

EDMONTON BULLETIN

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COAL LANDS FOR MINERS ONLY

The announcement published in yesterday's Bulletin that an order in council had been passed suspending the regulations respecting coal lands is one of the most important declarations of policy ever made by a government in Canada. The proposal of the government is to retain all the coal and oil areas now in possession of the crown and lease the same upon conditions of operation. The government is still in possession of immense coal areas in Alberta and this determination to preserve them to the public for a future supply of fuel will be received with especial favor in the west. The fuel question has never been a live one in this part of Canada until this winter. Coal has always been plentiful and has been sold at a reasonable price, but the severity of the winter, the incapacity of the railways to handle freight and the consequent large demand for coal boosted the price far above a reasonable rate. The government every ready to serve the best interests of the people became apprised of the situation and decided that private control of so important a business as the fuel supply was likely to work hardship it was time for the government to take some action in the matter. The lack of working mines upon anything like an adequate scale is responsible to a great extent for the high price of coal and there has of late been more of a tendency to speculate in coal lands than to mine the fuel. In this way areas of coal lands were being purchased by people who had no intention of working the properties but who meant simply hold them until the scarcity of mined coal might necessitate the purchase of their coal lands at an increased price. The action of the government ends this kind of speculation, every dollar of the profit which the coal consumer would inevitably have to pay. The policy of the government now is, "the coal lands for the mine operator only," and not only this but the coal lands to remain in the crown. This safeguards our fuel supply and prevents future speculation in coal lands. If a company or an individual wishes to actually mine coal he is not forced to buy coal lands from the people who now hold them. He can go to the government and obtain a lease upon reasonable terms and commence mining operations. Thus it will be seen that not only does the new regulation provide against speculation in further areas of coal but it prevents the present holder of coal lands from holding up mining companies for longer prices for coal rights. No small amount of money is due the Minister of the Interior for the new coal regulations. The proposition is his and is in keeping with his record in the House of Commons as the champion of the rights of the settlers in the west. Ever since he became a member of the Commons his energies have been directed to intelligent reforms of the many abuses in the administration of affairs affecting Western Canada and it is particularly gratifying to his many political friends to see these reforms carried out by Mr. Oliver as Minister of the Interior. The work of this session of the House of Commons alone will stand as a lasting monument to his administrative ability, and the unwavering loyalty to the best interests of the citizens of the west, of Hon. Frank Oliver.

GAS FRANCHISE

The city council has before it a proposition to renew the franchise of the Northwest Gas company, the local organization which has been prospecting for natural gas in the city for some time. This question will likely be discussed in conjunction with the application for a franchise made by the company who propose to manufacture artificial gas. Neither of these companies should get an exclusive franchise and in that case there should be no objection, with proper safeguards, to granting them both the privilege of going ahead with their respective enterprises. The natural gas company has shown considerable enterprise and not a little faith in their work so far. It is only a short time ago that they made a proposition to the city council asking that honorable body to take stock in the company and the council declined. The council has on the other hand never evinced any disposition to prospect for natural gas, and every one admits that the discovery of the same would be a boon to the city. If a company of citizens is willing to spend their money in an effort to find gas by all means afford them the opportunity and under proper restrictions allow them to supply the same when discovered in the city that require it. The advantages to the city if gas were discovered here would be very great. The convenience of artificial gas and the desirability of such a development to the city are of no small importance and the council should make arrangements with both these companies, sufficiently guarded to protect the city, to provide for municipal ownership and control when the city is in a position to take them over. Under no proper agreement let us have gas.

SMOOT AND THE SENATE

The American senate has defeated the proposal to expel Senator Smoot of Utah by a vote of 21 to 22. This contest has been in progress for three years and a great mass of evidence has been adduced, but the senate of the United States and the country has veered steadily toward the Mormon senator. The ground of contention against him is that he believed and practiced polygamy and hence unable to give assent to one of the vital laws of the state. It seems peculiar that in the light of the winter days of twentieth century toleration it would be possible for a political organization to persecute an individual for his beliefs. The evidence proved that Smoot was not a polygamist and that the ground of attack upon him was unwarranted. It is hoped that this will be the end of a nasty episode, and silence wholesale denunciation of a respectable and enter-

NOTES AND COMMENT.

The land act and coal regulations of the Dominion government are true to the traditions of the Liberal party.

