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THE TRIBUTE OF THE OPPOSITION.

The leader of the Opposition said what he had to say in criticism of the Rutherford Government on Tuesday. Perhaps it would be more correct to say that he demonstrated by elision how much he could not find fault with, and by voice how little there was for him to find an adverse argument on. It is significant that on no broad phase of provincial policy did he take ground opposite to the Government and that on the smaller matters to which he devoted criticism he had few remedies to suggest, and none to which he appeared willing to commit himself and his associate, Mr. Robertson's protestations to the contrary, it is difficult to see wherein his criticism rose above the traditional formality that requires an Opposition leader to differ with the Government in the first debate of the session, and still more difficult to detect in it any contribution of note to the better understanding of the more efficient management of provincial affairs.

Mr. Robertson regretted the absence of allusion to the money stringency in the Address and suggested that the Legislature memorialize Parliament to amend the banking laws. Well and good, provided the memorandum asks for amendment where amendment would be effective, which was assuredly not the direction indicated by the leader of the Opposition. His theory was that the banks withdrew money from Western Canada to loan in eastern Canada because they could get larger returns from it there. Clearly the gentleman is of those fortunate individuals who have not found it necessary to get accommodations from the banks, or he would know that the interest charges in Western Canada are anything rather than lower than the charges in the other provinces. But the course of the banks was not that they withdrew money from the West, but that they stopped loaning money in the West. They did not take money from us, but they declined to loan it to us as freely as they had previously done. Their offense was that they consented and assisted in the development of conditions in the West that made it no longer safe for them to continue to loan freely, and that when those conditions had been produced they consented their own interests with disregard for the interests of others. If the banking law is to be effectively amended, the amendment must prevent the banks from continuing at the creation of conditions which they cannot maintain with safety to themselves. Prevention is the only effective cure in this case.

The leader of the Opposition devoted considerable time to what he called the intention of the Government to the interests of the farmers, but he wisely refrained from getting down to details and pointing out wherein the intention was exhibited. He favored the establishment of an agricultural college, a project the Government has undertaken and will have in operation by the time there are a sufficient number of pupils wanting training. The forests of the northern districts might be tapped by a Government railway and lumber made cheaper—an enterprise which has already been begun by a railway company. Coal was dear in some parts of his constituency. This he thought might be remedied by the Government acquiring coal areas to be operated if necessary to regulate prices—a proposal which is by no means new and which certainly did not originate with the member for High River. Meantime Mr. Robertson omitted to mention that the substantial sum of one million dollars was spent last year on roads and bridges throughout the Province, a matter of primary interest to the farmers of the Province, and quite as much in line with the business of a Government as the building of railways or the operation of coal mines, and a species of institution that is not likely to send the farmers up in arms against the Government. Nor are the legislators likely to be worked into a frenzy over the alleged affront offered them in publishing the report of the beef commission before they had perused it. The Commission was appointed by the Government; the findings were of supreme public interest, and a delay in giving the results to the public would no doubt have provoked louder

complaints from the Opposition members than did the course pursued. The Provincial telephone system Mr. Robertson wanted placed under a Commission—a proposal involving an expense neither warranted by the present dimensions of the system, nor called for by the public interests. The Opposition leader was displeased because the Government had gone outside the Province to secure men specially qualified for certain positions in the civil service—an appeal that efficiency be subserved to prejudice which is not likely to do much harm to the Government nor much good to the Opposition. He was pained that the Address forecasted new temperance legislation, but he did not charge either that the legislation of last session was not beneficial or that it had not been well enforced. There was the usual appeal to sectionalism, the assertion that the Government was concentrating so little on things of the Province in Central Alberta and an indirect appeal to the South to become insulted and rise in wrath. Mr. Robertson concluded with the usual scriptural allusion to the individual who sold his birthright for a mess of pottage. He assured the legislators that had the Province the control of the coal lands the income from royalties could be made to exceed the subsidy in lieu of lands; but neglected to explain how this could be accomplished and the price of coal reduced at the same time.

