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DUNCAN MARSHALL,
Manager.

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LOGGERS VS. SPECULATORS.

The Vancouver Saturday Sunset is displeased with the regulations imposed by the Interior Department regarding timber limits. One of these regulations requires the holder of a limit to cut at least 60,000 feet per year from it. As the regulations apply to the timber limits in the railway belt of British Columbia the limit-owners of that Province are affected.

According to the Sunset the regulations "impose a distinct hardship upon the already harassed lumber industry" of British Columbia. For example it says:

"Suppose a timber company or lumber company owns say a dozen or twenty claims along an inlet, it means that camps must be established so that at least the minimum per annum shall be cut from each claim. Or again if the claims are situated so that they cannot be worked by driving the logs down a river, as most of those in the Dominion limits are, the loggers must build a railway through the string of claims to make it possible to comply with the regulations. This in itself is an impossibility with most of the companies, many of which will be forced to abandon numerous claims."

For the logger holding a logged-over claim, the Sunset expresses no concern, but it fears "the new regulations" seem to fail to distinguish "between the bona-fide logger who is working his limit in a legitimate fashion and those who hopelessly 'keep settlers out of lands for which they themselves have little use.'"

This it appears to us, is exactly what the regulation does. It distinguishes very clearly between the "bona-fide logger" who is working his "limits in a legitimate fashion" and the man who is not doing so. The illustration supplied by the Sunset proves the case. In the case of a lumber company owning "say a dozen or twenty claims along an inlet," it means that camps must be established so that at least the minimum per annum shall be cut from each claim. "In other words it means that the holder must cut the timber from a limit or lose it, and so far as the public is concerned this is the only 'legitimate' fashion of 'working' a timber limit. To the 'bona-fide logger' this will be no hardship as he is already cutting the timber. The fellow it hits are 'those loggers who are holding logged-over claims' and claims not logged over, and preventing settlement" by a "dog-in-the-manger policy." The more effectively these gentlemen are "harassed" into converting the timber into lumber the more will the public interests be concerned and the public rights asserted. And a regulation which the Sunset declares will either "harass them out of the berth-holding business" or "be about the most effective measure available."

One of the facts established before the Parliamentary committee last year was that British Columbia mill-owners have put far more money into their limits than into sawmills. On the average it would appear that these concerns must have enough timber standing to keep them running for generations. On this whole investment they collect interest and probably dividends from the trade. It is right that the man who builds a saw-mill should have assurance that he can secure logs for the mill to cut. But it is not right that the building of a saw-mill should be made a pretext for going into speculation in timber limits and that the product of the mill be saddled with the expense of carrying on the speculation. Unless the British Columbia mill-owners were badly addicted when giving evidence at Ottawa, this is precisely what they are doing and have been doing persistently and systematically. If the regulation forces them to either convert the timber into lumber or release it, for some one who is willing to do so, it will terminate one of the abuses which have made the control of the lumber business an oppression of the people.

The Sunset professes a belief that the "British Columbia mills have little or no power to regulate retail prices on the prairie. They are subjected to the competition of free rough lumber from the States. It is therefore 'retail prices' and the retail cost 'bore first prices to the consumer.'"

Without imputing unworthy motives, it must strike the reader as a curious circumstance that British Columbia

papers which have discussed the matter are equally convinced of the moral degeneracy of the reliance on the prairies and the immemorial business character of the British Columbia millmen. This is the more remarkable in the light of the findings of the Parliamentary committee that the doings of those gentlemen were of such nature as to require, at least investigation at the hands of the proper authorities. For reasons doubtless real and sufficient to himself Premier McBride has made no such investigation nor displayed "any outward and visible signs of an intention to do so. From this quarter the prairie consumer had no hope of relief from the wonder workings of the mill-men's "association." The untended testimony of the Sunset is that the regulations which condemn the seed he had procured was of poorer quality than he could have secured elsewhere, that the price was unnecessarily excessive or the terms unduly severe.

THE MAIL'S PLAN.

The proposal of the Mail and Empire that the G. T. P. should have been diverted to Montreal looks suspiciously like a masked plan to keep the traffic of the West in the hands of the C.P.R. From Montreal to the Canadian Atlantic seaboard are two lines of railway, the C.P.R. and the Intercolonial. Over one of these the traffic generated along the G. T. P. must have gone if that road ended at Montreal. According to the Mail the traffic would go over the Intercolonial. But according to circumstances it would go over the C.P.R. The circumstance is that the Intercolonial line from Montreal to the sea is twice as long as the C.P.R. line. The latter would accordingly get the trade of the G. T. P. just as it now gets the bulk of the other trade from its longer rival. On that trade the C.P.R. could charge anything less than the Intercolonial found it necessary to charge for the longer haul over its lines—in other words anything less than twice what should be charged. This charge the Western farmer would have to pay both on his out-going grain and on his incoming purchases. The arrangement would be splendid—for the C.P.R.