One cabinet minister defeated and another on the ragged edge, it is no wonder Roblin whistles instead of rejoicing.

The editor of the Camrose Mail is anticipating the 17th of March. He printed the Mail on green paper this week.

Did anyone say we had a cold winter? There is not a single evidence of it in all the land today.

The legislator evidently thought Calgary was not competent to make her own arrangements and so helped her out.

The land act introduced at this session of the House of Commons and the order in council preventing speculation in coal lands ensures another term in office for the Laurier government. Canadian people are not ungrateful.

From six to thirteen members in the Manitoba government represents the growth of the Liberal party in that province. The same proportion of increase puts Roblin out of business next election.

ADVANCED LICENSE LEGISLATION.

As Hon. Mr. Cross remarked in the Legislature when introducing the new License Bill, the Liberal party has ever been at the front in providing advanced temperance legislation—legislation that has kept pace with the views of the intelligent temperance sentiment of every Province in the Dominion. The new Alberta License Act even at the first glance, shows conclusively that the Government is anxious to go more than half way in meeting the wishes of the temperance people. The strength of the temperance sentiment is not known, a plebiscite has never been taken, so it cannot be charged that the Government is catering to an element that they know is in a majority in the Province. Mr. Cross' speech makes it clear that the Government is as anxious, as those citizens of the Province classed as temperance leaders, to restrict the liquor traffic, to make license-holders obey the law, and to make them keep hotel, first, the selling of liquor being treated wholly as a secondary matter. What better proof could be offered in this respect than the provisions in regard to the number of rooms required in hotels in cities, towns and villages, the proper sanitary arrangements, and the general cleanliness of the house. The hotels must provide accommodation for guests—accommodation that will ensure comfort and all conveniences. Thus the license holders will be held to the fact that they must keep hotel or get out. Particularly to the travelling public, and nearly everybody travels more or less in these days, the government's action in this respect will appeal very strongly. If the Government can improve the character, comfort and cleanliness of Alberta hotels, it cannot but win the commendation of the public.

The Act also sounds the death knell to saloons, blind pigs and such like. The person who attempts to sell liquor in unlicensed places will be given the full penalty of the law. The officers of the Government will enforce the law to the letter, not only in regard to unlicensed places but as to illegal selling in licensed hotels. Compelling license-holders to strictly comply with the law will do much to curtail the evils of the traffic. When the law merely exists on the statute books, and is not enforced, free and easy methods are followed by hotel men, but when they are made to know that every provision of the Act will be strictly enforced, they will keep hotel according to the law.

But it stands as that one of the most telling temperance features of the Act, is the provision making it absolutely impossible for a licensed hotel to exist in a place with less than 200 population. As Mr. Cross pointed out, even in Ontario, which boasts of its very advanced temperance legislation, a hotel can exist and an hundreds of cases does exist at "forks in the road." It is here the road house comes into being and when it is Ontario people and persons acquainted with conditions in many States of the American Republic will agree, evils that cannot be marked against hotels in larger communities, the road house, by the very nature of its location, its virtual seclusion, from the public is a pest. The Alberta Government state distinctly in the Act, that they will not permit hotels of such a character to exist by providing in the Act that licenses will not be issued outside of cities, towns and villages.

The basis on which licenses are granted according to population in Alberta, prevents there being a hotel at every street corner as is frequently the case in other Provinces. The restriction in this respect is far in advance of Manitoba, Ontario, New Brunswick and Quebec. Hon. Mr. Cross, in his speech, made allusion to this fact when he said:

"The Province of Manitoba has a population of 1,000,000. It has 100,000 licenses. Another correction that might be made is to teach centrally to say "number" instead of "hello" or a leonine

incorporated villages two for the first 600; one for the next 100, and one for each additional 600."

"New Brunswick has a provision as follows: One for each 250 of the first 1,000 of population, and one for each 500 over 1,000 of population."

"Ontario has the following provision: One for the first 250, but not more than three for the first 1,000, and one for each 600 over the first 1,000."

"In the Province of Quebec there is no limit except in Montreal, where the hotel and restaurant licenses are limited to 400. In Quebec City the limit is 120."

