

British Columbian Notes

By J. W. BENGOUGH

THE visitor from the East who happened to arrive at the Coast in January of this year found the British Columbians in a really pathetic situation. The Province that was understood to have just a regularly authorized rainy season (which was really no drawback, as the rain was never unpleasantly wet) to breathe the sunshine which otherwise lasted all the year round, was knee-deep in snow, with more and more of this beautiful falling every day. The physical result was bad enough, as the city dwellers evidently knew little of the art of cleaning off the sidewalks, which, throughout the residential sections, were reduced to goose-paths by no means easy to negotiate, but the mental result was nothing short of distressing. Every old-timer was thrown into an apologetic mood, and was kept busy assuring the new-comer that this was a really unheard-of state of things.

It was sorely humiliating not to be able to point with pride as usual to the roses blooming in the open at Christmastide; and for the resident of Victoria to have to admit that the street cars of that lovely city were altogether out of commission for two or three weeks was bitter beyond words. There was simply no accounting for it, unless it was one of the mysterious results of the disturbed condition brought about by the world-war—but whatever the explanation, the visitor was implored to understand clearly that it was most unusual. Such a denouement of eastern weather was nothing short of an affront to the Coast.

BUT one thing that the snow could not smother was the patriotic ardour of the British Columbians. Certainly no province in our Confederation has a better right to the adjective in its name. In the matter of enlist-

ments it holds first place in proportion to population, and for all the accompanying activities of patriotic funds, red cross, Belgian, Polish, and other charitable efforts, and the endless variety of women's organizations enrolled in war work of all kinds, the province has been and is nobly doing its bit. Indeed, the visitor gets the impression that the war and its affairs are the chief business of the people everywhere here, though in this respect B. C. does not differ from other sections of the Dominion. The spirit of sacrifice is manifest in all parts. The people of Revelstoke, for example, proudly mention that that little city (which in the East would only rank as a small town) is giving a regular donation of \$1,000 per month—and many other places larger and smaller are doing proportionately just as well. One sees the lads in khaki all over the place; in city, town and village, ranging, as elsewhere, from callow youths whom one suspects of being under military age to grey-haired volunteers equally open to suspicion in the other direction, with the general body representing the fine, athletic, clean type

of manhood that has already won eulogies for the Canadian army abroad. There is a great training camp at Vernon, where ten to twelve thousand troops are concentrated under command of Col. Gregory. The site occupied is a picturesque plateau, commanding a splendid view of the hills all round, quite an ideal spot for the purpose, and not, I should suppose, resembling Camp Borden in the least. The enterprising town is within a mile or so, and is necessarily much patronized by the soldiers in their off hours. Vernon has a number of bar-rooms, but Col. Gregory began his work by coming to an understanding with the license-holders, whereby potations supplied to soldiers were strictly confined to beer, and this beverage was only saleable between the hours of four and half-past nine p.m. The result has been so gratifying that the W. C. T. U. organization of the town passed a resolution of congratulation to the commander, on the excellent order that has obtained and the almost entire absence of drunkenness.

SPEAKING of drink naturally leads to mention of the forthcoming vote on Provincial prohibition, which is to be taken in connection with the general election, Sept. 14. The legislature, at its last session, passed an Act which had the approval of the temperance element, represented by the People's Prohibition Movement, an organization headed by Mr. Jonathan Rogers, of Vancouver. The measure was carried with very few dissenting votes. It is now up for the judgment of the people, and if approved, is to go into effect a year hence. It is along the customary lines of Provincial legislation, prohibiting the retail sale of liquor for beverage purposes. The prospect is that it will be carried by a large majority. In viewing the fact that the neighbouring provinces of the West have all gone dry, to say nothing of the neighbouring states on the south, it seems inevitable that B. C. must get into line or risk having those initials interpreted as referring to history, and relegating her to a place amongst the back number.

A PLEBISCITE vote is also to be taken on Women's Suffrage on the same occasion. Everybody seems to take it for granted that this will also carry. While there has been no great campaign for it, there has been still less evidence of opposition. Apart from the merits of the case of women's right to equality of political privilege, there is a sentiment that in consideration of their patriotic services since the war began, nothing is too good for the women. And, of course, Westerners are chivalrous, anyway.

NEITHER of these issues is getting much place in the campaign which is going on between the political parties. The Government, led by Mr. Bowser, is appealing for support on its record for purity and efficiency, and the Opposition, under the leadership of Mr. Brewster, are devoting themselves to a great effort to demonstrate that these particular qualities have been pre-eminently absent in the history of the Cabinet. Meantime, if we may rely on the newspaper organs of the respective parties, both are being received with every evidence of enthusiastic public approval. The prophets seem to be ominously silent as to the outcome. As Mr. Asquith would say, "we can only wait and see."

THE party system is a comparatively new thing in British Columbia politics, but it has certainly (Concluded on page 23.)



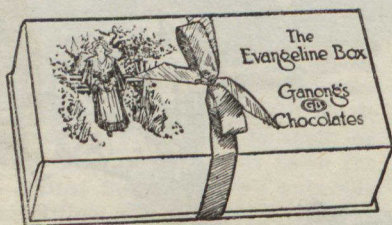
The Beautiful New Evangeline Box contains a very attractive and delicious assortment of

Ganong's Chocolates

in a variety of centres—Creams, Nuts, Brittles, Nougatines, Caramels—in fact, an assortment that is sure to meet with your approval. Be sure and ask for

The Evangeline Box

(The most popular box of Chocolates in Canada)



The Finest Chocolates you can buy at

60¢ a pound box

Also sold in half-pound boxes at 30c.