus managed to hold the seat and to avoid a trial until the day of the dissolution, when, of course, the proceedings came automatically to an end. Meanwhile the other side had been paying out freely to cover costs. Having looked into the question of expense the defeated candidate will of course, weigh the possibilities. He may not unseat his opponent. On the other hand, if he should get judgment he may not be fortunate in the bye-election; for the machine which bought the seat in the first place is quite capable of buying it again. In fact, it will do so the more readily if, owing to the financial exhaustion experienced by the opposing candidate as a result of the first election trial, a second trial is regarded as improbable.

The tremendous expense of election litigation is a prime cause of the paucity of protests. Men who are not rich cannot indulge in the luxury of the courts and of the multiplied appeals. And it must not be forgotten that they are not helped by the critics who are so ready to blame them for declining to undertake the financial burden. The situation means that private funds cannot cope with public corruption. The only remedy for the present state of affairs that we can see is the plan proposed by Mr. Borden, namely, the appointment of a public prosecutor to take proceedings in all cases of corruption at the public expense.

(Yorkton Enterprise.)

It was the proud boast of an ancient Roman soldier that he had received ninety-seven wounds in battle and not one behind. He had never turned his back to his fate. Mr. H. Green in the recent bye-election emulated the example of the Roman soldier. He received many wounds in his desperate battle, but all of them were received bravely facing the foe. Unlike some other political warriors in the constituency, he was neither captured or conquered. He neither retreated nor surrendered. He was defeated, but not subdued. In the short, sharp campaign he abundantly demonstrated that he has the courage of his convictions, and is not afraid to stand on any platform and give free and forcible expression to them. He measured swords with whoever came against him, from his opponent the minister of education, down, down, down to the political buffoon who discounts Rosthern every time he publishes the fact that he represents it in the legislature. Mr. Green cherished no illusions as to the result of the contest. He

price which is equal to the loss occasioned by defeat. Surely the victories of Monday are this kind. But when the premier himself was forced to fly it could hardly be expected that his colleagues would be compelled to do likewise.

Unjust Grading

The Gainsboro Post draws attention to a rank injustice under which the farmer labors. It says:

As the season advances, the louder seems the cry against the present wheat grading system. The desire to make the Canadian and American standards the same is increasing rapidly and the question is repeatedly asked why the government permits such an injustice so detrimental to the country to exist. Both the newly elected representatives to the provincial and Dominion parliament's must surely know what has been going on all along the international boundary line pretty much since that previous grading system has been in force and why is it we do not see some definite result of their stewardship in this particular instance. Surely, the government that grants a charter to any corporation has a right to see that that concern is not imposing on the public in any way, and why not have this injurious condition of affairs remedied at once. The injustice we refer to is why is it Canadian No. 2 Northern wheat at Gainsboro grades No. 1 Northern at Sherwood, N.D.? This means a difference of about ten cents a bushel alone and the American prices being about five cents a bushel higher than Canadian quotations, makes a total difference of about fifteen cents a bushel. To a Canadian farmer having 2,000 bushels to sell this means a drop of \$300 to haul it to points along this line. We do not blame the farmer for hauling his grain where he can get the most for it, but we know it more than angers him to have to do it. If it pays an American buyer to ship bonded wheat at an advance of 15 cents a bushel over the Canadian buyer, there must be fine picking in it for some corporation on this side of the line. We verily believe the government authorities could settle the matter in less than a week if they wished to, but as the farmers are not wholly united in the west on the question they may prefer to leave it alone.

Christmas Express Shipping

Mr. Knox, of the Dominion Express Co., was in town this week, and in conversation threw out a good suggestion which if adopted will mean the saving of disappointment to those back east who will be looking for their Christmas packages. Mr. Spooner and his staff will greatly appreciate it if patrons of the Dominion Express Co., will ship their Xmas packages early and not wait until the last day. At this season of the year there is a large volume of business to be handled and to make sure "Santa Claus" arrives on time, do your shipping early.

George Dempster, D.L.A. at Humboldt, has been appointed Dominion Land Agent at Prince Albert to succeed the late R. S. Cook. Mr. Dempster a couple of years ago was secretary of the Sturgeon Lake Lumber Co., here. Mr. Dempster is a connection of the Adamson-Turill-Sifton family compact. Mr. Dempster was appointed in face of the fact that the local Liberal executive and W. W. Rutan recommended W. L. McQuarrie. The Liberal executive held a meeting Tuesday night and wired Frank Oliver to cancel the appointment, and if he refuses Sir Wilfrid will be appealed to. W. W. Rutan's recommendation apparently has all the weight that the Prince Albert Times predicted it would have.—Prince Albert Times.

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