

Western Resources

Montreal Gazette Mon. Oct. 30/22

The Political Field

The coming session of Western Parliament is likely to Resources have something to do Claims with the claims of the western provinces in connection with their resources. When the provinces were established, the Government of Canada, which had bought the land from the Hudson's Bay Company, retained the administration in its own hands, agreeing to pay each of the provinces a sum of money in yearly grants in compensation for the loss of what they never possessed. All the cost of surveys, advertising and securing settlers for the lands were paid out of the national treasury. When the provinces began to find their expenditures exceeding their incomes and that taxation was unpopular, their governments thought to get more money by getting the lands and all that pertained to them into their control. Negotiations were begun and kept up for some years. Last February, Mr. Mackenzie King, for the Government of Canada, invited the provinces concerned to present their cases. The Winnipeg Free Press gives the following as the situation at present:

"Manitoba was ready to present its case which was the result of a thorough and exhaustive study of the subject in its historical and constitutional aspects, and the central feature of which was the claim that Manitoba should be recognized as the rightful owner of all her lands and other natural resources when the province was erected in 1871 and that she has, therefore, a right to compensation for all lands alienated by the Dominion Government—due allowance being made, of course, for payments by the Dominion in lieu of lands and for the expenses to the Dominion Government of administering the resources in Manitoba. Behind this case, as prepared by the Norris Government, all parties in the province were united and negotiations were entered into at Ottawa, as a result of which it was announced that there had been an agreement on principle and that Manitoba would be put on the same footing as the eastern provinces in regard to natural resources. It has been and is assumed that the Dominion Government admits the right of this province to be compensated for lands that have been alienated and the proceeds applied to Dominion purposes. The detailed manner of working out this settlement on principle remains as a further subject for negotiation.

"With Saskatchewan and Alberta the situation is more complicated, since they were made provinces only in 1905 after much of their resources had already been alienated. They are claiming compensation for such resources as well as for those alienated since 1905. These provinces, it is understood, have been asked to state their position in regard to certain features of the situation, and Alberta, at least, has not yet replied. The issue is regarded by the western provinces as one of vital importance. They have been waiting for years to recover their natural resources, but they do not merely want the remnant of their resources and to let the matter end there. They want a just settlement based on their full constitutional rights—the same rights as the eastern provinces have enjoyed since their original establishment."

The feeling that there A Protest is too much legislation that is in Canada, as in other Timely democratic countries, is voiced, among others, by the Kingston Standard, which has on the subject the following: "It is noticeable how much the idea is growing that there is too much government. People are getting sick and tired of laws being made to which a very large proportion of them object, and which only result in some cases of the law being ignored, and in a growing disrespect for all laws. Long ago Mr. Meighen said that less government was required and more initiative and control of their own affairs wanted.

Mr. Mackenzie King has said the same thing, and Mr. Bonar Law declares that 'what we want is quiet and as little interference as possible, either by legislation or administration.' And he said that this applied not only to himself but to 'social schemes' which might be advocated by others.

"It will be well if the uplifters and those people who seem to think that the governments can and should handle pretty nearly every question, take notice of this increasing objection to government interference. After all when the matters are considered which cause disputes, dissatisfaction and unrest it is instructive to see how many of them are due to too much interference by governments. And it must not be forgotten that Mr. Lloyd George said that less governments interfered, the better it would be for them and the people. The danger in Canada not only comes from the cranks who believe that everything can be set right by legislation, but also from our host of too well paid legislators who think they show how they are earning their money by imposing more and more laws upon the people."

It was noted in the O.T.A. bye-election campaign in Toronto Southwest Toronto that Election prohibition as represented by the Ontario Temperance Act seemed to have no friends. The Farmers' Sun, commenting on the situation, says:

"The result in Southeast Toronto is significant of nothing except that urban opinion, in the main, is not friendly to the Ontario Temperance Act. There is no pretence that the record of the Drury Government was an issue. Col. Currie did tear the air a few times with denunciation of the administration in Queen's Park, but the Colonel and his supporters were perfectly well aware that the one issue was the O.T.A. The fact that John Callahan, the protégé of the Moderation League, ran a poor second is simply a reflection of the general opinion in the riding that the election of Col. Currie, whose temperance policy was more apparent in his wink than his nod, would be a more practical method of securing modifications in the act than the endorsement of an independent like John Callahan, who would sit in no man's land in the House with that ineffective quartette led by M. M. McBride. The sorry showing made by Claude Pearce, the 'official' Liberal candidate, who had the support of Wellington Hay and lesser lights of the Liberal group in the Legislature, was perhaps the most noteworthy feature of the poll. Pearce's failure was largely due to the feeling that the 'machine' had forced him upon the riding, but the chief handicap the Liberal candidate suffered was the lack of leadership, and aggressive policy on the part of his group. Wellington Hay's passive policy has undoubtedly made for more expeditious transaction of public business in the Legislature, but it assays rather low as a vote getter. The Currie victory will probably mean the retirement of J. Walter Curry, K.C., the other Southeast Toronto member, when his term is up. Mr. Curry is not in love with political life, and is unlikely to throw himself again into a fight that promises little but defeat."

Rumor makers are New busy in New Brunswick Brunswick over the filling of some Politics. actual and some prospective official vacancies by the Government of Canada. The St. John Journal has the following on the subject:

"Of considerable interest to New Brunswick are some contemplated political moves, which the Journal learns on good authority are likely to take place in the near future. Another vacancy in the Senate is predicted as Senator King, of New Brunswick, is about to retire, and the question is raised upon whom will the togs of Senator King and the late Senator Thompson fall? According to a report emanating

0579
from Ottawa, Hon. William Pugsley is definitely slated for one of the seats in the rec. chamber and O. Turgeon, M.P. for Gloucester, is named for the other vacant senatorship. The appointment of Lieutenant-Governor Pugsley to the Senate will necessitate a successor to the New Brunswick gubernatorial chair and Ottawa gossip tells us that Hon. W. E. Foster, premier of the province, will be the recipient of this high honor. New Brunswick will then need a premier to take the place which Hon. Mr. Foster has so ably filled and our Ottawa informant tells us that arrangements have been completed for Hon. Peter Veniot, minister of public works, to head the Liberal Government of this province."

The Ontario Adolescent Act, which requires Too Much the attendance of the Education. youth of the province at school till their eighteenth year, is likely to be changed at the coming session of the Legislature. It represents the efforts of theorists who, rightly enough, thought that the better a child was educated the greater the chances would there be of his or her success in life. What was forgotten was that the parents who can keep their children at school, even on part time, till their eighteenth year are few. The objections to the law come both from school boards and parents. The law increases the cost of the schools as well as the burden of the parents. Some school authorities have declined to assume the cost, and seem to meet the approval of their communities. The Simcoe Reformer, dealing with the issue, says: "Very often, however, the fifteen-year-old boy is far better off at business than at school, and in that respect the Adolescent Act fails utterly. Education cannot be forced upon the unwilling pupil, who should be at work, where he may support himself and relieve the parents of much responsibility, especially where the family is large. To compel him to attend school for two additional years, during which time he might be earning and learning for future years, is the object of the Adolescent Act. The new policy of compulsory education is working hardships for hundreds of needy families in Ontario, for the sake of benefiting a few pupils. Hundreds of boys who might otherwise be well established in business occupations, are frittering away valuable time within the walls of Continuation Schools."

MICHELE PARRIS, Series 3 (P.G. 26, I, Volume 116)

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