

HON. A. G. BLAIR'S SUDDEN DEATH

Ex-Minister of Railways Called Hence Without Moment's Warning—Back to Liberal Fold

Frederickton, N.B., Jan. 28.—The Hon. Andrew G. Blair, formerly minister of railways in the Laurier cabinet, dropped dead at his residence here this afternoon.

Ottawa, Jan. 28.—The news of the sudden death of the Hon. A. G. Blair at Frederickton, today cast a gloom over parliamentary circles to-night. The ex-minister of railways was present at some functions given here during the early part of the week in honor of the visit of United States Secretary Root and was to all appearances in excellent health. He went to New Brunswick on a business trip, little knowing that he was never to return.

During the past few months, Mr. Blair was working in harmony with his old political associates of his native province, and his decision to re-enter active political life brought him more in touch with his old political friends than had been the case since his resignation from the cabinet. That he was to be a candidate for one of the New Brunswick constituencies, in all probability St. John City, was freely talked over, if not decided upon.

In parliament he had many friends. A hard hitter, he provoked often strong antagonism, but he cherished no animosities, and in every sense of the word he was one of Canada's most prominent men.

Had it not been for Blair three might not have been any railway commission. It would certainly have been delayed. The news at the time that his resignation was in the hands of the premier when he was pushing the bill creating a commission through committee, with all the railway interests of the Dominion confronting him, and fewer still or thought that he was to become the head of the same commission from which he resigned in rather tragic manner. Since his resignation he has been devoting himself to the practice of his profession, and, as already said, was preparing to return to the political arena.

Mr. Blair was called to the Laurier cabinet in 1896 and remained minister of railways and Canada till the fall of 1904, when he differed with his leader on the G.T.P. contract and resigned. In one of his letters to his leader regarding their differences, he stated as follows:

"Let me state our position on the main question: My decided preference is for a government owned and operated railway across the continent, and my chief reason for favoring it is that it will have an equalizing and regulating influence upon all other railways throughout the western territory. In this view I am practically alone, and therefore I admit at once that this proposition must be laid aside. But the cabinet has decided that the government shall build half way across the continent as a government owned and operated railway, and the other half shall be built and operated by private enterprise. This is a compromise, and I understand that liberal government aid will be given to the same company to build and operate the road."

To this mode of solving the railway problem an equally decided opposition is a hybrid scheme, favoring the compromise of two antagonistic principles, and will be followed as usual with compromises of that kind, by unsatisfactory results. It will also fail to satisfy the exponents of either view. It will be difficult to explain why the government should build and own the least sections of this railway, and provide a company with government credit to enable them to build and operate the rest.

It is attempted to justify the eastern proposition from Quebec to Winnipeg on the ground that a railway highway will thus be assured, open to any and all of the western railways to connect with it, and who might take their trains independently over this common highway from their connecting point to the St. Lawrence. I will not elaborate my objections again to this plan. It is wholly impracticable, that this line could be so used by different railway companies. There must be some authorized body to work, not the trains, but the freight cars of the different railways, and generally look after and operate the line. The necessity of this is what I presume has led my colleagues to decide that they will lease this section to the Grand Trunk Pacific, and it is proposed to assure the public that a contract can be made with the G.T.P. so binding as to enable these different railway companies to exercise what are called 'running rights' from and to Quebec and Winnipeg. This is equally impracticable, in my opinion, or nearly so. The Grand Trunk Pacific will employ the men who will handle the traffic, and the G.T.P. will be in the field as a keen competitor for western traffic with these other companies which it is presumed will desire to connect with the terminals at the end of the government owned section.

"I will not go into the reasons, which are conclusive, but under the circumstances, other companies if they can find any other means of reaching eastern points will not utilize this road. For my present purposes it will suffice to say that in

this opinion I believe I am absolutely correct.

"As I have said, I am in favor of the whole line being built and owned by the government but having abandoned my expectation in that regard I am equally in favor of the whole line being a company line, if any portion of it is, or a substantial portion, is to be a company line and therefore I am prepared since the council has determined to go forward with this undertaking at once, to co-operate with my colleagues in guaranteeing the bond over the whole line to an extent not exceeding three quarters of the cost of the construction of the railway.