Altogether, the speech of the leader of the Opposition is the best assurance to the people of Alberta of the excellence of their administration. That he omitted any opportunity for criticism is not to be supposed, that he could find so little to criticize is exceedingly gratifying; that the little he found was in minor matters rather than important lines of public policy bespeaks the thorough grasp which the Government have displayed of their opportunity to better conditions in Alberta; and that he did not venture to squarely oppose the Government in the matters he criticized is his tribute to their soundness of judgment.

A TIMELY AMENDMENT. Alderman Armstrong proposes an amendment to the city charter to make city commissioners dismissible on a majority vote of the council. At present a commissioner can be removed only for satisfactory cause and by the votes of two-thirds of the members of the council. The amendment does not of course propose to interfere with the stipulation that there must be good and sufficient ground for dismissal. The proposed amendment is a move toward making the commissioner body more responsible to the people, which may be taken with safety and which will meet with very general approval. At an earlier stage of the city's affairs when the commissioner system was new and public and council alike unused to the broadened powers conferred on the executive branch by the city charter, there was a possibility that a commissioner who took his instructions directly from the charter might find himself in trouble for doing what he considered the charter empowered him to do but what the council thought lay beyond his powers. Under such conditions a straight majority vote might have been recorded against a commissioner through misunderstanding rather than because of fault on his part. Perhaps it was as well therefore that in the earlier years of the system the commissioners should be guarded against such emergency, and given assurance to take up with confidence the duties assigned to them by the charter.

The necessity for such guaranty, however, has now been removed. By use of the public the council and the commissioners have come to understand the respective powers and duties of the two branches of the civic administration. The boundary line of authority is now pretty clearly defined. Points which were by no means clear in the earlier stages have been settled by precedent, have not decided by interpretation. There is now no danger of the commissioners suffering through a misapprehension of the part of the council as to the duties which fall to them. Nor is there danger of them falling victims to a feeling that in discharging their duties they are encroaching on the privileges of the executive body. The safeguard may, therefore, be abandoned with assurance that the aldermen will not seize upon the opportunity to unnecessarily interfere with the commissioners, and that the commissioners will not be hampered in their duties by any unreasonable fear of dismissal.

On the other hand, it is desirable that the public servants should be answerable to the representatives of the people, as directly as the employees of a private concern to the management. The government of the city has been often compared to the

directorate of a joint-stock company, the commissioners corresponding to the departmental managers. In such a concern it is not considered necessary that two-thirds of the directors should be convinced of the inability of an employee before he can be replaced. A simple majority of the directors is considered sufficient to request his resignation. It is difficult to see why there should be any difference in the case of the commissioners of the city.

THE ADVOCATE OF IRRESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT. The Manitoba Government has engaged the services of a highly-salaried telephone system, and efficiency can be found advisable in future it does not require a telephone expert to see the folly of loading down our present telephone system with an expensive board of managers. Yet if it is ever found advisable to select a telephone commission for Alberta, it should be a board of highly-salaried men. Efficiency is the first requirement of a telephone system, and efficiency can only be secured by having competent men at the head of it. The Manitoba Government are not subject to criticism on account of the salaries they are paying to the Commissioners, provided they have secured men worth the salaries, and if Alberta should find it desirable at any time to appoint a Commission, we too, would have to pay the price to get the men. Meantime the system is being capably handled by a competent manager under the supervision of the Minister of Public Works.

The ground on which the Opposition use the appointment of a telephone Commission for this Province is that the system might some day fall under the control of a Government who would utilize it for their political welfare, rather than operate it for the welfare of the public, that it would be made to provide offices for Government supporters regardless of whether or not they knew anything about telephones, and thus its efficiency would be destroyed. As Mr. Robertson does not aver that anything of the kind exists under the present Government his argument may be merely a foreboding of what would happen in the remote possibility of the present Administration being replaced by one under the leadership of the honorable member for High River.

