

THE EDMONTON BULLETIN

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TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8, 1908.

THE RAILWAY SITUATION.

The railway problem we have always with us, particularly in the season when the grain trade and the coal trade join in taxing the facilities of the transportation systems. At present the problem looms even larger in the public thought than usual at this time of year. Reports from the south of a lack of cars to haul out the grain, followed by the Premier's announcement that the Province would start machinery going to London railway construction have focused public attention on the subject and are producing a variety of detailed proposals.

Thanks to our westerly situation Alberta is the last but not the only province to benefit by the natural trend of railway construction. The older portion of Canada, being the eastern portion, and the market for Canadian products, lying across the Atlantic, it was natural and necessary that railway construction on a large scale should proceed mostly from east to west, and as a consequence that we in Alberta should be the last province except British Columbia to receive benefit from it. Hence it is that Alberta has less railway mileage than the much smaller provinces of Manitoba, and less than the neighboring province of Saskatchewan.

The problem here falls into two largely distinct propositions: the establishment of railway competition in the southern districts, and the building of development roads through the northern country. Edmonton and the immediately tributary country is fairly well supplied with railway accommodation on the competition basis. But from Edmonton south extends practically four hundred miles of comparatively well settled country, as yet served by only one railway system; while northward lies more than four hundred miles of country rich in varied resources but held back from settlement by lack of railway facilities of any kind. To create competition in the south and to extend accommodation in the north are the two problems involved in our railway question.

These problems overlap of course in the south, where railways are wanted both to create competition and to open up new country. But the demand there is for competition rather than for development lines. Competing lines would do immeasurable service in extending settlement into districts now remote from roads, but the public outcry is not so much that new country be opened up as that competition be provided in the country already supposed to be served by railways. The hard fact which makes the railway question a pressing one in the southern country is that the system already in the country does not provide adequate shipping facilities. It is not a matter of preparing the way for more people so much as of lifting a hardship from the people actually in the country; not so much the extension of the opportunity for settlement as the removing of a handicap from settlement already in existence. If roads are not built there, not only will the coming of new settlers be checked, but the people who have already come will be prevented reaping the reward to which their own enterprise and the capabilities of their country entitles them.

This situation involves an obligation on the Governments, Federal and Provincial, to work for its relief. The people who have gone into the southern country, who have put their money into it, who have undertaken to make a country out of a wilderness, and who in large measure have succeeded in doing so, find themselves thwarted by the chief factor on which they counted for assistance. What they settled for those districts, they did so largely because they were served by railways, or were supposed to be served by them. The existence of the railways was an argument which weighed with the new-comers, and which, no doubt, induced many of them to settle in the south instead of going elsewhere. Relying on the railway accommodation which seemed to exist, they have by the thousand, put their all into the development of the country, have driven their stakes there for better or worse and stand to win or lose in life as the country advances or does not advance. When these men declare that the conditions are such that not only cannot the country advance but that they cannot continue the work they have begun unless relief comes, a case is made out which

demand attention without further argument. Such is the condition which many of them have desired to exist through the failure of the roads to supply their transportation needs.

It is true that the fund of this dis-appointment lies not with any government but with the inability or indifference of the C. P. R. But the fixing of the fault is not the main thing. This is that relief be brought for the existing condition, wherever or whatever caused it. And such relief is apparently not to be expected from the C. P. R. however strong may be their moral obligations to give it.

It seems reasonable that both phases of this problem will be better, more quickly and more certainly solved if new lines be constructed as branches of great railway systems than if they be independent concerns relying on their own necessarily limited capacities. A railway can enter competition with an old and established road effectively only if it be backed by ample funds and managed by men who are prepared to spend money to capture business. Similarly, a development road pushed into a new district, if it is to facilitate development, must be prepared financially to operate, and operate efficiently to a time, gain or loss. A new road which undertakes to capture territory from an old one, or which is built into a country where traffic has largely to be generated after construction must be prepared to lose money and expect to lose money for a time; and if it is not prepared to do so, the chances are that it will lose itself.

The history of railroading is a continuous story of weak enterprises that have tackled competitors too large for them, or have undertaken development work which was beyond their resources and have gone down in the fight. Usually they have been finally taken up by some powerful company made part of an extensive system equipped effectively, relieved of individual management expenses and run win or lose until the traffic in their territory has made them paying concerns. For the traffic of the country and the credit of the country it is far better that roads be built in the first place under conditions which guarantee their regular and efficient operation, whether the purpose of their construction is to create competition or to induce development.

