

The Wayside Philosopher

ABRACADABRA.

The Vancouver Civic Elections.

The annual civic election in Vancouver is now history. L. D. Taylor has had his ambitions gratified and is now Mayor-elect. We congratulate him personally on his successful ending to a long, hard fight extending back some years. He was not the candidate of this writer's choice, none the less we wish him and the city he will govern, all success. With a mandate to spend certain moneys in civic improvements, he will begin his term under auspicious circumstances. His progress will be keenly watched, and none will rejoice more than ourselves to see his administration a success.

Police Commissionership.

One important matter now facing the Provincial Government is the selection of Police Commissioners for Vancouver, to sit with Mayor-elect Taylor on the Police Commission next year.

It should go without saying that Mr. Macpherson would be re-appointed. This leaves an alderman to be selected as his sitting mate. As none but Liberals need expect this honour, we have three eligibles in the new Council—the present incumbent, Scrivens, Garbutt and Worthington.

The present incumbent has proven his absolute unfitness for the position. Not even Mr. Macpherson's ability to take a firm stand could inoculate him with any courage. Either he did not wish law-enforcement or he was too weak to support and enforce his wishes even with such a firm coadjutor as Macpherson to aid him.

Garbutt is an excellent man, but his age renders him undesirable in a situation that will demand so much of any man who seriously undertakes to carry out his duties.

Worthington seems the real choice, but has not always behaved with that due obedience to party wishes that the present Government, and most other governments, demand. He is therefore, persona non grata with a large and influential element in Government circles.

The Attorney General of British Columbia made a wonderfully complete and spineless backdown in the Harnett matter. The celerity with which he swallowed himself stands unequalled in known B. C. political records. Even that most humiliating sacrifice of dignity on his part only gave Harnett a short lease of life ere he joined the "unwept and unsung" departed of officialdom.

May we hope that the Attorney General, if he never had a backbone of his own, has borrowed one or has possessed himself of a wooden stick or some such substitute, and has enough spinal column to enable him to choose a proper man in Worthington to support Macpherson.

With Macpherson and Worthington working in accord, our present situation may be improved. With either absent, we can look for as much improvement in our law-enforcement in Vancouver as you could expect in a leaky boat in boring new holes in her.

The Present Session.

At the time of this writing, the legislative session draws to a close. In that it developed that on all sides there was a disposition to forget mere partizanship, its story has been quite pleasing. The result no doubt

will show in the legislation resulting from real co-operation in the work of representing the public.

Several important measures have been passed. The Motor Act has been increased greatly in its efficiency by having a speed limit, not as a rule which nobody obeyed, but as evidence in the question of driving to the common danger. It may be regretted that the licensing of drivers was not accompanied by an examination as to fitness, etc. At least the door is opened for such an amendment.

The most disappointing feature of the session was the handling of the Timber Royalty Bill. The blame for this falls on both Government and Opposition. Mr. Pooley, despite the lead given by General Macrae, followed blindly the Oliver Government in supporting one of the most farcical pieces of legislation ever introduced at Victoria.

Speculators have no doubt paid large sums gambling in B. C. timber licenses. Now the B. C. Government, in sorrow over their sad lot and losses, goes to their relief, splendidly indifferent to the interests of the public who own the timber. Why should a people with millions of dollars in timber resources begrudge a paltry 5 or 7 millions of dollars to these poor speculators whose zeal outran their discretion? If B. C. had not had such a fine lot of timber, and world conditions had not indicated that good money could be made from it, these poor business men would never have bought and lost. They are not getting along well, therefore we must help them. Every body of men who are not doing well, except the lawyers, have come to the Government for relief, and in many cases gotten it. Why leave these poor American speculators to a cruel fate? Macrae was governed by self-interest, Hinchcliffe was a professional man, not a business man. The Labourites were misled by their zeal for their fellow workers. The Provincials could be expected to follow Macrae. Woodward knew nothing of lumber. Their advice sounded well, but was of course actuated by the wrong idea, viz., that the people of British Columbia had a real interest in this question. So the measure was passed.

The Racing Bill was another noteworthy feature of legislation. The season has been cut to 44 days. This is some relief, but it cannot be allowed to rest there. Thirty days is surely enough time to satisfy any gambler. No one pretends that racing in B. C. is conducted for any other purpose than gambling. There is a weakness for gambling in B. C. which feeds the racing associations, the race track riff-raff, such as horsemen, jockeys, touts, bookmakers, etc., who fatten on the public weakness. The Government gets a revenue from it. The unfortunate public puts up its money for its experience and gets nothing else.

Racing is all right when it is a sport. When it leads to better breeding, to properly managed contests, it has much to be said for it. No doubt even in British Columbia there is an odd person who is genuinely interested in it as a sport. Probably if all in B. C. of that kind were gathered together they would fill a small grandstand division in one of our parks. The rest are there mainly for the gambling. Churchmen or men with no church affiliation, women and men alike, they crowd in their greed to bet, and like fools the world over, swap substance for shadow,