

THE HERALD

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 15, 1909.

SUBSCRIPTION—\$1.00 A YEAR. TO THE UNITED STATES \$1.50 PUBLISHED EVERY WEDNESDAY AT 81 QUEEN STREET, CHARLOTTETOWN, P. E. ISLAND. JAMES MCISAAC, Editor & Proprietor

Those of our friends who have not yet remitted their Herald Subscriptions for 1909 should lose no time in sending them along. Only two weeks of the year remain, and if they delay 1910 will be upon them before this obligation is discharged. Please do not delay.

Laurier and His Cabinet.

The baby of the cabinet, Mr MacKenzie King, got the Government into a whole lot of trouble last week, and as a result of his failure to display anything approaching the first rudiments of statesmanship the Laurier administration was sustained on a division by the meagre majority of 22, the smallest on a real party vote since they came into power in 1896. The young minister had an easy task before him. For the last two sessions there has been on the order paper an innocent looking resolution standing in the name of Mr. Hugh Guthrie, member for South Wellington, asking for the appointment of a commission to enquire into the needs of Canada in respect to technical education and industrial training. This resolution was again reached on Monday 6th, and member after member on both sides of the House sang the praise of such education which had been so eagerly taken up by European countries, particularly Germany. Mr King however made an impassioned speech filled with lofty imagery and word painting of the "yellow peril" of Chinese industrial competition, which only technical education and industrial training of Canadian artisans could possibly circumvent, but he refused to accept the very resolution which would be the creation of a commission of enquiry have brought these conditions of training appreciably nearer. Mr King conjured up the phanton that by interfering with educational matters the government would be trespassing on the field of provincial rights. Why this prevented him from accepting the innocent resolution of Mr Guthrie is not known and possibly never will be. The resolution did not bind the government to anything. It merely called for a committee of enquiry and if Mr King had wished the matter to die a natural death there were more ways than one for him to administer the customary chloroform. But he had not enough practical political wisdom for this. He came out of his dream of the glories of technical education and moved the adjournment of the debate which is tantamount to deliberately murdering the innocent resolution. This did not please Mr Borden and Mr Guthrie also kicked over the traces with the result that on division Mr King's motion was carried by the small majority of 22 and the spectacle was witnessed of three ardent government supporters, Messrs Guthrie, Mr. Fowke and Verville voting with the opposition. Several Liberals who had strongly supported the Guthrie resolution dodged out of the chamber instead of voting. All of which goes to show that Mr King has many things to learn before he can expect to be treated seriously as a cabinet minister. In past years Sir Wilfrid Laurier has repeatedly gone outside the house to choose his cabinet

ministers. Notable examples of this lack of confidence in his supporters in parliament are Messrs Graham, Pugsley, and Murphy. Now that Mr. King is added to the list the risk of serious blunders is immensely increased. Mr Pugsley, that maker of plattitudinous promises has a vast amount of trouble in store for himself this session if the opposition carries out its expressed determination of challenging all votes in his public works estimates which are of the patronage type and not in the best interests of the country generally. The appropriations for public buildings this year are studded with large sums for the erection of post offices in small rural villages where the postal revenue will not begin to pay the postmaster's salary, let alone the interest on the outlay. These items are put in at the request of the sitting member who is of course a supporter of the government and in the majority of cases the post office department has never asked for the erection of a new building as the business would not warrant it. By moving to reduce these votes the opposition will be doing their full duty in protesting against extravagant expenditures for purposes which are purely political. Advancing years are making Mr Fielding more politically brazen than ever. It was the finance Minister who two sessions ago laid down the principle from his seat in the House that the minority in parliament had no rights whatever save those granted by the majority. On Tuesday last he came out with the startling declaration that in the construction of public works only good and true Liberals should be employed. He even went further and added that he for one would have no hypocrisy in the matter and whenever possible work in his province would be done by men who supported the government. Mr Jameson of digby and Mr Crockett of York, N. B., pointed out to Mr Fielding that he was not spending his own money but the money of the people of Canada. Mr Fielding invariably forgets this fact. But to this gentle reminder he fiercely retorted that while the money might belong to the people of Canada, the government was the trustee in charge of it. If it was a crime for a preference to be given to a Liberal than this government would have to be turned out for the crime. For this confession of faith many thanks, Mr Fielding. That parochial policy has marked your political career from its inception and the narrow gauge upon which your ideas run stamp you as a fit leader of a parish council instead of the man who handles the purse and pulls tight the strings except when your own party is concerned. One would think according to your doctrine that all the taxes of the country were provided by Liberals. The Island Province has nothing for which to thank the present government. Time and time again it has made through its representatives in parliament just demands for its rights but a deaf ear has been turned. The tunnel question has once more been brought to the attention of the administration but all that is forthcoming is a specious promise by Mr Fielding that if ever the tunnel does come within the realm of practical undertakings he will give it his hearty support. That is, very comforting. Then the question of the dwindling representation of this garden of the gulf was brought up, but once more Mr Fielding indulged in a Utopian dream that some day the great provinces of Quebec and Ontario might take pity on their little sister and