Our province lies in the heart of the continent. Its markets are across the Atlantic and the Pacific. A railway to share effectively in the business of moving our products must operate to the southeast or to the head of the Lakes, whence a water-way leads to the sea. A road which operated merely in the province itself could hope and expect to become nothing more than a "feeder" for the trunk lines—and there is no money in feeding railways that belong to somebody else. Yet unless the roads in the provinces can be made profitable they will become a drag rather than a help to advancement. A railroad failure is not limited in consequences to the people whose money has gone into it—these extend also to the public who are denied an efficient service to the lands which have to make good the loss and to the country which is condemned as unable to support a railway. In life it is a burden to its patrons, in death a grievance to its backers and in the end is merely meat for the stock market sharks. Why, then, do we seem to need the rapid and general extension of branches, feeders and connection of the large systems rather than the creation of small concerns dependent on the trunk lines for their outlets and hence at the mercy of these?

CURRENT COMMENT.

The little Republic of Hayti is now in the limelight. It belongs to that happy group of Central and Southern American nations whose political course will be cannot be ascertained until the books are made up for the year. But an indication may be got from the results of the tax on land speculators last year. Of the proceeds of this the University receives only twenty per cent, eighty per cent, or four-fifths going to the province of the operation. Yet, from this tax the university there last year was \$5,000; there, moreover, \$20,000 from this source which went to increase the grants in aid of common schools. Similarly, the university gets only 30 per cent of the proceeds of the corporation tax. These proceeds this year were apparently large enough to warrant paying the university \$5,000 from them; there remains, therefore, at least \$20,000 derived from this source to be added to the general funds of the province. The Province of Quebec, managed by Mr. G. P. Smith, is a party to the new tax which will so far as the patronage list business was concerned.

Unfortunately for the digger, however, others can dig, too, and the St. John Sun got out its little spade and unearthed a sheaf of documents

The assurance that the authorities are taking precautions to safeguard Lord Minto will not occasion more satisfaction throughout the Empire than it will arouse apprehension by the implied admission that such measures are necessary. The history of Indian troubles is that measures of this kind are not taken until they are needed, usually badly needed. To the observer from a distance their argument is the straightest kind of testimony from the men on the ground that they expect "trouble in India."

Politics in New Brunswick are continuing to the four-year observer. Last spring the constitution of Northern-British Columbia and Carleton went Conservative in the Provincial elections by large majorities. Both members resigned and ran for the Federal House. Both were defeated. By-elections to fill the vacancies in the Provincial House were held the other day and both constituencies went strongly Liberal. The complication is increased by the fact that John Morsey, commissioner of public works in the Hagen government supported one of the winners against a Conservative candidate. This seems to offer room for some explanations from the party who told Mr. Hagen won a "straight party fight" last spring, for it indicates that in accepting a portfolio in Mr. Hagen's government the commissioners of public works did not debar himself from taking a hand in the election of a Provincial Liberal candidate against the nominee of a Conservative government. At least this is not strictly in accord with the custom in party "straight party" governments.

Montreal tried recently the interesting experiment of offering \$2,000,000 worth of debentures to citizens in blocks large or small. The experiment did not work out. In the end the bonds had to be sold to one firm bringing a good figure.

THE UNIVERSITY: ITS COST AND AIMS.

From figures recently given out it appears that the cost of the Provincial university for the first year has been \$1,150,000. The sum in itself is not large, but an equally important fact is that not a dollar of it came from the general funds of the Province nor from the general public. No part of it was taken from the subsidies received from the Federal treasury, and none of it was obtained by levy on the people of the Province. The existence of the university has not been increased by a dollar the ordinary funds of the Government's disposal for carrying on the Provincial business; while on the other hand it has imposed no burden, large or small, on the public. The Government has during the year and has today just as much money for the construction of roads and bridges and for the other matters requiring provincial expenditure as they would have had ordinarily if there had been no university. The only charge against the Province here is that the university has not come from the general public. One of these is the educational tax imposed on land outside organized school districts. In the overwhelming majority of cases this land is held by speculators awaiting a rise in value, or by men who sell the land to a school district is quickly organized. This tax comes, therefore, from the speculator rather than from either the land or the public. This, together with the tax on corporations within the Province, are the sources from which the money for university maintenance comes.

These sources have done more, however, than provide the thirteen thousand dollars needed for the university. They have yielded a large amount besides into the other funds of the Province. Just how large this balance will be cannot be ascertained until the books are made up for the year. But an indication may be got from the results of the tax on land speculators last year. Of the proceeds of this the University receives only twenty per cent, eighty per cent, or four-fifths going to the province of the operation. Yet, from this tax the university there last year was \$5,000; there, moreover, \$20,000 from this source which went to increase the grants in aid of common schools. Similarly, the university gets only 30 per cent of the proceeds of the corporation tax. These proceeds this year were apparently large enough to warrant paying the university \$5,000 from them; there remains, therefore, at least \$20,000 derived from this source to be added to the general funds of the province. The Province of Quebec, managed by Mr. G. P. Smith, is a party to the new tax which will so far as the patronage list business was concerned.