AS TO "CHARGES" OF "RASCALITY."

Discussing the sales of three Western timber limits, and after stating definitely that in every case the limit was sold to the highest bidder, the Edmonton Journal declares that "the Government was charged" with "rascality" in connection with the sale of these or any other timber limits; third, when the Government refused an "open inquiry" into any "charges" of "rascality" made against them by members of the Opposition.

Until this information is produced the Bulletin expresses the opinion that never since the Laurier Government came into power has any member of the Opposition "charged" that Government or any member of it with "rascality" in connection with the sales of timber limits or any other Government business. The Government has never "deliberately" refused to have an open inquiry into any "charges" of "rascality" made against it or any member of it.

THE SEED GRAIN.

The Edmonton Journal accuses itself for attacking the method of supplying seed grain by declaring that it did not do so, and then repeats the offence by asserting that so far as it can see there was "absolutely no justification" for distributing "unclean grain." This means either that the Government should have purchased no seed that contained any percentage of weed seeds, or that if they did so they should have removed every weed seed before distributing the grain. In the first case, where could the Government have got the grain absolutely free from weeds? In the second case, just how would one go at it, to remove every weed seed from a half million bushels of grain, how long would it take, and what would it cost?

AS TO SEED GRAIN.

The Edmonton Journal attacks the seed grain distribution on the ground that the quality of the seed is inferior. The seed it declares "is for the most part bad," and "unfit for seed." This it asserts makes many farmers "lose off" than if the Government "had not taken up the question of 'supplying seed at all.' It also invites the farmer who purchased seed to feel aggrieved, because he had to sign a note to secure it. Presumably

it would have had the Government advance the seed without the note—when, of course, it would have quite properly criticized them for loaning the money of the people without security.

It may be significant that the Journal discusses the subject in purely general terms—such terms as one might use about a subject on which he had made no inquiry and sought no information, or such as might be used by an interested party whose hopes of holding up the Government elsewhere, that the price was unnecessarily excessive or the terms unduly severe.

AN ATTACK ON THE GOVERNMENT-OWNED RAILWAY.

The Toronto Mail and Empire launches an attack on the construction of the eastern division of the G. T. P. on the fact rather than an eastern division is being constructed. According to that Journal the Grand Trunk railway wanted to build only a western system with an extension to Montreal, where its traffic could be turned over to the Intercolonial, but the Government for some reason unexplained but necessarily laid, decided to build a line from Winnipeg direct to the Atlantic seaboard. More, this line was projected through Northern Ontario and Quebec. It does not touch Montreal. Wherefore the Mail detects the faint glimmer of a hope that the commercial interests of Montreal may be roused to hostility by the declaration that they have been discriminated against. Still unsatisfied, the Mail extends its solicitous lamentations to "every city, town and village in Ontario and Quebec that has a Grand Trunk 'connection' and invites them all to feel distressed because the National Transcontinental was not diverted south to touch the metropolis at the junction of the St. Lawrence and the Ottawa.

This, we may take it represents the latest attitude of the Opposition toward the Grand Trunk Pacific project. The Mail is the accredited spokesman of the clique who determine for that party its policy on railways as on other matters. Where others have failed it stood firm. The Montreal Star has been heaving bricks at Mr. Foster and his pirating associates pretty freely since their financial feuds have brought consternation and analysis on the party. Even the Montreal Gazette has nottered some decidedly disapproving language about public ownership and provincial rights when the nominal leader has been constrained to make speeches on these subjects. But the Mail has known no disagreement with Mr. Borden and his associates. When the resolutions of the Insurance commission brought upon some of these the disgust and censure of the fair-minded, public-spirited members of their own party the Mail toiled daily to prove that their black was white. With them it has joined heartily in the slander campaign. It is peculiarly and distinctively their mouth-piece, when it declares war on the construction of the new Government road from Winnipeg to the sea, we must accept the declaration as coming from the dictators of the Opposition party in Parliament, as indicating the ground they take before the House and the country. On this then the issue is clear. The Government stands for the construction of a national railway from the Atlantic to the prairies; the Opposition claims that project as useless and unwise.

It is significant that the claim that Montreal has been ill-used comes not from Montreal but from Toronto. The business men of Montreal have not heretofore admitted or displayed any inability to look after their own interests, and had they considered those interests sacrificed by the route of the new road we may rest assured we would have heard from them. They have indeed moved to secure the construction of a branch from the city to a point on the main line, but have not demanded nor requested that the interests of the country at large should be subserved by diverting the main line to Montreal. Where the Mail and Empire gets authority to take up the cudgel Montreal has declined to take up for itself passes understanding, save in the readiness of that journal to manufacture a grievance for the purpose of knocking down the government-owned railway. Remembering that the Mail speaks for the rulers of the Opposition, this is surely sufficient indication of the kind of affection Mr. Borden and his colleagues entertain for the policy of "nationalizing" the railways of this country.