This is the argument commonly advanced for the establishment of a commission to control public utilities. It is urged that through such enterprises under the management of men dependent for their positions on votes, the temptation is to engage as employees men who have been successful in securing votes rather than men who are qualified by training and experience for the work to which they are assigned. That the temptation exists cannot be denied; that it has frequently been yielded to is common knowledge, and certainly the party to which Mr. Robertson belongs is admirably qualified to tell us of its evils. The advent of that party to power either at Ottawa or at one of the provincial capitals in Canada has followed inevitably by the wholesale dismissal of men whose only offense was that they were suspected of being Liberals, and the offices filled with gentlemen free from such taint, and also very free from any suspicion of fitness for the duties pertaining to the offices. The success of the Whitney Government in Ontario has been followed by the wholesale dismissal of public service of that province to party purposes, and in this the Whitney Government has only testified its through-going loyalty to the party traditions. It was only when the Opposition at Ottawa found themselves an Opposition and likely to remain so for an unlimited period, that they discovered the evils to which the patronage system sometimes leads, and it is not presuming on the probabilities to suggest that Mr. Robertson would never have made the discovery had he too not been in opposition and likely to remain there.

It is commonly assumed by the advocates of commission government that this expedient would free us from the evil of an abuse of patronage. That remains to be proven, for the experiments so far tried have not always and altogether worked out that way. It has been found quite frequently that a Commission can be as faulty as though the heads of the party nominated the candidates for vacancies; it has been found that as often as not the party which dominates the Commission is the party in which the electors have refused to place their confidence; and it has been found quite as often that a Commission when not so dominated may establish a system of its own quite as vicious as that of a private concern to the management. It is not altogether explained on the grounds of personal ability, for the issue of the contest as reflected in

lacked. So far as experience goes we have yet no convincing evidence that the commissions free us from liability to the evils of the patronage system, and we have splendid evidence that they introduce us to a species of evils from which the patronage system is free. If a commission is to be independent, it must be absolutely free from the control of every political party. It must be exempt alike from dictation by the Government and from intimidation by the Opposition. It must be liable to dismissal neither by the Government that created it nor by any possible successor to that Government. If either party, in office or out, holds the power to bend the will of the commission, it is not independent, it would become merely an expensive and cumbersome agency for the continuation of the patronage system.

The utmost that could be done to impose a check on a Commission free from the control of any Government would be to make the Commissioners liable to the censure of the combined parties in the House—or to so large a majority in the House that only a party alliance could dismiss them from office. But any such remote check must be hopelessly ineffective. Any Commission with ability to manage a public enterprise would possess tact enough to avoid angering both parties at once, and so long as only one party were angered, their positions would be secure. By currying favor alternately with either party or consistently favoring one party, the Commissioners could laugh at their enemies and continue to draw pay-cheques from the public treasury for continuing a system they were supposed to abolish.

Or a still worse evil might ensue. Freed from apprehension of dismissal so long as they maintained friendship with one party in the House, the Commissioners could proceed to the distribution of patronage as suited their individual fancies or their ulterior interests. For government patronage we should have clique patronage, and government patronage at its worst is several degrees better than clique patronage at its best. A popular upheaval, by throwing a Government from power, can temporarily at least affect a remedy for the evil, but the present system of the present system. But no series of popular upheavals and no rise and fall of parties could free the country from the evils of a patronage distributed among their favorites by men who held positions beyond the reach of the electors, and maintained that a handful of the popular representatives.

Under the present system the servants of the people are chosen by the representatives of the people, who answer to the people for the conduct of their appointees. Under the Commission system, the servants of the people would be chosen by a body over whom the people would have no effective control, upon whose conduct they could pass no effective censure and against whose abuse of power they could have no effective remedy. The issue is between responsible and irresponsible government. It is in every way fitting that the Oppositions both at Edmonton and at Ottawa should place themselves in open hostility to the principle of government of the people by the people, and according to the wishes of the people, and should declare their attachment to the cause of government of the people by the place-holders regardless of the wishes of the people. In so doing they are maintaining the most cherished tradition of their party that the people should never be entrusted with a power that can be kept in the hands of an irresponsible body.