"If this view is entertained I think it should be upon some such conditions as the following—I do not propose to state all of them, but the important ones—

"1st. The Grand Trunk Pacific is being aided to a most generous extent. It cannot build its road without very liberal assistance. In giving aid the government might very properly impose terms looking to some financial advantage to the country in the future, and therefore I would insist that a share of the earnings—I would not say half, but I would not think it ought to be less than a third of the net earnings, or that portion of the net earnings which would not be required for the improvement or betterment of the road, and which remained for distribution among the shareholders, should go to the government.

In this connection the government might very properly claim the right to appoint one of the directors, and also have the books of the company open to the inspection of a railway accountant at any time required.

"2nd. As a means to achieve the same purpose which the Nova Scotia people appear to consider very essential—that is to say the obtaining of a share during the winter of the Grand Trunk Pacific through traffic for Halifax—the company should be bound to carry all unrotated traffic over the whole of the Winnipeg section to a St. Lawrence seaport in summer, and in winter from Quebec to Halifax and St. John over the Intercolonial, and the Intercolonial should in the division of rates, be entitled to such division on a mileage basis, mile per mile, with the G.T.P. As to traffic not routed the G.T.P. should be required to bind itself that it will use all its influence originating in the west for ocean carriage to secure such traffic for the Intercolonial during the winter season, using with its shippers all lawful and proper means to that end. There might very well be a condition in the contract between the government and the G.T.P. in order to observe this feature of the contract, that the governor in council should have power by order in council to declare after an enquiry at any time if it is so established that the G.T.P. have not complied with their agreement, and such declaration being made, the same shall be final and conclusive as to the fact, and the Grand Trunk Pacific shall thereupon be liable to pay to the Intercolonial the share of freight rates which it would have carried and the agreement being carried out.

"I am sure that this will guarantee bona fide treatment by the Grand Trunk Pacific under any management, and will thereby secure an advantage, not only without the enormous expense of the country which would be involved in building a line to Montreal, but would save the Intercolonial from destruction and depreciation, and keep the people who live along the line from having the Intercolonial reduced to a mere local road, and at the same time, would increase the business carried over that railway to the extent to which such business would have been done by the Grand Trunk Pacific over the proposed Montreal line.

"I mention these as a few of the stipulations which appear to me to be reasonable and proper, and which if I had been permitted to conduct the negotiations on this question, I would have sought to bring about. They do not by any means exhaust all that might be suggested, but I mention these now so that you, Sir Wilfrid, and the council may have them before you before you finally determine that you will perpetuate that I cannot help regarding as one of the most indefensible railway transactions which has ever taken place in this country. The more I look upon the subject and think of the consequences which are going to flow from an adherence to the present scheme the less capable I am of reconciling myself to it, and the more determined I feel that the whole responsibility for the undertaking will have to rest upon their shoulders than mine.

"I feel it my duty to add, that I shall be compelled, on further reflection, to oppose the project in its passage through parliament.

Yours Faithfully,

(Sgd.) ANDREW G. BLAIR.

Hon. A. G. Blair is dead. The G.T.P. has yet to build, and time alone will tell if he was right in the stand he took when he resigned from office rather than associate himself with the project, under the present character.

THE LUMBER COMBINE

Parliament and Congress to Prove This Matter to the Bottom

John Herron, M.P. for Alberta, moved a resolution in the federal House declaring that it is important for the rapid settlement of the west that lumber should be supplied to settlers at as low a rate as possible that it is claimed an unlawful combination exists among manufacturers and dealers for the purpose of unduly enhancing the prices of lumber to the consumers, and, therefore, a select committee of nine should be appointed for the purpose of enquiring into the matter.

In support of his resolution Mr. Herron declared that there was no assurance as to the price of lumber at the present time. The price of lumber was too high.

It is believed through the northwest that this is due to the operations of a combine, which should be dealt with under the act provided for that purpose.

Mr. Herron said that he had seen told on the very best authority that the lumber combine was not a mere fiction, but that it did exist, and that members who sold lumber to retailers who were out of the combine. For selling to any one who was not on the list the punishment for the first offence was \$50 a year, for the second offence \$100 and for the third offence further supplies of lumber from the mills.

Mr. Kennedy of New Westminster, said that he could speak for the coast mills, but not for the mountain mills of British Columbia. He declared that the prices the mill men were charging for lumber at the present time were not reasonable. They had to pay far higher than in the logs, they had to pay the cost and take the risk of towing them, they had to pay far higher than in the past for labor, and they had to pay high freight.

IN STATES ALSO.

