



# REFLECTIONS

BY STAFF WRITERS

## THE PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND TUNNEL



ACCORDING to current gossip, the Dominion Government will shortly announce that it will soon undertake two great pieces of work. To please the West, it will promise to build a railway to Hudson Bay. To please Prince Edward Island it will promise to get plans and estimates for the much-talked-of tunnel. The West is determined and so is Prince Edward Island, and the Government facing a general election will yield.

A prominent Charlottetowner writes to protest against some of our statements about the tunnel proposition. Instead of the tunnel being twelve miles long, he states that the breadth of the Straits at "The Capes" where the tunnel must be built is  $6\frac{1}{2}$  nautical miles. In 1904 and 1905, the Government ice-crushing steamers were stuck continuously for two months in each year, besides stops of one to three weeks in these and other years. The regular steamers never run more than eight months in the year and seldom more than seven.

## A NEW CONSERVATIVE JOURNAL

FOR a long time, the Conservative Province of Ontario has been without a strong Conservative daily paper. The *Toronto Mail and Empire* while an excellent newspaper has never been a supreme political influence. Perhaps its proprietors did not deem it best that it should be. In any case, it never became the Tories' "Bible," as the *Globe* has been and remains the "Grit Bible." The *World* is the personal organ of Mr. W. F. Maclean, and has never been a reliable party newspaper, though Mr. Maclean is usually classed as a Conservative. There was thus a curious situation. The *Globe* and *Star* are full-fledged party organs as well as excellent newspapers; the *Mail and Empire* and *World* were sort of half-raters on the Conservative side, while the *News* and *Telegram* were independent. Since the failure of the *Empire* and its absorption by the *Mail*, the Conservatives have always chafed under what they considered a disadvantage. Now, if report is to be believed, the *News* is to become an out-and-out Conservative newspaper. Independent journalism loses; party journalism gains.

Mr. J. S. Willison is to remain as editor and there will be few if any changes in the staff. Mr. Willison was bred and raised in Conservative principles, but by accident became managing editor of the *Globe*, a position which he filled with distinction and ability. Under his guidance the *Globe* came back more nearly to the leading position which it held under the Hon. George Brown. Now, Mr. Willison goes back to the party of his early manhood and will henceforth fight on the Conservative side. Just whether he can make the *News* the leading Conservative organ, as he kept the *Globe* the leading Liberal organ, remains to be seen. If he does, he will be entitled to much credit as a skilful journalist and a forcible publicist. Nevertheless, it seems a strange turn of fate that the Conservatives should turn to the historian of the Liberal Party and the biographer of Sir Wilfrid Laurier as their chief journalistic advocate in the largest province in the Dominion.

## THE EVILS OF LOBBYING

THE lobbyist is usually described as a man who, for a stated sum of money, will undertake to influence votes in a legislature or parliament. It is probably true that certain lawyers, some of whom are members of our legislative bodies, might at times come within this definition. When they accept fees from private individuals or corporations for piloting legislation through the House, they are doing something which was never expected to fall within the purview of an elected member.

The word lobbyist is, however, much too widely used. Each of the larger railways has a representative at Ottawa, not a member, who

attends to the legislation of his company, appears before the Railway and other committees and explains by maps and speeches, what his company intends or desires to do, and why it is seeking certain legislation. These officials are not lobbyists, because their employers are known and they are not working for any other corporation or person. Being known in this way, any argument they present is accepted as an official statement from the corporation which they represent.

Again, when a committee of a city council or a deputation of local capitalists visit Ottawa and explain their requests for legislation or their opposition to certain proposed legislation, they are not lobbyists. Their purpose is clear, their service is single and there can be no doubt as to their character.

When, however, as occurred last week in Toronto, a city employs two men, one a Conservative and one a Liberal politician, neither being an official or a member of the City Council, to move about among the members and influence them in favour of certain legislation, that city is resorting to lobbying of a distinct character. A mayor, an alderman or a city solicitor would not be a lobbyist; these specially employed politicians are. The distinction is fine but clear. Mr. Whitney was quite right when he objected to lobbying, but he and the public must be careful to distinguish between the objectionable lobbyist who is working in the dark and the recognised official who is working in broad daylight; between the man who is using political influence and the man who is depending upon fair argument. Of course, if either man resorts to undue or improper forms of influence, he should be exposed and punished. Fortunately, we have little if any of that kind of work in our legislative corridors.

## THE WORRIES WITHOUT END

OUR national worries continue to flourish as the psalmist's green bay tree. For years we worried because our trade was not developing and our population was stationary. We worried because our young men and our young women went in large numbers to the United States. It is said that there are as many Canadians, counting their wives and children no matter where born, in the United States as in Canada.

During the past ten years, development here has been so rapid that the natural increase in our population has found ample opportunity without going abroad. Some of those who had previously gone abroad have returned home. With them have come many settlers from the United States, many from Great Britain and many from Europe. And now the quality of the new arrival is our only worry. The Jap and the Hindu in British Columbia, the Doukhobor and the Galician in the prairie provinces, and the feeble-bodied European in Ontario and the East—these are all giving trouble.

Some of the "Douks" have settled in Fort William and because they object to wearing clothes they are being put in jail. Once there they refuse to eat the jail fare and will take only fruit. At the conclusion of a murder trial in Ontario the other day, Chief Justice Sir William Meredith inveighed most strongly against the criminally-minded Britisher, who was encouraged to come here. The Hon. Mr. Hanna states that, of the 1,163 people admitted to Ontario asylums in 1907, 346 were foreign-born. The foreigners resident in the province were but twenty per cent. of the population, yet they contributed thirty per cent. of the asylum inmates and thirty-eight per cent. of the commitments to jail.

Some have advocated the abolition of bonuses in order to remedy this state of affairs. It is questionable if this would have the desired effect. What is needed is closer inspection at European and Canadian ports. The task of discovering the mental, moral and physical weaknesses in all people coming this way is one which will require a larger staff than the immigration department employs at present. Nevertheless it would probably be a paying investment to have experts