EXHUMING THINGS.

The Toronto News has been "dovetailing" for proof that the abuses in the Marine department officials did not exist under the former Government—and of course found what it was looking for—according to its own story. The Toronto News has been "dovetailing" for proof that the abuses in the Marine department officials did not exist under the former Government—and of course found what it was looking for—according to its own story.

That the university has not been made a sink hole for the Provincial

funds or a burden on the public by no means implies that efficiency has been sacrificed to cheapness. On the contrary, while no attempt has been made to create a Harvard or a Cambridge, a McGill or a Toronto the purpose has been kept steadily in mind of creating an institution adapted to the conditions of the day and the Province, and capable of growth and evolution as conditions change into one meeting the new requirements and filling the sphere opened by them. To this end the institution is managed by a body of representative men chosen from all sections and all portions of the Province, many of them schooled by long and successful business training to know the value of a dollar and how to get it. A President has been secured with wide training in organization and yet with a clear perception of the difference in conditions and requirements between an old and well developed institution and the problem of development and forced to concentrate its resources on the material necessities of pioneer effort. With a moderately sized staff of assistants a course has been mapped out broad enough to allow of future expansion yet based on conditions as they exist and on the educational demands which those conditions create. In the beginning the university of Alberta is designed to qualify men and women for the ordinary business of life, as well as to offer opportunity for those who may desire to train for professional careers. That there was a demand for such training is evidenced by the establishment several years ago of colleges in Edmonton and Calgary; while the numbers of students going yearly to eastern universities proved that there was also a demand for a more specialized education than the one provided by the provincial university. To serve this dual purpose is the aim of the Alberta university; an end which is being accomplished without detracting from the funds ordinarily available for the more pressing business of the Government or imposing a burden on the people of the Province.

OUR NATURAL COAL MARKET.

The Saskatchewan Phoenix discussed editorially "The Movement for Cheap Coal." It claims the Saskatchewan dealers find request and material differences between the weights indicated on the weigh bills and the contents of the cars, whether these come from Edmonton or Taber. The reason is not that the Phoenix is profiting, or, definitely, but says the difficulty is made acute by the absence of track scales at Saskatoon for checking car weights. The Phoenix urges the Edmonton mine owners to go after the Saskatoon business. It says:—

The attitude of the Phoenix is not entirely correct. If the Phoenix is not to be a leading Canadian publisher house to undertake the preparation and publication of a series of biographies of the "Makers of Canada." This was the task undertaken by the Phoenix for the Province of Toronto, and now, nearing completion. Though ostensibly biography the volumes are history also, history perhaps not less accurate and certainly none the less interesting that each author deals with his epoch from the standpoint of one of its leading characters. Mr. McBride's case history is secured by the superintendence of a board of editors.

A BELATED DISCOVERY.

Mr. McBride is said to entertain the idea of inviting the premiers of the other provinces to visit British Columbia next summer and see for themselves the hardships he has to contend with and the dire need of larger subsidies from the Dominion. The honorable gentleman it seems recognizes now that one of the bars to getting "better terms" is the lack of support from the other provinces. If this be correct the premier has reasoned well for a change. There was a conference of premiers in Ottawa some years ago when he had ample time and all manner of encouragement to lay his case for better terms before the provincial premiers and to ask their support, with good chance of getting it. Mr. McBride chose to insult the premiers without cause or provocation other than that they proposed to recommend his province to the Dominion, general satisfaction is felt.

THE DAWN OF RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT.

It was a task well worthy the enterprise of a leading Canadian publishing house to undertake the preparation and publication of a series of biographies of the "Makers of Canada." This was the task undertaken by the Phoenix for the Province of Toronto, and now, nearing completion. Though ostensibly biography the volumes are history also, history perhaps not less accurate and certainly none the less interesting that each author deals with his epoch from the standpoint of one of its leading characters. Mr. McBride's case history is secured by the superintendence of a board of editors.

A notable volume in the series recently issued is the life of Lord Sydenham, written by Professor Adam Shortt. Professor Shortt has been for many years known to students and readers of Canadian public questions. To them it is only fulfilling the expected that the engrossing subject of the present volume is masterfully dealt with. Though Professor Shortt's text is Lord Sydenham, his discourse is that of a statesman, and he will place the part he played in changing and moulding them for a better order of things.

It is interesting in these days of "commercialism" to observe that Lord Sydenham was our first civilian governor and that he was a business man in politics. His early years were spent in prosecuting the business interests of a great firm in Russia, and later in London. He gave up this for politics, and resigned from the cabinet of Lord Melbourne to accept the Canadian governorship. He was thus as great a contrast as could be had between the military dignitaries who had formerly ornamented the position and bungled its opportunities.