Now the new Act says that in the cities, towns and villages of Alberta, licenses will be granted on the following scale, one for the first 500, one for the second 500 and one for each additional 1,000 of population. It can readily be seen that this restriction is far in advance of the other Provinces mentioned, merely proving that the Government is eager to confine the liquor traffic to as few places as possible. The argument that has been offered that this restriction of the licenses, will place the business in the hands of a few, is not a theory, it is a fact, and it is a theory feared by the most advanced temperance sentiment, for it will be remembered that only a little over a year ago the most pronounced advocates of prohibition in the City of Toronto succeeded in having a by-law submitted to the ratepayers of that city favoring a reduction of licenses and they maintained that it would be an effective method of curtailing the liquor traffic. Surely then the restriction of the Toronto temperance advocates fought for and did not obtain, and which the Alberta Government has voluntarily offered, should establish beyond a doubt that our administrators are eager, and willing to adopt effective measures for the curtailment of the liquor traffic.

On the other hand those who believe in providing plenty of hotel accommodation may say, on a glance at the law and without fully considering it, that the ratio of hotels according to population is too small, and the vast number of people who are flocking into this country looking for land investments, cannot secure sufficient accommodation with only one hotel in a place of 600 and so on. But a careful reading of the Act sets all doubts of that nature at rest. The old law provided that a hotel in a city or town need only have twenty bedrooms and in a village ten. Now hotels in cities must have at least forty-five bedrooms; in towns thirty-five and in villages fifteen, and all existing hotels must come up to this standard by the first of July. So the clause in the new Act does not cover new licenses only, but the old ones as well. Now the provision of this extra accommodation virtually means that there will be twice the accommodation existing under the old Act, and there will not only be a provision for an increased number of licenses, but a very admirable provision all fair-minded persons will admit.

The bar as a bank, by that we mean the hotel as a cheque-cashing center, has afforded an easy source for workingmen to spend their money for the benefit of the cash register. It is a custom for wage-earners on a pay day to go into a bar, buy a drink and have their cheques cashed. Once in the bar they are liable to remain some time and spend more of their earnings, and the Alberta Government is determined to put an end to this. It provides that cheques cannot be cashed in a hotel. That is advanced, and, at the same time, unique legislation. It will assist many a wage-earner to resist the temptation of going into the bar and spending his wages. He will go to the grocery or the dry-goods store to get his cheque cashed, and if that case out of ten will go home with most of his earnings, or a supply of edibles or clothing, instead of a scarcity of cash and too much intoxication. As we all know many men spend their money freely and go home frequently intoxicated and with part of their hard-earned wages in the hotel-keeper's possession. This clause of the Act is a protection to the workingman and will serve also as a stimulus to temperance sentiment.

THE CITY'S TELEPHONE.

The advent of the automatic telephone is awaited in this city with all the patience its citizens can muster, but in the meantime it is too bad that an effort is not made to have the service as efficient as possible until the change is made. Whether or not it is because the girls at the central have too much work we cannot say, but over and over again they forget to disconnect phones when parties have finished a conversation, and frequently it takes five or ten minutes to get your phone disconnected if you want to call up two numbers one immediately following the other. In some cases subscribers have had to go to another phone to ask that theirs be disconnected, and another correction that might be made is to teach centrally to say "number" instead of "hello" or a leonine

POOR POLITICS.

When either a general or a by-election is won by the Liberal party, especially in a province where that party happens to be in power it has become a habit with the Opposition to talk very knowingly about "machine politics" and "corrupt politics" and "carpet baggers."

When a man has been continuously kicked out of office by his own

"well." Now one never knows whether he has central or not. You ring your phone and some one says "Hello!" If you ask for a certain number the party at the other end frequently informs you that you are connected with some other phone, so the only safe way is to ask, "Is that central?" If central always answered with the query, "Number?" it is done in every place but Edmonton, the person using the phone would be saved trouble and annoyance. If central is short-handed, the commissioners should see to it that added help is secured, and some trifling attention should be given to convenience those who are paying for phones.

It looks as if Roosevelt will have to go down and dig the Panama canal himself.

NOTES AND COMMENT.

His name should be spelled Fowler.

Corporations are to bear their share of taxation in Alberta.

It looks as if Roosevelt will have to go down and dig the Panama canal himself.

Strathcona will be made a city this week, that our ambitious neighbor grows in importance.

Thirteen members in the Opposition in Manitoba. It may prove an unlucky number for Mr. Roblin yet.

The report of the Insurance Committee will have a healthy effect upon the management of all public institutions.

