

arising out of the modern methods of doing business by corporations, mergers, and holding companies has directed the public towards providing a remedy for relieving the masses of the people from the oppression of corporate greed, and the country from the dangers arising from the accumulation of too much wealth in the control of a few individuals.

The parliament of Canada, the legislatures of our different provinces and many town and city councils have unsuccessfully endeavored to control the operations of organized companies operated under special legislation. Their experience invariably has been that the English language can not be used in legislation so as to tie down a corporation that has secured a franchise for public service or semi-public utility. Under these circumstances the public instinctively turns for relief to one of two sources. Government (that is public) ownership and operation of public and semi-public utilities and the co-operative method of distribution and manufacture of commodities. Under existing conditions the few co-operate to discharge those functions for the benefit of the few. Obviously the remedy for the evil that condition creates is for the many to co-operate for the benefit of the many.

The practical application of the principle of government ownership of public utilities is well recognized by governing bodies in Canada. Municipal councils, as might be expected, being nearer the people, are pioneers of the movement and the most active in applying the principle. They are followed somewhat closely by the provincial governments of the prairie provinces and the province of Ontario, while, as would naturally be expected, the government of the Dominion, due largely to its environment and being less accessible to the people, is the most tardy in putting the principle into active operation. The usual method in recent years is to have those undertakings administered by commissions appointed, in the case of municipalities, by the council, that of the provincial and Dominion government, by the cabinet. It is a very significant fact that commissions appointed by cabinets whether Dominion or provincial, are constantly accused of being derelict to duty and amenable to corrupt influences by the party in power. When suspected they are very difficult to reach by the people or their representatives on account of the tendency to condone their shortcomings in the interest of the party in power, while commissions appointed by municipal councils are comparatively free from such suspicion. When incompetency or worse is discovered in their case there is never any difficulty in the way of removing the delinquents as their position is dependent entirely on the representatives of the people—not on a cabinet.

We venture to say that, had the commission appointed by the Dominion Government to build the National Transcontinental Railway been appointed by parliament and directly responsible to parliament instead of to the government, or had the Manitoba Telephone Commission been appointed by the legislature and controlled by the legislature instead of by the cabinet, much of the adverse criticism that is directed against both would not have been heard.

The Manitoba Grain Growers' Association has the distinction of being the first public body to advocate extending to the provincial legislature the principle that now obtains in municipal bodies, namely that of appointing public service commissioners by the representatives of the people rather than by the cabinet. They incorporated in their demands for public ownership of grain elevators that the commission entrusted with the operating of those elevators should be appointed by the legislature and directly responsible to the representatives of the people.

The committee to which the Grain Growers entrusted the initial negotiations for securing government ownership of elevators was subjected to a good deal of adverse criticism in

certain quarters for the attitude they took in respect to the appointment and control of the commission. Their attitude was represented as being untenable and without precedent. We, however, think that the attitude they took on this question is a sound one, and will be justified by the support it will receive from enlightened public opinion. That it will receive due attention in the near future is fairly certain.

DOMINION GOVERNMENT NEGLIGENT

The elevator companies that were fined so heavily a few weeks ago were not formally charged with mixing wheat, though it is apparent to any person that the discrepancies in figures could have been caused in no other way. On account of the absence of this charge some people seem to think that the elevator companies did not do anything very serious. But the knowledge that they were mixing wheat and thus robbing the farmers is just as serious whether it be known by one name or another. The mixing has been carried on while a swarm of government officials stood watching. But they could see nothing out of the way. After it was all over the inspectors, by checking up their books, saw they had been fooled. Then the elevator companies were prosecuted and fined \$5,550. Evidently this is supposed to make it all right to the farmers. But we cannot see how it will aid the farmers one bit. There is nothing to prevent the elevator companies carrying on this system of robbery year after year and paying a fine when they are caught. If they can make \$200,000 a year or a great deal more by manipulating the grain they will gladly pay a fine of \$5,550 for the privilege of so doing.