SOUTH HURON. The Liberal candidate was elected in the bye-election in South Huron, Ont., on Wednesday, having turned a Conservative majority of 111 into a Liberal majority of 134. The result is a fair criterion of the trend of public opinion in that Province, for while the constituency was represented by a Liberal for many years, it returned an Opposition member by the substantial majority mentioned at the first general election since the redistribution of 1903. In so far, therefore, as the re-distribution may be supposed to have affected the riding, it did so for the worse—from the Liberal point of view. As Mr. Gunn, though an estimable and highly respectable gentleman, was not an outstanding figure politically, his election was rather an indication of the normal complexion of the re-arranged constituency than a victory of a political leader in a doubtful riding. That Mr. McLean has been able to swing the majority so decisively the other way is a signal mark of his ability and a promise that very effective public work may be expected from him at Ottawa, but his victory can not be altogether explained on the grounds of personal ability, for the issue of the contest as reflected in

the newspapers was the business record of the Government against the mud-slinging tactics of the Opposition. The result can be construed only as an approval of Government policy and a repudiation of Opposition tactics; and coming from a constituency whose political complexion was by no means certain both the approval and the repudiation are the more significant. The moral of South Huron is that unsupported slander cannot antagonize a normally well-informed Canadian constituency against a Government of known ability and integrity. Nor does it strain the political vision to detect the corresponding moral that the wages of slander is political death.

KEEPING POSTED. A timely innovation at the city hall is the presentation of financial statements each week showing the record for the week on both current and capital accounts. The current account sheet shows the expenditures classified under the headings bills payable, city hall, debt, interest, engineer's department, E. L. and P. department, finance, fire department, health department, interest, market, police and license, power house, pound, revenue, stores and works department, telephone department, water department, etc. The capital account sheet is itemized to show the expenditures for bills payable, E. L. and P. construction, fire department improvements, interest, incinerator, local improvements, pavings, street railway, sewer construction, telephone construction, water construction, etc. Three columns on each sheet, show respectively the amounts previously paid on each item during the financial year, the amounts of the present accounts and the totals. At the bottom of each sheet is shown the total cash receipts of the week, the total disbursements and the bank balance in respect of the account. A glance at the sheets thus shows the alderman at a glance what the city has paid out during the year on any item in either the current or capital account. Copies of each statement are delivered to each alderman for inspection and record. If the members of the council of 1906 are not continuously and fully informed on the financial affairs of the city the fault will certainly not be that they have not the information at hand in very convenient form. The credit for this much needed innovation belongs to Mayor McDougall.

COAL LANDS THAT YIELD NO REVENUE. The Minister of Public Works drew attention on Tuesday to the enormous area of coal lands within the Province which are exempt from yielding government revenue. That the area is great is generally well known, but how great may not have been clearly realized. Of the total of one million tons of coal mined in the Province last year two-thirds yielded no royalty to the Government. This amount was mined on lands alienated by the former Federal Government under conditions which permit no royalty to be collected from the output. However great may be the production of those mines the treasury of neither the Province nor the Dominion benefits one cent. Nor does the proportion for last year appear to be abnormal. Considering the location of the mines now open, and the areas of Hudson Bay lands, railway lands, and other lands disposed of in the days when surface rights carried also coal rights, it is not an unreasonable estimate that not more than one-half the coal lands of the Province are subject to royalties on the output.