His appointment was received with anything but general approval. By the time the English dominion in Quebec he was disliked because of his free trade opinions. By the Family Compact an Upper Canada he was disliked because of his responsible government policy. Nor was he well enough known to have compensating favors among the French majority in Quebec or the body of the people in Ontario.

Yet it is to him that we owe the introduction of responsible government in Canada. His credit is the greater that he established it when to do so was held by a large section of the community to be inviting separa-

tion from Britain. There has not indeed as yet been laid down the precise line which demarks the authority of the Home government from the independence of the Dominion. In his day any attempt to lay down such a line was regarded as "impossible," and yet to institute responsible government without laying it down was held to be equally impossible. In theory responsible government meant a severance of British connection; Lord Sydenham, with the co-operation of Lord John Russell, introduced responsible government without even straining dangerously the bonds of union. It is because he did in practice what was declared impossible and what has not yet been done in law, that he deserves the appreciative memory of Canadians.

All this end much more is told with absorbing interest in the volume of Professor Shortt. The conditions and the consequences of the undying racial antagonism which for nearly a century have existed between the French and English colonists at dagger-draw are sketched with clearness and precision, with an occasional hint by the way also of how this warfare was perpetuated and enlivened by the consistent impolicy of the Imperial government.

The abuses of the Family Compact are reviewed, and the political reasons for the institution of this memorable iniquity made clear. These two lines of impolicy in the two provinces of Lower and Upper Canada are shown to have produced a condition of things which may well have been regarded as "unresolvable" by well-intentioned statesmen of the day. That the problem was solved we owe to Mr. Poulkett Thompson, afterward Lord Sydenham. His work and how it was accomplished in Canada cannot be better summarized than in the closing paragraph from Professor Shortt's pen:—

"It fell to Lord Sydenham's lot to bring to a close the old regime with its absolute racial antagonism and its party division of loyalists and rebels, and to open a new era of responsible government in which it was possible for both races to take their share in the government, and in which both Government and Opposition were brought within the pale of loyal Canadian citizenship. In accomplishing this he was required to be at once the last and most powerful of the autocratic governors, and the first and most influential of the diplomatic representatives under responsible government."

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SEEN THROUGH

A. W. Ponton is Enabled, From Correct Error

After nearly two years of very work in the northern provinces, A. W. Ponton, Dominion and surveyor of the city this week reports that the city will not go north again. He is very enthusiastic of the "abilities of the great tributary to the Peace river conversation" which the Bulletin undertook to reveal this country.

Mr. Ponton has been for the past two years in extensive meridian northward, up with a party in June, commenced his survey on ship 76. During the first extended the line northward as Wallaceau river. Mr. Ponton states that this is not the correct way. The correct way is to follow the Peace river, a lake with a wavy early part of last winter was transporting supplies to the river, a tributary to the Peace pack trails through a broken country. Last spring extended the line with a distance of the Peace. The line was about 100 miles from the Peace river district. Mr. Ponton stated that the line was incorrect in some places. The survey was marked too far to the west. Another error was the location of Birch river. The line was about 100 miles from the Peace river district. The line was not drawn at all. The line was about 100 miles from the Peace river district. The line was not drawn at all.

Excellent Agricultural Co. Mr. Ponton states that the position of the Peace river is well suited for agricultural purposes, or will be as soon as the river is straightened. The annual citizens' meeting held last night at the Aldermen have given their Pre-Election Pledge. Matter of Interest. The annual citizens' meeting held last night at the Aldermen have given their Pre-Election Pledge. Matter of Interest.

THE STRATHCOONA COUNTY TELL OF THEIR STAFF.

Annual Citizens' Meeting Held Last Night—J. McKernan, the Aldermen Have Given their Pre-Election Pledge.

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Criticism of the Ratepayers. After the council had read the minutes of the previous year, the ratepayers asked questions with reference to the accounts in the annual report. The council answered some of the questions, but many were left unanswered. The ratepayers expressed their dissatisfaction with the council's performance.

Blame Last Year's Council.

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Mayor Duggan occupied the meeting was called on an account of the provision of the city charters such a meeting be held to discuss work of the year. The accounts year had been audited, and the Mayor had not yet received the report of the ratepayers but he regretted they did not contain the details. This would be forth in a week or two. He outlined series of debates during the year and showed that a better position had been obtained than in the past. He spoke of the efforts made to get additional ratepayers for the city, but after consultation with a number of men he had decided that the time had not yet come when it was necessary to increase the rate. However, he thought that later taxes had increased over last year but the increase was not as great as in the previous year. The money had been expended on sewerage and electric light plant revenue from water and sewerage not nearly as large as it should be and as a result the taxes had to be raised.

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