The business of the Legislature will probably wind up this week. The work of the session has been of very great importance to the Province.

Mayor Mills will find himself the chief magistrate of a city before the week is out, and the Premier will get even with the honorable member for Wetsakwin.

The Government telephone policy is growing in public favor. A number of towns proposing a Government local system established in connection with the long distance line.

Kuropatkin's revelations would seem to show that during the war all of his Russian generals remained at home to fight the unarmed peasants.

THEY STAND CONDEMNED.

The criticism offered by the Ottawa Opposition because the Minister of Justice did not instruct the Insurance Commission upon the subject of the old law provided that a hotel in a city or town need only have twenty bedrooms and in a village ten.

It is pretty evident that when the Opposition instructed the committee they hoped to be of a partisan nature, which to minimize the report of the Commission, but failing in this they placed in the position of condemning the Government for not doing the thing they hoped to condemn them for doing.

It has been shown beyond doubt that the Insurance Commission had a free hand; that they were not interfered with in any way whatsoever; that they pursued their work with a zeal and vigilance worthy of their important duties. They probed every suspicious transaction in the insurance business, and to their notice and that Messrs. Foster, Fowler and other Conservative members of Parliament came in for a good deal of abuse. They were not in a manner that was not in the public interest and does not make for public honor in the country.

The matter is all the more serious because these gentlemen occupy seats in the House of Commons. Their conduct in this respect is a disgrace to the House of Commons. The Commission is not likely to inspire the public with confidence in their honesty as public officers, and it is likely to hasten the day when they will be entrusted with administration of Canadian affairs. So long as these men remain upon the front benches of the Opposition the people are likely to refrain from placing that party in power. Let their success in speculation with trust funds might lead them into practices of a similar character with the public monies. They are the dead weight about the neck of the Opposition leader and every time Mr. Borden raises his voice to proclaim his policy as that of "honest government" the public will wonder how he could carry out such a program with the assistance of the class of men by whom he is surrounded. Mr. Borden is too weak to get rid of Mr. Foster and his ilk and would be consequently too weak to control the ex-Finance Minister and his crowd if that party were returned to power. The Opposition is in a sad plight indeed and while every day adds to its discredit the Government is steadily gaining ground in business administration by the introduction of legislation such as the new land laws, and the preservation of our own areas, which is giving it a stronger hold upon public opinion and increasing its well deserved support all over Canada.

Has Initiator But No Competitors. A Cash Register, Sewing Machine, Typewriter, Medical Equipment, Furniture, Wash Tub, and other goods. The "H. C. B. Co." is the only one in the city. The "H. C. B. Co." is the only one in the city.

The Bulletin Want Column Gets What You Want.

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Mr. Carpenter: We want you to see our stock of Carpenter Tools and Supplies. We have laid in very complete lines of Stanley Planes, Squares, Cabinet Scrapers, Etc., Distons, Atkins, Maple Leaf, Shurley & Dietrich Saws. It will pay you to inspect our Nicholson Squares, Yankee Drill, Screw Drivers, Chisels, Auger Bits and in fact any tool needed in the line of your requirements. We show Underhill's GENUINE Lathing Hatchets. We want your trade. Our goods and prices deserve it. TRY US FOR QUICK DELIVERY. SOMMERVILLE'S OLD STAND. OPPOSITE NORTHERN BANK.

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Telephone 330.

It is always interesting to visit Ramsay's Greenhouse

but especially now when Spring Flowers are looking so well. DAFFODILS, SWEET PEAS, are some of our specialties at present. WHY NOT HAVE SOME. Phone 523.

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UNDERTAKERS

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Telegraph

TWO LIVES LOST IN CAPE HALIFAX. Mr. Blizard, of Halifax, Nova Scotia, reports that two persons perished in the storm on the morning of the 14th. The men were from Cape Breton and were on their way to the coast of Nova Scotia. They were blown overboard and perished. The bodies were recovered and buried in the morning. The men were 35 and 40 years old, and were from Cape Breton. They were on their way to the coast of Nova Scotia. They were blown overboard and perished. The bodies were recovered and buried in the morning.

John MacLeod had a big loss. He was employed at Sarnia, Ont., and started to walk to their home in Sarnia on the morning of the 14th. He was returning from his work and was on his way to the station. He was blown overboard and perished. The body was recovered and buried in the morning.

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