All the officials of the federal government are fully aware of the fact that 500 inspectors at the terminals would not be smart enough to prevent the manipulations. The government knows that the terminals have been hotbeds of graft, but still they make no move to help the farmers. The government has been asking the farmers to prove the graft. It is already proven. The Dominion government in its endeavor to slide by the terminal elevator problem has not a leg to stand on. The graft is there; the government is aware of it and yet does nothing. This can only continue so long as the farmers are willing to put up with it.

SIR WILFRID'S ITINERARY

Our readers will see in another part of this paper the announcement of the itinerary which Sir Wilfrid Laurier will follow on his western tour. He will be at Winnipeg on July 11th, Brandon, July 18th; Moose Jaw, August 6th and Edmonton on August 8th. These dates will be in good season for the farmers to get together and meet him. It will also be noted that Sir Wilfrid will speak at a number of intermediate points. At all of these other points there are branch associations. It would be a splendid scheme if the president and directors, and as many of the officers as possible, could get together and meet the premier on their own ground and support the same attitude the central associations will take on the four big questions. By having Sir Wilfrid's mind jogged at all points in the West he will be convinced of the earnestness of the demands of western farmers. This is the only opportunity in fourteen years that western farmers have had to meet Sir Wilfrid, and it should not be lost.

HOMESTEADS FOR WOMEN

There is a growing feeling among the women in Western Canada that they should have the same right as the men to the free homestead lands of the prairie. They realize that they are doing as much as the men in the work of creating a vast empire in this new country. Parents with a family of children see their

boys go out and secure free land, but their girls are not so fortunate. Suppose two families live side by side. In one family there are four boys but no girls; and in the other family four girls, but no boys. The parents of the girls family are not to blame because their children are all girls. The Creator undoubtedly had some good purpose in view when he ordained it. But our law steps in and gives a prize to the parents of the boys and penalizes the parents of the girls. Of course if the four boys married the four girls when they grew up then things would be more equal, but it doesn't seem just right that matrimony should be made a provision of securing a fair share of what the state has for distribution. Under ordinary circumstances the family with the boys would have five homesteads from the government and the family with the girls would have only one. The boys' family becomes wealthy but the girls' family becomes poorer. Until the government of our land is entrusted with the power of ordaining the sex of children it does not seem fair that such discrimination should be made as is done in the case of our homestead laws.

At the present time there is practically nothing being done towards the construction of the Hudson Bay Road. There is a lot of talk about building the big bridge across the Saskatchewan River at The Pas. But still it is only talk or was a few days ago. It is also interesting to note that the 90 miles of the Hudson Bay Road from Hudson Bay Junction on the C.N.R. (Prince Albert Line) to The Pas, is owned and operated (by spells) by the C.N.R. The Dominion government is building right onto the end of Mackenzie and Mann's line. Does this mean that they are going to hand over the Hudson Bay road to those two gentlemen. If this is the case it seems useless to support two administrations. We might just about as well do away with parliament and hand over the keys of the federal treasury to the railway companies and manufacturers.

Over in England certain of the party political papers and politicians are endeavoring to condemn some of the cabinet ministers for causing the death of King Edward. This is about the most extreme step that we have ever known politicians to take and it is agreeable to know that it is not the general opinion of any party. Such a scheme is lower than even plots and schemes that are hatched in Canadian politics. Even in Canada, bad as our politics may be, our newspapers and politicians would hardly stoop to such tactics.

We are all right now. Sir Ernest Shackleton, the Antarctic explorer, was in Winnipeg the other day and was interviewed by the press. The reporter asked him: "Do you believe in Canada's future?"

Shackleton replied: "Undoubtedly. And not only its future, but its immediate future."

Everybody will be glad to know this. If we are to ask this question of all visitors, they will begin to think we are skeptical about our own future.

We are glad to correct the statement that we are the only independent and unpurchaseable paper in the West. But such papers are so scarce that it seems like a beam of sunlight on a dull day. When papers claim they are independent and unpurchaseable the best method of proving it is by deeds and not by words.

We see by a press dispatch, that one of the leading elevator men in Minneapolis has been arrested in New York on the charge of smuggling. It is strange what these elevator men will do. They are such active lads, that we are liable to see them crop up anywhere.

Don't forget to write to your Ottawa Member and tell him to get busy.