agree to a change which would maintain for her her representation. Mr Fieldings sympathy with Prince Edward Island is almost tearful but so far as any practical sympathy is concerned and the determination to remove the wrongs off our loyal people Mr Fielding is hopelessly indefinite. In the meantime the people of this Island will have the privilege of paying their share for vast undertakings which to them are of little value while their own crying needs are neglected or laughed at by the spendthrifts who to day adorn the treasury benches. The Australian Cabinet has cabled from Melbourne to the Admiralty. London, asking the latter to immediately commence the construction of a battleship cruiser, which is the chief vessel of the Australian Pacific fleet. The Government proposes to proceed with the construction of the remaining vessels, so that all shall be completed simultaneously. It will be noted that while New Zealand is contributing the price of a first-class Dreadnought, and if found to be necessary, offers the price of a second, the Commonwealth of Australia is creating a "fleet unit," as suggested by the Admiralty. This fleet unit consists of one Armored Cruiser of the Indomitable class, with three cruisers of the Bristol type along with six destroyers. The Indomitable is the famous Dreadnought cruiser, the most formidable afloat and very fast. It is this that the Commonwealth Government has ordered to be immediately constructed in the Mother Country. Dominion Parliament. In the House of Commons on Monday 6th, in the course of the debate on Mr Guthrie's motion, Mr King cited the constitutional objection urged by Mr Guthrie to withdraw the resolution and to move the adjournment of the debate. The Department of Labor, he said, is collecting information. Mr Borden at once protested. He contrasted Mr King's eloquent appeal for industrial education with his conclusion. Mr Guthrie's resolution would have been a lame and impotent conclusion to so strong a speech as the minister had made, he had expected that Mr King would move an amendment to ask for definite and prompt action on the constitutional aspect he sided with Mr Guthrie; the Dominion Government could spend its money as it chose and it already did a good deal of work in education. He concluded by declaring his sympathy with Mr Guthrie's motion and his readiness to support definite action at once. After several additional speeches Mr King's motion to adjourn the debate was put to the house. The opposition insisted on a vote and opposed it. The division was called in a thin house. To add to the discomfiture of the Government three Liberal members who had spoken in favor of the resolution could not bring themselves to vote in opposition to their speeches, and bolted. They were Mr Guthrie, the mover of the resolution, Mr Fowke and Mr. Verville. Mr Ralph Smith was not in the house and Dr Morley Carrie voted for the adjournment. The vote stood 78 to 56, giving the Government a majority of only 22—the lowest since 1896. The house adjourned at 11:38 p.m. Mr W. B. Smyth brought up the subject of the sending of Dominion police to look after the interests of the Laurier Government in the bush polls of Algoma. Mr Aylesworth explained that three policemen went to the West and eight to east Algoma, none being sent to Thunder Bay and Rainy River or Nipissing. Questions and answers then ran as follows:— Upon whose request and by what representations were such policemen sent into the ridings and for what purpose? Who ordered them to go and what instructions were given them? It was stated in the Toronto Conservative papers of the 19th of October, 1908, that a number of men, not regular constables, were given special authority by the Government of Ontario to make arrests, and were to go into the constituencies of east