On the one-third of the output on which royalties were paid last year the total revenue of the Federal Government would be about \$30,000, of which princely sum we are therefore to understand the Oppositions both at Ottawa and Edmonton ask us to forego the cash subsidy of a half million dollars annually, which we now receive in return for our public lands. The coal lands, it must be remembered, are necessarily the most productive part of the public domain. The homestead lands can only be administered at a loss. Land sales cannot be made a source of revenue in a country where land is being given away, and where the difficulties of bringing land under cultivation are recognized as equivalent to a fair price for cultivated land. More, the immigration policy is an essential part of the settlement policy, and its cost must be borne by the Government and no Legislature, however well-intentioned, is entitled to threaten the wishes of the people in order to govern according to their own opinions, however strongly they may be convinced of the correctness of those opinions. It is the privilege of the members alike of a Government and a Legislature to advocate their opinions as strongly as they may deem wise, but it is not their privilege to impose those views upon the public

lands in accord with the notion of our friends opposite. And against that deficit we would have only the returns from the coal lands—now amounting to the sum of \$30,000 per year. Clearly if anybody got a bad bargain in the Autonomy Act it was not the Province of Alberta.

It is asserted by our friends opposite that the royalties from the whole coal output of the Province would equal the subsidy received in lieu of lands, and perhaps exceed it. But the point is that there never can be royalties collected on the whole coal output, and probably never on more than half the whole output. The critics say so that when they were in power. So generous were their notions of the deserts of their party friends and corporation allies that the resource which might have yielded revenue to us was cut in two and one half made non-revenue producing forever. If therefore we would be better situated in future with royalties from the coal products of the Province than with the cash subsidies we shall receive, the credit for our loss lies at the door of the gentlemen who made it impossible for any government to collect royalties from a great part of these coal products. And the difference between the amount which a royalty on the whole output would have yielded and the cash subsidy is one item of the price we paid for having our affairs administered on the principles, and by the practices of the Opposition. The cash subsidy is an allowance made us by the present Federal Government in consideration of the wrongs done us by the preceding Government. Had they not depleted our resources, we could have received either the royalty from the whole coal output of the Province or a fair cash equivalent from the Federal treasury. Our friends are caught in the net of their own laying. In power they placed half our coal resources out of business as revenue producers, in opposition they urge that we be forced to derive our revenue from those resources, or left without revenue. The present Government recognized that as it was a Dominion Government that despoiled our resources, the Dominion should make restitution to us for them. If the Opposition consider the restitution insufficient they should propose to buy back the coal lands they alienated, and present us with the whole unimpaired coal resources of the Province, unhampered by a restriction that any portion shall not be subject to royalties. Meantime we decline restitutions by any other means, but especially but firmly we decline to accept of accepting what coal lands the former Government failed to exempt from royalties in place of a cash subsidy that appears to be a very, very liberal equivalent.

PROHIBITORY LEGISLATION. A prohibitory law that does not prohibit is several degrees worse than a license law that does prohibit to the extent to which it is intended to prohibit; for the reason that a law which is violated with impunity brings all law into contempt and breeds general lawlessness and disorder in the State. A prohibitory law can only prohibit lawfully by approving and vigilantly enforcing it. The law against murder is effective only because an overwhelming majority of the people are opposed to murder and readily lend their assistance to the apprehension of the murderer. Similarly a law prohibiting the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors can only be enforced when the people want it enforced and are prepared to assist in enforcing it.

There is no reason to believe that public opinion in this Province today is strongly in favor of prohibitory legislation or that the public generally would exert themselves to secure the enforcement of such law. A legislature that would place such law on the statute books would therefore only be imposing on the Government an impossible task in the present state of public opinion; and by passing a law that could not be enforced would invite public disregard for their legislation generally.

While it is desirable that a Government and a Legislature be leaders of public opinion rather than laggards in the march of social progress, the administration of a Government and the legislation of a Parliament can not and should not run too much in advance of public opinion. In democratic countries, the people rule and have a right to rule, and no Government and no Legislature, however well-intentioned, is entitled to threaten the wishes of the people in order to govern according to their own opinions, however strongly they may be convinced of the correctness of those opinions. It is the privilege of the members alike of a Government and a Legislature to advocate their opinions as strongly as they may deem wise, but it is not their privilege to impose those views upon the public

in the form of laws against the public wish. And against that deficit we would have only the returns from the coal lands—now amounting to the sum of \$30,000 per year. Clearly if anybody got a bad bargain in the Autonomy Act it was not the Province of Alberta.

