

the space of ten years or more, and I may be pardoned if I refer but briefly to what has occurred in this connection. The first delegation visiting Ottawa in advocacy of British Columbia's case went in 1901, and consisted of the then Premier, Mr. Dunsmuir, and yourself, sir, as Attorney-General of the day. I was privileged to occupy a seat in the Legislature at that time, and recall a great deal of the discussion which resulted in that delegation being sent to the national cabinet. The report of that delegation forms the basis of the claims that have since been consistently pressed on Ottawa. The second delegation was in January of 1902, when the then Premier, Col Prior, and yourself, sir, as Attorney General, presented further the claims of the province, which in this instance laid special stress upon the physical conditions of the province as responsible for the greater cost of administration and a justification of our claims for special treatment. In neither of these cases was there a definite request for a sum of money in settlement and in both cases the matter ended there. In neither case was definite or tangible result attained.

"The third delegation was in 1903, after the present administration came into power, and it consisted of the Hon. Charles Wilson, Attorney-General of that day and the Hon. R. F. Green, Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works. On that occasion, for the first time, a definite and formal request was made for a commission of inquiry such as we may expect presently to have. Up to that time the Government had supplied in its various reports and memoranda a vast amount of statistical and other matter in support of its contentions.

#### **Premier McBride at the Interprovincial Conference.**

"The next stage in these negotiations came with the interprovincial conference of October, 1906, the conference which, as First Minister, I was privileged to attend. All the Prime Ministers of Canada were present, and the discussion covered a wide range, extending over three or four days. I took

opportunity early in the proceedings to submit British Columbia's brief, and I had behind me practically the unanimous voice of the country in the stand I then took. The only direct result of that conference of 1906 was the granting to this province of a sum of \$100,000 per annum for ten years, which the provincial ministers, in common with Sir Wilfrid Laurier and his cabinet, considered ample to meet the requirements of the case. Despite the fact that we have never, either, directly or indirectly, agreed to accept this annual grant as settlement of our claim, it marked the first recognition we had received from without the province in the nature of fair and honest recognition of the fact that British Columbia was in equity entitled to better and more adequate recognition than it had received under the Terms of Union and the Confederation compact. We refused, of course, to agree to this grant of \$100,000 per year for ten years being recognized as adequate to a final and unalterable settlement, but when opportunity offered we could point to this small grant as something in the nature of tangible recognition of that fact that we had a claim entitled to be considered. Following the conference of Prime Ministers in 1906, the Federal Parliament submitted a petition to the Imperial Parliament which covered what I might call the new matter herein, at any rate in so far as the fiscal arrangements of the several provinces were concerned. This petition was in due course submitted to the Colonial Secretary, with a view to the Colonial Secretary bringing it before the Imperial House, and having that House incorporate it into the Imperial Statutes as an amendment to the law which brought about the Confederation of the Canadian provinces in 1867. Following this I took the ground that nothing should be left undone to have our case understood by the highest form of the country.

"The Legislature coincided in my view, and in pursuance of a resolution passed by this House on March 21, 1907, I visited London to protest against the attempt to have the B. N. A. Act amendment made a settlement "final and unalterable." After a stay in London covering several weeks, I succeeded in