

REFLECTIONS

By THE EDITOR

That Ninth Plank.

LAST week, I referred to the ninth plank in Mr. Borden's platform as laid down in his final message to the people before the general elections. It runs thus: "(9) The extension of civil service reform." This means that those employed in the civil service outside of Ottawa will be placed under the Civil Service Commission at an early date. Then no man over thirty-five will be eligible for a Government position, and candidates must pass an examination before appointment.

Mr. Borden's new Postmaster-General will be one of the first of the new Cabinet to face a situation where the spirit of the "Ninth Plank" must be considered. The Postmastership of Montreal is vacant. The Deputy Postmaster has been performing the duties for two or three years, and is *prima facie* entitled to the promotion. In a similar case in the Toronto Customs House, two years ago, the Deputy Collector was given the preference, although it had been customary to appoint a politician to such a post.

Surely, with Mr. Borden's ninth plank in mind, it may be expected that no politician shall be given preference over Mr. Gaboury, unless there are departmental objections to his promotion. Montreal is the most important post-office in Canada, although its revenues are not so large as Toronto's, and if there is any post in the outside service which should be free of political patronage, it is this one. The highest kind of efficiency there can be secured only through making the postmaster entirely free of political influence.

The Conservative politicians of Montreal will not be doing their duty by Mr. Borden, if they refuse to allow him and his Postmaster-General the fullest liberty in regard to this appointment.

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Railway Servants in Great Britain.

MUCH information has been given to the Canadian public about the position of railway employees in Great Britain, and some of it has been misleading. It is quite true that wages for this kind of work are lower in Britain than in America, but this is true of all kinds of labour. It is not true, however, that the railway employees get an average of \$5 a week. Porters are paid at this rate, but they earn a great deal in tips. No person thinks of handing in a bag or trunk or taking it away without giving the porter a penny or two. This must add a shilling a day at least. Again, the carters are paid a low wage, but this sort of work is easy and is classed as "unskilled."

A recent return of *The Board of Trade*, a Government publication, gives the average wages of employees as follows:

	Employed.	Wages.	Average.
		£	s. d.
1906	457,942	582,207	25 5½
1907	478,690	618,304	25 10
1908	459,120	574,059	25 0
1909	459,444	582,782	25 4½
1910	463,019	596,342	25 9

These numbers are exclusive of clerical staff, salaried officers, and casual labourers.

When the number of hours worked is considered, the wages do seem low. The same return shows that during one-half of the year, the men work more than twelve hours a day. This is especially the case among passenger guards and brakemen.

On the whole, therefore, while the case for the railway employees may not be as strong as some would have us believe, it would seem as if the wages were too low and the hours too long. On the other hand, it is probably true that in the United States and Canada, the hours are too few and the wages too high. However, so long as we can get along with short hours and high wages, no one will be anxious to see them lowered.

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Political Ethics.

A FINE point is raised by the Winnipeg *Telegram* in regard to members of parliament who may desire to change their allegiance. The editor of that paper discusses a rumour that Mr. Champagne, M.P., of Battleford, and Dr. Neely, of Humboldt, elected as Liberals, will change over to the Conservative side and support Mr. Borden

"for what there is in it." The *Telegram* says that "the Conservative party cannot avoid accepting such support, but it would be most unwise to encourage it."

Well, let us see. In 1908, Mr. Joseph Russell, an independent, ran against Mr. A. E. Kemp, the former member in East Toronto. With the aid of the Liberal vote in the riding, when there was no Liberal candidate, Mr. Russell was elected. He went to Ottawa, and after a time slipped into the Conservative caucus. When the news reached Toronto, the regular Conservatives objected. They protested to the other Conservative members from Toronto. They protested to Mr. Borden himself. Yet Mr. Russell continued to attend the Conservative caucuses. It would thus seem that the Conservative party at Ottawa have created a precedent which will let Mr. Champagne and Dr. Neely join the Conservative party if they so desire.

If the *Telegram* thought the principle wrong in 1909 and 1910, it should have protested against allowing Mr. Russell to attend caucus. Its present protest seems to be rather late.

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Another Phase of the Question.

THERE is another side to this question. If it is permissible for a constituency to switch its politics in order to get on the Government side, why should not the same permission be given a member if he thinks his constituency would ap-

Mr. Borden's Cabinet

(ANNOUNCED ON TUESDAY.)

R. L. Borden—Premier and President of the Council.
 Martin Burrell, B.C.—Minister of Agriculture.
 Dr. J. D. Reid, Ont.—Minister of Customs.
 W. T. White, Ont.—Minister of Finance.
 W. B. Nantel, Que.—Minister of Inland Revenue.
 Hon. Robert Rogers, Man.—Minister of Interior.
 C. J. Doherty, Que.—Minister of Justice.
 T. W. Crothers, Ont.—Minister of Labour.
 Hon. J. D. Hazen, N.B.—Minister of Marine and Fisheries.
 Col. Sam Hughes, Ont.—Minister of Militia.
 F. D. Monk, Que.—Minister of Public Works.
 Hon. Frank Cochrane, Ont.—Minister of Railways.
 Hon. Geo. E. Foster, Ont.—Minister of Trade and Commerce.
 Hon. L. P. Pelletier, Que.—Postmaster-General.
 Dr. W. J. Roche, Man.—Secretary of State.
 Without portfolio—A. E. Kemp, Ontario; George H. Perley, Quebec; Senator Lougheed, Alberta.

prove? For example, if the Liberals had been returned to power last month, would Rainy River have elected a Conservative or a Liberal? Mr. Carrick, the Conservative candidate, got the seat by acclamation last week because the Conservatives have come into power. Had it been otherwise at Ottawa, Mr. Carrick would certainly have had a stiff fight.

