

THE WEST

Published every Wednesday by The West Company, Limited, at their office, Ross Street, next New City Hall.
 Subscriptions other than to the United States \$1.00 per annum, if paid in advance; otherwise \$1.20 per annum.
 Subscription to United States, \$1.50 per annum if paid in advance; otherwise \$2.00 per annum.
 Commercial advertising rates furnished on application.
 All communications, etc., should be addressed to
THE MANAGER,
THE WEST COMPANY, LIMITED,
REGINA, SASK.



WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 18, 1907

Mistaken Policy

We believe it to be a mistaken policy for the Convention of Agricultural Society delegates in this province to regard the question of a national port on Hudson's Bay as a matter outside their jurisdiction to discuss.

The convention of agricultural society delegates is a provincial institution; the transportation interests of this province affects the farmers more closely than perhaps any other interests in the country and it will be a decided detriment to the producers of this province if in the legislation providing for the extension of Manitoba's boundaries there is no provision to secure the same transportation rights for this province to tide water on the Bay as is assured to any other province or provinces.

Mr. Green submitted in opposing Mr. Jaxon's resolution that the government has gone on record with regard to a Hudson's Bay port. The provincial government, however, has not taken the people of this province into their confidence in regard to their policy on this question, and the leader of the government is absent at a time when the people of Saskatchewan would like to know that when the legislation comes before parliament our interests will not suffer. Knowing how our provincial rights have been abandoned on other occasions by its professed friends, we are disposed to disagree with the majority of the delegates of the convention as to the wisdom of leaving this question to the politicians, when the matter of transportation is so urgent.

Port Churchill is a natural outlet for our products and at least that port should be nationalised, and with regard to this matter the farmers of Saskatchewan in convention should have expressed an opinion.

General Hail Tax

A general tax of one cent an acre over the whole province to cover disbursements for hail losses is the policy advocated by one adventurous local improvement district, known as 8-H-2. That council would have the scheme worked out conjointly with the cent an acre tax for under the supplementary revenue act, and would tax every acre of land in the province.

The policy is not only bad in principle, but it will not attain the object aimed at without bearing equally on the just and unjust, and in that respect would be on a par with Mr. Calder's tax bill. In the first place, the whole province should not be taxed to pay hail insurance on a small area of the province which happens to be in the path of a hail storm. The people who were hailed out this year and were insured received far more money out of their crop than hundreds of farmers who missed the hail, but who were caught by the frost against which there is

no insurance. It would be manifestly unfair for the farmers who lost their crop through frost and who are without recourse for damages to have to pay one cent an acre to the farmers in another district who lost their crop through hail and who could take the precaution of avoiding a total loss by insuring.

In the second place the speculators would not pay any more than the resident farmers, and the ranching districts could not be expected to pay hail tax which they could not get any benefit from. The scheme is very unsound and will never work out. We can, however, account for a proposition of this kind coming from a community of farmers who swallowed Mr. Calder's cent an acre tax scheme, and doing so without reasoning the matter out, excuses to some extent the rash step taken with regard to the hail tax.

Standing Together

That the farmers of Saskatchewan through their delegates at the annual convention of last week passed a resolution co-operating with the farmers of the east in protesting to parliament against granting the requests of the Canadian Manufacturers Association for increased protection. is a matter of some note.

This is one of the years when the farmers begin to realise what a burden it is to pay heavy indirect taxation. The people of Canada are paying in customs taxes today three times what they did eleven years ago, while the population has increased only one-fifth. Some \$40.00 per family each year is too much to take out of the farmer, and yet the manufacturers are not satisfied. The western Conservatives brought in a tariff amendment last year to reduce the rate on agricultural implements to ten per cent, but the Liberals voted it down. We are glad that the farmers have taken a stand against the demands of the manufacturers who had the government sufficiently under their thumb to compel their support to defeat the resolution of the western Conservatives.

The farmers convention should have been just as emphatic with regard to the Hudson's Bay port.