It is learned from Washington that there will be an investigation of the lumber trust by the bureau of corporations. It will be similar to the investigation made of the oil trust, beef trust and other great combinations in restraint of trade.

The senate has adopted the resolution providing for an investigation offered by A. B. Kittredge before the holiday recess.

In many sections of the country including the prairie states, a situation has been reached where farm improvements are at a standstill because lumber prices are prohibitive. The farmers are unable to afford the price of constructing necessary buildings, and the present conditions have become intolerable.

The resolution directs the secretary of commerce and labor immediately to inquire and report to congress on the subject. It is not in session, as to the lumber business of the United States, which is the subject of inter-state of foreign commerce, and into the cause of the high price of lumber in its various stages of manufacture from the log. The investigation should be conducted with the particular object of ascertaining whether there exists and combination conspiracy, trust, agreement or contract intended to operate in restraint of trade of lumber or to increase the market price of lumber in any part of the United States.

NO LIMIT TO WHEAT BELT

Ottawa, Jan. 28.—Prof. John Macoun, botanist of the geological survey, appeared before the agricultural committee of the Commons this morning, and continued his observation on his trip to the west last year. He explained his former statement to the effect that wheat could be grown as far as the three miles of the Hudson Bay by saying that the climatic influence of the waters of the Bay did not extend inland for more than three miles.

It was alluded rather than latitude that determined the possibility of wheat growing. In fact altitude was the base of wheat growing. The wheat, however, became climatic, and eventually adapted itself to conditions, and Prof. Macoun predicted that the northern limit of wheat would become extended as the country became settled.

A large consignment of Oriental silks, almost priceless in value were thrown into a ditch by a derelict at Benson, Mich. and all night were the playthings of the wind and snow despite the best efforts of trawlers and citizens to save them from loss.

To have beautiful, perfect pink, velvet-like lips apply at bedtime a light coating of Dr. Shoop's Green Salve. Then next morning, notice carefully the effect. Dry, cracked or colorless lips mean feverishness, and are as well ill-appearing. Dr. Shoop's Green Salve is a soft, creamy, healing ointment, that will quickly correct any skin blemishes or ailments. Get a free trial box at our store and be convinced. Large glass jars, 25 cents. The Regina Pharmacy Stores.

TO SEARCH FOR NECKLACE

Tear of the Virgin Hidden in the Deep is Being Sought by Emperor

Vienna, Jan. 28.—The wonderful pearl necklace of the late Empress Elizabeth, known as 'Tear of the Virgin' is to be sought for at the bottom of the sea by the order of Emperor Francis Joseph.

This necklace was the only piece of jewelry which the empress cared for during the last years of her life. According to the story, some months before her death at the hands of the assassin, Luchini, the empress was distressed to find that the pearls were losing their lustre. Then in a dream she was told that the only way to restore the pearls to their pristine state was to sink them in the sea for a whole year.

The empress who was then staying at the villa in Corfu, put the pearls into a perforated box attached to a long steel chain. In the middle of the night she rowed with her lady-in-waiting to a rocky islet off the coast and saw the precious box, attaching the chain to a rock.

The disappearance of the empress occurred before the year was out, but after her death the lady-in-waiting went to Corfu to pull up the pearls. She found, however, that the chain was broken.

The 'Tear of the Virgin' have now remained at the bottom of the sea for nearly two years, and if they are brought up by divers should be much improved in appearance.

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Gentlemen,—Last winter I received great benefit from the use of MINARD'S LINIMENT in a severe attack of La Grippe, and I have frequently proved it to be very effective in cases of inflammation.

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SMASH CARS

Winnipeg, Jan. 28.—Several freight cars were smashed and a number of horses killed in a wreck which took place last night in the C.N.R. yards. A passenger engine jumped a switch and ran down the side track leading to the stock yards where a string of cars were standing.

In the smash which followed four cars were piled up in a tangled heap and three others were thrown from the rails and across the lower end of water street. In one of the cars were a number of horses and a second was loaded with baled hay. How many of the animals were killed is not known, but the ones which were injured were removed in an ambulance to a horse hospital.

The officials of the railway are unable to state whether the switch had been properly closed, or whether the accident was due to the snow. The accident occurred at the exact spot where four men were killed in a similar smash about a month ago.

CONDITIONS SATISFYING

Scotch Miller on our Wheat Grades and Shipment

Winnipeg, Jan. 28.—At the sitting of the Grain commission yesterday George Fisher, representing the Scottish Wholesale Co-Operative Society with headquarters in Glasgow, gave evidence and deposed that he was the company's purchasing agent here.