It is asserted by our friends opposite that the royalties from the whole coal output of the Province would equal the subsidy received in lieu of lands, and perhaps exceed it. But the point is that there never can be royalties collected on the whole coal output, and probably never on more than half the whole output. The critics say so that when they were in power. So generous were their notions of the deserts of their party friends and corporation allies that the resource which might have yielded revenue to us was cut in two and one half made non-revenue producing forever. If therefore we would be better situated in future with royalties from the coal products of the Province than with the cash subsidies we shall receive, the credit for our loss lies at the door of the gentlemen who made it impossible for any government to collect royalties from a great part of these coal products. And the difference between the amount which a royalty on the whole output would have yielded and the cash subsidy is one item of the price we paid for having our affairs administered on the principles, and by the practices of the Opposition. The cash subsidy is an allowance made us by the present Federal Government in consideration of the wrongs done us by the preceding Government. Had they not depleted our resources, we could have received either the royalty from the whole coal output of the Province or a fair cash equivalent from the Federal treasury. Our friends are caught in the net of their own laying. In power they placed half our coal resources out of business as revenue producers, in opposition they urge that we be forced to derive our revenue from those resources, or left without revenue. The present Government recognized that as it was a Dominion Government that despoiled our resources, the Dominion should make restitution to us for them. If the Opposition consider the restitution insufficient they should propose to buy back the coal lands they alienated, and present us with the whole unimpaired coal resources of the Province, unhampered by a restriction that any portion shall not be subject to royalties. Meantime we decline restitutions by any other means, but especially but firmly we decline to accept of accepting what coal lands the former Government failed to exempt from royalties in place of a cash subsidy that appears to be a very, very liberal equivalent.

SEED GRAIN. It is satisfactory to know that the Western Provincial Governments are co-operating with the Department of the Interior to secure a plentiful supply of seed grain in all parts of the West. The task confronting the Governments is believed to be not the importation of seed grain, but the distribution of the seed in the country. While in some sections there is a shortage of grain suitable for seed, in other districts there is a surplus and taken altogether there is probably enough seed in the West for all requirements if it were equitably distributed. Obviously the time to deal with the difficulty is to deal with it before this grain has been exported. To do this, information must be secured, and speedily secured, of the conditions in every portion of the country. This done, the distribution of the seed available can be undertaken systematically. It has been suggested that in some cases advances, either of seed or of the price of seed, may have to be made to farmers not in position to pay for their whole requirements at once. If so, it should be kept clearly and persistently before the world that the advances are loans and not gifts. The farmers of the West do not require and do not ask that seed or anything else be given them for nothing. Were financial conditions normal they would be practically every day able to secure the loans necessary on the security of their property alone. But conditions are not normal, and the farmer of the West experiences exactly the same difficulty as the manufacturer or merchant of the East in borrowing money and no more. But the important point is that during the coming months many farmers must secure loans, or the equivalent of loans, or else the country and every interest in it must suffer. Loans advanced to farmers under such circumstances are by no means favors extended to a class against other classes, but an expedient to conserve the interests of the whole country by securing the welfare of the industry upon which the interests of the whole country depend.

MORE AMERICAN JINGISM. Seattle Alderman Thinks Japs Are Trying to Control Water Supply. Seattle, Jan. 22.—Councilman James Conway has asked the city council to investigate the alarming reports sent out from White River valley between Seattle and Tacoma regarding the actions of the Japanese. Robert Bridges, former state land commissioner, who owns a farm on Orilla, says the Japanese are making determined efforts to get possession of every ranch between Seattle and Tacoma, and that they are all armed with rifles and that many secret meetings have been held at night. Signal lights are kept burning all night long. Councilman Conway thought that the Japanese are seemingly quiet and believed the situation well worthy of investigation. The big water mains from Cedar River that supply Seattle with water pass through White River valley, and they could cut off the city's water supply without the least trouble. There are two hundred Japanese living in the valley, which is one of the richest dairy districts in the state.