Temperance Reform

There is plenty of room to differ with the decision arrived at by the moral and social reform and temperance conference which met here last week and resolved to go all the way regarding prohibition of the liquor or traffic. We believe that the policy of the Presbyterian body was not only sound principle, but good policy. The step is so great between present conditions and that aimed at by the reform workers that it is absolutely impossible for them to make good. The government regulates the liquor traffic today but does not control it

and if they were to assume control many of the evils surrounding the traffic would be eliminated. The temperance conference sat in the city at the same time as the liquor men of the province were in session, and there is no doubt that the latter were satisfied with the verdict of the conference to fight for prohibition instead of the control of the liquor traffic by the government. We do not think that the cause of temperance has been advanced by reason of the decision of the conference. As far as local option goes that is one of the worst features of the temperance movement. The stuff that is always available in prohibition towns is nothing short of poison, and while there may not be as much drinking apparent as there is under the bar system there will not be prohibition. The temperance movement, like any other reform, must be accomplished a step at a time and the labor delegates who were at the conference realise that. They are in closer touch with the conditions of life than the ministers are, for the latter look on from afar, and prohibition will always be in the distance as long as its advocates insist on reaching the goal in one lone stride.

EDITORIAL NOTES

The farmers are to be commended for taking a forward step with regard to a national organisation. The move should have been made before, and the agricultural societies, the grain growers and the stock breeders associations should all be auxiliary organisations. The conditions are such that the farmers must get together. If, however, they unite as other industries do, they will be the strongest organisation in Canada.

The local government organ endeavors to show the western farmers that Mr. Borden is a high protectionist, and the government wishes the manufacturing interests to know that Mr. Borden is a low tariff advocate. It is very difficult to please some people. Here is what Mr. Fielding said, in parliament a few days ago:

"These gentlemen opposite abandoned adequate protection and accepted the tariff policy of this government. Never was there a more complete surrender to the government in regard to the fiscal policy than that which took place when the last revised tariff was brought down. Hon. gentlemen opposite had no desire to continue the discussion; they were ready to close the debate and go on with other business, and if there was a tariff debate at all it was because some hon. gentlemen on this side thought they would like to avail themselves of the opportunity to speak on the question. But it is not only in parliament that hon. gentlemen opposite have abandoned the tariff question; it is not only here that they have flung adequate protection to the winds."

PRESS COMMENTS

(From Weyburn Herald)
 Halbrite, May 18, 1907.

Fred Richards
 Sir—I have been informed you are finding fault with the Government Re the Small Pok cases I want to inform you if we hear any more of your foolish talk you are going to get yourself in trouble for we will not stand such foolish talk from you. Smart Alex like you Mr. Hanson told me there is five hundred at coal at his place for you to pay for this coal weather you take it or not else you want to keep quiet or you will find the government no play thing. Some of you Americans want to know that and you will know it dearly some of these times we will charge you for this coal and you will pay it also.
 Yours truly,
 W. S. White,
 Justice of the Peace.

In a previous issue we endorsed a certain appointment made by the Scott government. The above letter is the work of another appointee. W. S. White received the appointment of Justice of the Peace as a reward for political services and it seems from the tone of this remarkable communication that the government could not have clearly defined his duties to him. As the Toronto News remarked he seemed to attempt to inculcate a love of British institutions in all his commercial transactions, keeping before the American settlers of Halbrite the mighty power of the government wielded through him.

White's literary compositions are not models of clearness, but we should judge from the letter that he should judge from the letter that he wishes to impress upon our American settlers that he is the Scott government's Czar of the Halbrite district. They must not express any views except those furnished by the govern-

ment through their Halbrite representative. Could Mr. White, J.P., possibly be a great Canadian patriot seeking to impress upon the American settlers the majesty of the Canadian law and the integrity and disinterestedness of its officials? He must be, for he even uses his official position in his private business. He will permit no treason in the Halbrite district and points out the awful penalty of the crime of "talking against the government."