and west Algoma in connection with the elections then proceeding, to polling places called backwoods polls to patrol the approaches to such polls on the voting day and make arrests if they might think fit. It is the ancient and undoubted privilege and right of this House to conduct its own elections by its own officials who are responsible to it alone. The House of Commons has at all times been jealous to guard this privilege and right and quick to resent any interference with it. In these circumstances, believing the statements in the newspapers above referred to, to be true, I upon my own responsibility as a servant of this House, directed that sufficient Dominion police to protect honest voters from intimidation or interference with the free exercise of their franchise and under instructions to arrest and prosecute under Section 269 of the Dominion Elections Act, anyone guilty of such indictable offenses, should be sent at once from Ottawa to the electoral districts of east and west Algoma. I directed the commissioner of the Dominion police to despatch the men and to give them their instructions in the words above stated. Two of the men went on a special train, which for a different purpose altogether left Ottawa for Sault Ste. Marie on the 25th of October, 1908. No request was made by anybody that men should be sent on that train and there was no cost of special transportation. The circumstance that the train was going was simply taken advantage of. The cost in all was \$338. Then came more:— Has it been the custom of the government to utilize the Dominion police force for this purpose? If not, why was an exception made in these instances and upon what authority? No, because this is the first instance so far as known, in which any such interference with the conduct of elections to this house has been attempted. What was done in this case was done upon my authority alone. Was the sending out of these police preceded by any request of the Ontario government to provide such? If so, when and by whom was such request made and with what result? Certainly not (with immense scorn) All of the foregoing submitted in Mr Aylesworth's most robust and rotund style. There's the way to conduct politics. No wonder the back benches deem Mr Aylesworth the finest ever. He is so much like them, it is a drop to come down to business, but it is necessary to record that the budget probably will be given on Tuesday, 14th December. Mr Fielding was disposed to make the date Thursday but Mr Foster had an engagement for that day. The following is the report of the special committee appointed by Mr Borden at the request of the caucus for the purpose of taking into consideration matters connected with the approaching convention of the members of the Liberal-Conservative party. The committee recommends:— 1—That a committee of fifty (of whom not more than 20 shall be members of parliament) to be known as the committee on preliminary arrangements for the Dominion convention of the Liberal-Conservative party be appointed by our leader. 2—That the said committee be called together at Ottawa for their first meeting on some day in the month of January 1910 to decide on the best way of getting the whole party throughout the Dominion to join heartily in the said convention and to arrange the system of obtaining delegates to the convention and all matters connected with the same. 3—That while it is the opinion of this committee that the Dominion convention should be held in the city of Winnipeg two or three days previous to the Winnipeg exhibition which would be early in July, the final decision as to the place of holding the said convention should be left until the first meeting of the committee on preliminary arrangements, and that in the meantime our leader be asked to communicate with the Conservative provincial prime ministers, with the Conservative leaders of the Opposition in provinces which have a Liberal Government, and also with the Provincial Conservative Association executives in those provinces where such exist and request their opinion as to the best time and place for holding the convention in order that their views may be laid before the committee