TO RISE CONTENTION. Mr. Puffer also scored Mr. Robertson in a calm but very effective way for his remarks on the location of the University. He pointed out that he intentionally or not, to the north of this province against the south. This matter he had long settled at the conference in August 1906, when it was agreed that the

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Federal Government Bought Land. The point he desired to bring was that this country was being bought by the Hudson Bay company's agents, consequently belonged to its owner, the Federal Government. He said after its purchase the Conservative government, then in power, proposed to carve out the province of Manitoba from the bulk of territory.

"If our Conservative friends are why its public lands were not given to Manitoba then I will more than answer why the control of her province was given to the Hudson Bay company," said Mr. Puffer.

The land purchased by the federal government and paid for by the revenues of the country's provinces did not belong to the provinces. The Hudson Bay company, which owned the territory, and the government, of course, did take them, but Alberta, stated speaker, stood in quite a different position toward the government and did not claim its public lands.

Federal Control in States. Furthermore, the States carved out of Louisiana, never owned their own lands, though they were provincial control were found, containing they did. Texas, however, in joining the confederacy, stipulated that they should still own their own lands, and this condition was granted them for a price of \$10 million. In the minds of some of the opposition, Mr. Teller continued, there was an idea that the Confederacy was now giving away its lands to their friends. He desired to turn to statistics, he stated that in the 18 years when the Confederates were in power at Louisiana, little over 31,000,000 acres of land were turned over to the States. On the other hand, only 2,000,000 acres had been disposed of during the same period. The Liberals have been in power, the sales of land for settlement during the period of the Confederacy amounted to something over 2,000,000 acres, he continued. During the period of the Confederacy, the Confederates imposed on the some settlements duties in return for cheap lands. These, said the member for Lethbridge, were levied on the States, all—1,342 settlers in all, and 17 of companies are looked as bringing money.

Lands Under Conservatism. The present federal government accused of giving timber limits away to friends. He desired to state fully that these are not given friends, but are instead sold to the highest bidder. He further recalled the earlier government dealt with 7,000 square miles, for which it received \$7,000,000, or \$4.50 per acre. The present government, up to this time, have sold 4,500 square miles, for which they were paid \$297,229, or \$66 per mile.

The completion goes to show that the Liberal government got 15 times as much per square mile as the present government did. Of the early grants 46 were made to parties carrying with them the obligations of the members of provincial assemblies and 18 political workers. He concluded with conviction that every transfer of the government of today can be said to be a business transaction. (Applause.)

W. F. Puffer Speaks. W. F. Puffer, the member for Lethbridge, on rising to reply, was greeted with applause. He congratulated the mover and seconder of the address upon their capable speeches, but also the leader of the opposition and his colleague upon the manner in which they handled their side of the question. He desired, however, to take exception to one statement of the leader of the opposition—that which he denounced any measure of direct taxation. He further recalled that during last session this honorable member had raised no protest against the small measure of direct taxation proposed at that time.

A tax had then been placed on railways and corporations to meet the case of thousands who lived outside the provinces but contributed nothing to it, even while deriving large revenues from the country. They had been also a very light tax placed on residents of Alberta in settlements outside of organized school districts. The people on whom this was imposed did not contribute to the revenue in any other way, while at the same time they received direct advantages from the province by attending their children to the organized school districts, to which they contributed nothing. Further, the light tax mostly fell upon the specialist or holding land from settlement lands upon the actual settlers, who specifically organized school districts after their arrival.

All the money realized from this tax was devoted to the purpose of spreading educational facilities throughout the province, and it was considered by the framers of the enactment that it was one of the best methods of equalizing the burdens all had to carry.