Mr. White, Justice of the Peace, is an appointee of the Scott government. Does the government assume the responsibility for his acts? If they continue him in his position we are justified in assuming that they endorse his insulting methods toward a greater portion of the people, of not only the Halbrite district, but of many other parts of Saskatchewan.

Are our American settlers to be harassed and insulted by ignorant officials of the government? Are they to be classed with the ignorant foreigners of Southern Europe? The retention of Mr. White in his position will justify us in assuming that this is the attitude of the Scott government.

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AUSTRALIAN MAIL SERVICE

Canada to Withdraw the Subsidy—Helping "All Red Route" Scheme

Vancouver, Dec. 13.—The action of the Dominion government in deciding not to renew the subsidy of the Canadian-Australian mail service when it expires next August, is looked on by the business men here as a step to force Australia to a recognition of the rights of Canada to preferential treatment, or, at least equal treatment with other countries.

It is believed here by well informed people, that unless an arrangement is made to re-subsidize the Vancouver-Sydney service, that a line of steamships will again be established between San Francisco and Sydney. It is known that powerful interests in Sydney are at work to bring it about and it is recognised, that without a subsidy the Union Steamship Company of New Zealand, at present operating the service, would not continue. Interested persons express the opinion that the present move in Ottawa, is intended to aid Lord Strathcona and Hon. Clifford Sifton in promoting their "All Red" scheme in England, as well as bringing the Australian government to time.

PITCH IN RESULTED

Carlton Place, Ont. Dec. 13.—A pitch in occurred on the C.P.R. yesterday afternoon when the first section of the eastbound Winnipeg express crashed into a freight standing on the main line half a mile from here. The signal against the express was not seen until too late. The freight was badly wrecked and took fire, the town brigade being called out. The passengers were thrown about and cut and bruised. In the dining car two waiters were shot or a table and cut with broken glass. Conductor Cameron and Engineer Dwyer were in charge of the express.

ROBLIN ON TIGHT MONEY

Manitoba Premier Says Balance of Trade Against Canada is an Injury—Should not have to Import Farm Produce

Portage la Prairie, Dec. 13.—The first annual meeting of the industrial exhibition this evening, proved a very successful affair. At a banquet held the principal speakers were: Premier Roblin and Edward Brown, the leader of the Opposition, who was defeated at the last election. Mr. Roblin said that the country suffered, not from hard times, but from a surplus of prosperity. The balance of trade was so heavily against us that a restriction must result, and Canada, both great and small, had been spending more than its financial basis warranted.

Coming to the local causes he pointed out that Manitoba, as an agricultural country imported vegetables from the south, also butter and other things, and in view of these conditions, and the large area yet to be cultivated, if there was a stringency in Manitoba, it was because of the neglect to produce all we consume,

and there should be an organised effort made to combat this.

Mayor Brown

Mayor Brown among other things, said that the association must be run on sound lines financially. He dwelt on the educational value of the work to the country at large. Speaking of the money stringency, he thought that the policy of the banks was the essence of wisdom and was disappointed that they had not grasped the situation sooner, and applied the pruning knife then. There was nothing in the situation to feel bad about, and he would not be surprised that in a few years the present stringency was not spoken of as a blessing in disguise.

A Third Party

Calgary, Dec. 15.—After a lively discussion occupying nearly the entire session on Saturday afternoon, the delegates to the Alberta labor unions and the farmers' society decided to adopt the name and platform of the Socialist party of Canada by a vote of 37 to 9. The opinion of many delegates was that the platform should be adopted, but under another name, but when it came to voting they switched with the above result. The Socialists expect to have two candidates in southern Alberta and probably two in northern. The officers elected were: Executive council A. Henderson, president; G. Howell, secretary; W. J. Brown and J. Harrison, all of Calgary, McCormick of Lethbridge; C. W. Springfield, Edmonton, and J. Leheny of Coleman, organizer.

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