

The Wayside Philosopher.

ABRACADABRA

(All Legal Responsibility Assumed by the Author)

ROBIE L. REID, K. C.—Book Prospector.

One of the familiar figures on Vancouver streets and in her Law Courts is the big-framed man, big enough to be of Highland stock, but claiming to be English by descent through Connecticut emigrants from mid-England. Holding an assured position in his chosen profession of the Law, a well-known politician, an even better known lecturer—particularly on Canadian literature—Mr. Reid's most distinctive trait is, perhaps, a faculty for hunting out books. Is some Canadian work dug out of some dust heap? His is likely the hand that secured the treasure. Has some second-hand man picked up some tome of real worth and value, Robie's hand is the one which will pluck it from his grasp to join the store already accumulated by him.

Reid goes about his daily tasks. He abates not a whit his pursuit of law, yet with a scent that is unerring, a faculty that is almost uncanny in its working, he gathers the treasures of worth-while books in abundant store. Nor is it with a selfish purpose. When his use of them is ended he intends to bestow them where they will be at once a lasting tribute to his memory and a source of unending usefulness to his adopted Province. Meantime the good work goes on. May he be long spared to exercise his talent for book prospecting in so worthy a cause.

PROVINCIAL POLITICS.

With an election not more than a year away it might be useful to look at the situation now obtaining at Victoria. From a party standpoint we have a preponderating Liberal party (showing persistent signs of dissolution) a small Conservative opposition (made up of four good men and a following of voters), and a soldier party that is only a party in the sense that it is made up of one element (returned soldiers) and has a recognized leader.

There are two outstanding figures in the Parliament, W. J. Bowser and John Oliver. Bowser's star is waxing, John's is waning. The impossible task of harmonizing the views of his followers has been too much for the old hard headed Farmer-Premier. He needs a rest and it will soon be forthcoming. But who will succeed him? Bowser is splendidly qualified by his personal and parliamentary ability. It may be doubted though whether he has that psychological gift sufficient to enable him to get his finger directly on the public pulse. With good advisers his chances are good. With the past ones his case is hopeless. No other one capable of the work to be done by a leader is in view. What will happen? Quien sabe?

Let us now see what the Government has accomplished.

It had two great appeals—or say three. There was need of relief from the burden of taxation. We have had it. Every tax then in existence is still imposed and we have several new ones and some increases.

We were to have clean administration. The result has proved that the old administration was clean and that the new had its own task uncovering the wrongs of its friends and supporters. So frightened of what may be is the present administration that it dare not give Hanes a properly appointed Commission to inquire into the campaign contributions of the P. G. E. outfit. We have had looseness in administration resulting in Findlay's fall and Cook's escapade and trouble in the Vancouver Assessment Office. We have had looseness of administration in the matter of Prohibition so that as matters stand now the people will be called upon

in the Fall to choose between a practically unenforced Prohibition Act and Government control. This choice they will in the main make without realizing that the chance of a real choice was denied them by the very Government that submits the plebiscite to them.

We have had just the sort of thing one would expect from a Government composed of inharmonious elements, whose principal work was to find somehow, somewhere, a common ground on which to stand while the outstandingly needful legislation was enacted.

We have had some other things—a Dolly Varden Act and a Sumas Reclamation scheme. These are not as yet ended. They are filled with promises—of trouble to the Government responsible for them.

What is to happen? Who can tell? With the present Government doomed, with no certainty that Bowser can form a sufficiently strong following to take over the reins of Government, and no one else in sight capable of so doing, are we to have a rump Parliament in B.C., or is some outside party at present not in the public mind to come in and be our next Premier? Query!

BRITISH COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY.

We are informed by the press that the removal of the University to its permanent home in Point Grey is foreshadowed by the Minister of Education's recent utterance in the House. Let us hope so. No one has attempted seriously to defend the waste of letting it remain in its present quarters last year. A solution was offered. Mr. Sweeney went to Victoria and presented a bond plan. It is quite generally understood that he was in a position to assure the Government that he could place the bonds he asked it to issue. It had the security in the University lands. But the Solons who decided the issue in their wisdom arrogated to themselves the financial ability to decide that Mr. Sweeney's plan was not in the best interests of all concerned. So the University stayed where it was. Will this error be remedied? We hope so.

PROHIBITION.

Welcome to Carrick's article on this subject in last issue. Let us hear more from "the man in the street" particularly if he be as readable as Mr. Carrick.

Any Junior who wishes to answer any question asked, or find out about any quotation given, or to send in any he or she likes, is invited to do so by dropping a card or letter to The Wayside Philosopher, c-o B. C. M., 204 Winch Building, Vancouver, B. C.

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