Witness stated that he was familiar with the quality of grain at Liverpool and Glasgow. Witness bought his grain from exporters and elevator companies. There were times when wheat could be bought cheaper in Glasgow than here, for instance, at the present time.

In October and November he bought wheat, c.f. Glasgow, and in December cash wheat in Port William. There was never any margin between Port William and Glasgow, after freight was paid, and there was never half a cent difference.

At present they were shipping their wheat all rail from Port William to Glasgow. The rate all the way was 23 cents per hundred.

Winnipeg prices were too high for him to do business today, unless he could be sure of getting his wheat to seaboard on time.

His firms had always been satisfied with the Dominion inspection. Seaboard inspection was about a grade lower than Dominion inspection. The difference between the two was thoroughly understood by the old country dealers. They would never buy seaboard inspection if they could get the other.

Mr. Fisher said he believed the western wheat was being graded according to its real milling value. Asked if he found any types of wheat which were graded too low, witness replied in the negative. His firms would not buy off grade or bleached wheat. Canadian wheat was never used by itself, but was blended with other wheat.

There was great room for improvement in the cleaning of wheat. There was a big percentage of dirty wheat than there should be. Prior to two or three years ago, Duluth wheat was their standard wheat, but they had changed to Canadian and benefited by the change.

Witness stated that he had not yet shipped any wheat by the lake, and had not heard of any rebates being given by the lake carriers. In his opinion the cost of transportation across the Atlantic was quite satisfactory.

DUTY OF REPRESENTATIVES

Speaking recently to the members of the Montana legislature, W. J. Bryan said:

"There are two theories regarding public representation. One is, that representatives are elected by the people to think for them; the other, that they are elected to carry out the wishes of the people. The more these theories are compared, the more important it is that representatives of the people should have a proper idea of their duty.

"In my opinion, the people should, and do, think for themselves, and it is the duty of their agents, such as you gentlemen are, to carry out their wishes, and if that occasion should arise when the representative of the people cannot see his way clear to carry out the wishes expressed when he was elected by his fellow citizens, he should then resign and give way to the man who can."

"Battles have been fought and millions have died that their children and their children's children should have a good government.

"The platform on which you were elected is binding and those who adopted that platform and elected you to it recognize the right to demand that you do consider it binding. The embezzlement of power is as grievous a crime as the embezzlement of money. And it is only when there are great interests on one side and common men on the other that there is a danger of bias. Corporations of the class most commonly known do not advance the public good, but are one of our greatest enemies. Legitimate corporations need not fear injustice in fair legislation. The natural man can protect himself against natural men, but he cannot protect himself from the man-made giant."

"Taken at the sweetest stage" Preventives—a toothsome candy tablet—will surely and quickly check an approaching cold or La Grippe. When you first catch cold or feel it coming on—take Dr. Shoop's Preventives, and the prompt effect will certainly surprise and please you. Preventives surely supply the proverbial "ounce of prevention." Sold in 5 cent and 25 cent boxes by the Regina Pharmacy Stores.

T. H. Johnston of Cypress River, was sentenced to one month with hard labor by Judge Ryan at Portage la Prairie. The charge was illegal shooting. Last week the prisoner became involved in an altercation during the course of which he fired a gun at his opponent.

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ADDITION

The Regina mill meeting hall, Smith & Ferguson block, Saturday afternoon and adult residents to the provincial

Notices have been annual meeting of of trade which is City hall on Thursday 7th. The program will include the reports for the year of officers.

The Peart Bros opened up for business & Ferguson block by moving the Co.'s stock from here. This is now ware business in

W. P. Wells, international Harvester with his family. Owing to storms the trip took two days and return made Wells says that in the Northern S than on this side

The program of works includes the street and extensive improvements to including Lorne, and Smith street has outlined to of the health and The scheme is the West at outlined, ner.

A townsite six mile north of Regina laid out in City. The towns owned by C. R. B. considered that B. intend to maintain and other cement

The death occurred last Wednesday. Roden, a teamster, the employ of C. O. Deceased, Wolverhampton, sick since Christmas place in Regina. vice were conducted

D. A. Donaldson of Bethune, was on business. In the West, Mr. the people of his suffered badly but they had times. The towns ig ahead and a very largely next year.