Again, the Yukon and other outlying constituencies usually elect Government supporters. These elections are "deferred," and are conceded to the party which wins in the earlier polling. Can it be wrong for a representative of an outlying constituency such as Battleford or Humboldt to do what the constituency would probably have done if the election in that riding had been on the "deferred" list.

I have no knowledge of the intentions of Mr. Champagne or Dr. Neely. The *Telegram* may be entirely wrong in taking the rumour seriously. Yet, should these men take the course which rumour suggests, it is apparent that they will have at least some arguments in their favour. If I were asked my advice, I should say that they have no right to do so without resigning their seats and running again; but should they not choose to do so, they will have a fair though inconclusive argument to support them.

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The Telegram's Own Answer.

ON the same page on which the Winnipeg *Telegram*'s attack on Mr. Champagne and Dr. Neely appears, there is an editorial note on the Yukon. It begins, "The election in the Yukon will be of more than ordinary interest, owing

to the overthrow in politics." It goes on to point out that Dr. Thomson will be a candidate "now that the Conservatives are returned to power," and that he will likely defeat Mr. Congdon, the former member. To my mind this seems an almost complete answer to the *Telegram*'s own editorial on Mr. Champagne and Dr. Neely. It is all a question as to what the constituency desires. It may not be dignified, but it is practical politics as practised by Canadian constituencies which require special treatment from the Government because of their newness and their undeveloped condition.

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Lord Grey's Departure.

LORD GREY has gone and Canada is welcoming his successor. Just before he left, Lord Grey remarked, in replying to an address, that Lord Chatham was the first British statesman to realize that the future of the British Empire lay on this side of the Atlantic. He added that he would never miss an opportunity to preach Lord Chatham's gospel wherever he might be.

This may be taken as Lord Grey's final message to the Canadian people. He has come to believe in Canada's future as a national power and as a great force in the Anglo-Saxon family of nations. He looks to Canada to be the great nerve-centre of the British Empire—to exercise the hegemony which has been so often discussed. His enthusiasm over the idea cannot fail to be inspiring.

Whatever divergent opinions there may be as to Earl Grey's ardent imperialistic views, no one will deny him the credit of being honestly in earnest. He is no time-server, no smooth flatterer. Every one who has come in contact with him, agrees as to his honesty of purpose and belief. Without denying nor belittling Canada's right to decide as to her own destiny, he has kept the imperial ideal before the people with whom he came in contact, and has done it with a skill and an earnest frankness which has aroused neither antagonism nor animosity among even those who are inclined to disagree.

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Civic Improvement.

WHILE Toronto is being invited to adopt a general plan of civic improvement prepared by the Guild of Civic Art, Ottawa is being severely criticized for not adopting such a plan. In a resolution passed by the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada, which met last week in Montreal, it is pointed out that the work of beautifying Ottawa "has been carried out without any comprehensive interest or plan of the whole possible scheme of improvement; and many things have been done which are unsuitable and inadequate, and will require change."

Here is another charge as to unwise and improvident expenditure of federal funds which will require the attention of the Borden Government. The charge may not be correct, but as the criticism comes from an independent, non-interested source, it should be investigated.

The lesson, however, for all Canadian cities is that there should be a general plan of improvements which are to be made or which may be made during the next twenty-five years. This will prevent useless undertakings, ensure orderliness and timeliness in all undertakings, and prevent extravagance. The curse of civic government is its haphazard yearly programme and lack of continuity.

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Sir John Thompson.

A SUBSCRIBER asks if Sir John Thompson had any parliamentary experience when made Minister of Justice by Sir John Macdonald, in September, 1885. He had, but not at Ottawa. He was first elected to the Nova Scotia Legislature at a bye-election in 1877, and re-elected by acclamation at the general election of 1878. The Liberal Government, under Hill, being defeated, a new one was formed under Holmes, with Thompson as Attorney-General. In May, 1882, he became premier, was defeated at a general election in June and resigned in July. He was immediately made a Judge of the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia.

In the autumn of 1885, Sir John Macdonald brought three new men into his cabinet, Thomas White, George E. Foster, and John S. D. Thompson. The two former were members of the House of Commons. Thompson was not a member and had not even met Sir John Macdonald. He was entirely unknown in a national sense and his appointment was a great surprise. Sir John Macdonald, however, needed a Nova Scotia successor for Sir Charles Tupper, and selected Thompson on his reputation. He afterwards said, "The great discovery of my life was the discovery of Thompson."