EDMONTON'S CREDIT.

Nearly a million dollars worth of Edmonton city 5 per cent. debentures sold at 101 in London this week. There can be nothing much wrong with the credit of a Canadian city when the British investor is willing to pay a dollar on the hundred bonds for its bonds; or, incidentally, when the British money market either

CANADA LEADS.

Mr. Victor S. Clark, Ph.D., of the United States Department of Commerce and Labor, has been in Alberta during the past few weeks studying the operation of the Lemieux Act for settling industrial disputes. Similar investigations have been made in other provinces by representatives of the same department. Altogether our neighbors seem to have a pretty good opinion of the measure from the thoroughness with which they are studying its results and the commendations expressed by some of their leaders of thought on industrial questions. It will be a denial of some pretty plain intimations if similar legislation is not enacted in Washington before very long.

MENTIONED OWNED RAILWAY.

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been built at all. History declares that if it had been built under the auspices of the Mail's friends it would have been as a privately-owned enterprise. That it is built at all, and that it is built as a public enterprise, is a tribute to the Government. A higher tribute could certainly not be paid them in the West, for whatever value the Grand Trunk Pacific may be to these Provinces, the eastern section will be of infinitely more value. The need of the prairies for a new outlet rather than for a new western system, without such outlet the western system would be of limited benefit. With the outlet, the development of western systems is assured. The drawback to Western railway building has been the enormous expense of getting to tidewater. This problem the Government must solve, and solve in a way that all Western systems may take advantage of it. The necessity of constructing the Western Grand Trunk Pacific system may have been a matter for legitimate difference of opinion. The necessity of constructing the eastern section could be doubted only by those who had no stake in the West, or whose partisan spirit blinded their perception of the commercial requirements of the country.

The appeal of the Mail is to the selfishness of the established commercial circles of Eastern Canada. These it would have made war upon the Government because the Government did not subserve the broader interests of the country at large and the vital interests of the Western half of the country to their immediate and apparent benefit. To the credit of those communities it is due to say that they have not displayed the narrowness and greed the Mail seeks to inculcate. But that they have not done so, and are not doing so is no fault of the Mail or of the Parliamentary group for whom it speaks.

FOSTER'S PROPOSAL.

Ottawa, Mar. 31.—Hon. Geo. E. Foster proposed in the House of Commons on Monday the creation of a commission, appointed for life, to buy supplies required for government work. As this would be a breach of the principle of ministerial responsibility for public expenditure, the government opposed it, and carried an amendment favoring public tender and contract whenever feasible.

DEMANDS ADMISSION FOR THE HINDUS.

Some time ago an order in council was passed authorizing the Minister of the Interior to prevent immigrants entering Canada from countries other than their own. When such immigration was considered a menace to Canadian labor. While couched in general language the purpose of the order was understood to be to enable the Immigration Department to head off an influx of Hindus and Japanese into British Columbia, as these people were not coming direct from India and Japan, but from Hong Kong and Honolulu. A British Columbia judge held however that the Governor-General in council could not delegate such authority but must exercise it direct. To put the matter beyond the shadow of legal doubt a bill was introduced on Wednesday embodying the annulled regulation. Curiously enough it was met by hostility from Mr. Borden and his followers and is held up for the time being. One of the oppositionists even went so far as to move an amendment that all who had moved in the British Empire should be admitted.

EMPHASIZE THE WEST.

Recent copies of the Belfast Evening Telegraph contain columns of correspondence from Canadian writers discussing the industrial and other conditions in relation to the prospective immigrant. For the most part the conditions are fairly represented, but the regrettable feature is that the conditions described appear to be exclusively the conditions which exist in the Province of Ontario, and entirely different from conditions in the two-thirds of Canada which lie west of Ontario. But to the man abroad who has made little study of our geography these facts are not apparent; and it is by such men that letters are being read.

This points the need of some kind of publicity campaign in the Old Lands emphasizing the fact that the older Provinces are by no means all of Canada, and that conditions which may exist there do not necessarily exist in the other portions. This need is emphasized by the immigration returns. In the nine month period of 1907 the total arrivals by ocean ports were 90,008. Of these 56,000 remained east of the Great Lakes, and only 32,000 came to the four Western Provinces. Ontario alone got as many of the newcomers as Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia together. This is scarcely satisfactory to the Western Provinces and emphasizes the necessity of getting these provinces' resources and opportunities plainly and distinctively before the minds of the British people.