on preliminary arrangements, at its meeting in January. 4—Your committee further recommends that each member of parliament and defeated Conservative candidate be requested to consult the executive of the association for his electoral division with the object of obtaining their views, and that the whip of the respective provinces be requested to transmit immediately to each defeated Conservative candidate a copy of this recommendation (when concurred in by caucuses) and invite an expression of their views and the opinions of their said ridings executives thereon. This report was unanimously concurred in and adopted by the Liberal-Conservative members of parliament convened in caucus on the 7th. On the 9th Mr Verrill's eight-hour day bill, a hardy annual, was up for consideration in the House of Commons. It is entitled "an act respecting the hours of labor on public works," but it really deals with contracts of all sorts entered into by the government. It stipulates that "every contract to which the government of Canada is a party, which may involve the employment of laborers, workmen or mechanics, shall contain a stipulation" that no laborer employed by contractors or sub-contractors engaged in the whole or a part of the work shall work more than eight hours a day except in case of emergency. A second clause provides that in the event of non-compliance the contract shall be void and the contractor cannot receive any money for work performed under conditions which violate the stipulation. It was generally held in the house such an enactment would extend to every department of the public business. As Mr Claude MacDonell remarked, if in a contract for postmen's clothing the eight-hour day was not observed in the manufacture of any portion of the work, the contract would be void, or as Mr Mullen remarked, the Dominion could not buy steel rails from the Sydney works unless the eight-hour day obtained on the ships which bring iron ore or dolomite to the mills. While there was much criticism of this aspect of the bill, the general idea of an eight hour day met with a good deal of support. After the bill had been passed and the question arose of sending it to a committee the opposition gave Mr MacKenzie King a bad quarter of an hour by making a categorical demand upon him for a statement of his position on the eight hour day. Mr King's reply was unmarked by what Mr Meighan, who preferred the demand, described as "the capaciousness of his ifs." Mr Verrill's own speech calls for little attention being largely devoted to his own action in the matter. Mr Claude MacDonell, who followed him, at once drew into notice the lack of correspondence between the name of the bill and its real scope. It struck at the Government's power to buy anything. Many in the House would be willing to go to the extent of requiring contractors to give their men the 8 hour day, but this bill would make it impossible to buy an article any component part of which had not been manufactured under this system. That was altogether impossible and in conclusion Mr MacDonell urged the duty of the Government to present the House with a well thought out plan of dealing with the 8 hour problem. Mr R. L. Borden replied to Mr D. D. McKewin, pointing out that the most valuable act passed for working men had been passed by Sir John MacDonell's government. Prior to the passage of that act it was a crime to strike, and a former Conservative M. P., Mr. E. P. Clarke, had gone to jail for striking. After striking the labor department for its work on this subject, Mr Borden said that the question must be met. He desired to see the laboring men of the country grow up healthy, strong and virtuous. He was disposed to think that the bill should go to a committee. Just as he had argued that the legislation act of 1907 should have been sent to a committee. There must however, be no striking; there must be a fair understanding with the government. They should get any intervention which the labor department had contemplated. Mr Verrill assented and the bill got its second reading. Hon. Geo. E. Foster brought out the fact that Canada spent in sending her contingents to South Africa \$1,972,255. There has been spent so far on the Quebec bridge \$,906,882. The contract, awarded the other day to Mr. M. P. Davis is for \$2,448,475. It is for two pneumatic caissons, two abutments, two anchor piers and one intermediate pier. These will be needed if it is ultimately decided to make it a cantilever

bridge. If the decision is for a suspension bridge the abutment, center pier and anchor pier will not be needed, but anchorage piers for the cables will be required. No estimates have been prepared for the latter. Mr. J. M. Brown stated that the steamer Ontario was bought for \$17,000 from C. P. J. A. Farquhar, \$10,479 has been spent on her repairs and she averages nine knots speed. On motion to go into supply, on the 10th, Mr. Meighan, moved "That in the judgment of this House session 1 orders of the House of Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland in force on July 1st, 1897, are hereby repealed, and the words, phrases, messages and forms of printing contained in rule 1 of the House of Commons of Canada" Mr. Aylesworth defended the Speaker's ruling and opposed the amendment. At the outset he said Mr. Meighan for not having challenged the Speaker's ruling, was not entitled to an argument that sessional orders inasmuch as they expire and are temporary not of the same character as standing orders. Mr. Meighan quoted Sedley to show that the authority does not that "sessional orders" are "rules." Mr. Borden said that Mr. Aylesworth's argument was that an order of the House is a "rule" by being not to the nature of the rule, but to its length of duration. Every law in the House is a rule that was not a common sense. Further it was not a common law. For example, the motion of adjournment is provided in England by an annual act. Because the motion is renewed yearly it is not a law against nature. Sir Wilfrid Laurier took the ground that the ordinary members of the House had no right to say that either of such authorities as Mr. Aylesworth or Mr. Borden was wrong and held that the Speaker's proposal that the House fix a rule on the subject was a common sense. He had a motion on the order paper for a committee to investigate the matter. Mr. Meighan, Mr. Borden, Mr. Haggart spoke. The latter asked the extremely pertinent question why Sir Wilfrid Laurier did not end this difficulty by voting one of the seats. Mr. Borden argued that the constitution of the House of Commons is a matter for the consideration of the House. Mr. E. W. Cochrane asked Borden to lay down the principle that a member in the Premier's position must resign one of his seats. The statute sets that the House shall consist of 221 members. If one sits for two constituencies there are only 220. Then comes the division 90 to 91, and shortly only 29.

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