The Federal Government cannot of course carry on immigration efforts aimed to the development of certain provinces as against the others. It is, however, the legitimate privilege of provincial, municipal and public bodies of the West to take measures to present the advantages of the Western portion of the country, as distinguished from the Eastern Provinces, distinctively to the attention of prospective immigrants. Property conducted such campaign should arouse no unhealthy rivalries and jealousies between the older and newer portions of Canada, but should rather encourage each in the legitimate and profitable course of making known the opportunities it has to offer to the capable and industrious. To this subject the Boards of Trade of Western Canada might well devote some attention, and could, perhaps, initiate some effort.

A regular or auxiliary troops be excepted from the operations of the Act. As many of the Hindus have served in the army this was tantamount to a demand that they be permitted to pour into British Columbia without hindrance. How the gentlemen will square their course with their previous professions of a desire that British Columbia be kept a "white man's country" remains to be seen.

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Mr. Foster condemned the existing system as unbusinesslike. Modern business methods must be applied, he said; and a commission, versed in mercantile affairs and following each of the movements in prices, would place the government more in line with the times. There was great disparity in the prices paid by the government for the same thing. How was it, for instance, the militia could be fed for very much less than the men on government steamers? He moved that all supplies, purchased for use of the various departments, should be procured on the basis of public tender and contract, under the direction of a commission and with regard primarily to quality and price. His idea as to the constitution of the commission was that it should be appointed for life; and removable only on such grounds as the auditor-general is removable.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier said the purchase of supplies on the basis of public tender and contract was the only method whereby the government could do business; but this was not, as Mr. Foster had said, the customary method of doing business in commercial life. When a person was intending to erect a building, he did not generally call for tenders; and, even if he did, he did not necessarily accept the lowest. He selected the contractor who, he thought, would give the best value. In the case of erecting public buildings, the government would have to select a contractor, who, they knew, were perfectly above-board and would give satisfaction; but, under this proposed law, they would be bound under no circumstances to give a preference to such contractors. It would be, therefore, impossible for the government to do absolutely as the business man. While competition by public tender was a desirable thing in government work, it was not possible to apply it in every case. It was not practicable, for instance, to provision by contract all the men of the N. W. M. P. who were quartered here and there all over the prairie. That kind of expenditure had to be carried out on the judgment of the minister; and, if he was blessed with a good deputy, it was generally pretty well done. With regard to the construction of public works, the government had a rule that all works to cost more than \$5,000 were to be thrown open to public tender. Works below that were carried out by private contract.

As to the proposal to appoint a competent commission, Sir Wilfrid thought that Mr. Foster had outlined ideas that he would have to revise before they were accepted even by his own friends. History and experience had shown that the British constitutional principle of ministerial responsibility was the most efficacious of all systems of financial administration. But Mr. Foster proposed to break away from it and place the expenditure on supplies under a commission appointed for life. The commissioners would therefore, not be responsible to any body; they might do well or ill; but, if they did wrong there would be no remedy, except impeachment or some thing of that kind; a remedy which it would be difficult to apply, and which was not to be compared with that which was available under the constitution. Then, again, there would not be much for the commission to do, if, as Mr. Foster said, everything was to be obtained by public tender and contract. But, apart from this, it was a proposal that ought not to be adopted; because it was contrary to human experience that non-responsible to no one had ever proved beneficial.

R. L. Borden said he had not quite understood Mr. Foster's resolution as the prime minister had interpreted it, but, even if they had a purchasing commission, removable at pleasure, it would be a serviceable check on expenditure. The minister of finance said that the ordinary man, although he did not apply Mr. Foster's methods, thought he did things in a businesslike way. Did even the corporations adopt them?

He had never seen an advertisement from the Canadian Pacific railway, asking for tenders for supplies. The company did not purchase them by tender and contract; but they had a list of persons who, being worth something in their trade, were thought competent to furnish the company's requirements. Mr. Borden had cited the manner in which the British fleet was provisioned at Halifax; but, in that case, there was no purchasing commission. The supplies were bought by a responsible officer. Mr. Borden here pointed out that they had a commissariat department. The minister of finance said so had every department of the government. The economy with which supplies were obtained depended upon the integrity of the official charged with that duty, just as it would with a body of purchasing commissioners. Mr. Foster's proposal was unworkable, he moved to substitute after the word "contract": "So far as practicable, especially where large quantities of goods are required, to be procured primarily to quality and price; and that all purchases should be made under the authority of the official charged with that duty, just as it would with a body of purchasing commissioners. Mr. Foster's proposal was unworkable, he moved to substitute after the word "contract": "So far as practicable, especially where large quantities of goods are required, to be procured primarily to quality and price; and that all purchases should be made under the authority of the official charged with that duty, just as it would with a body of purchasing commissioners. 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