Labor News From Coast to Coast.

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Minister of Labor Gives Sharp Return Blow

CALGARY GATHERING OF THE UNITED FARMERS

Addressing the annual convention of the United Farmers of Alberta H. W. Wood, president of the organization, spoke in part as follows:

"Three years ago the U. F. A. decided to engage in political activities. We believed that under systematic organization the people themselves could initiate and control political activities, and that under no other method could these activities ever be made democratic. There was keen realization that the development of democracy was necessarily a slow process, even when right principles were strictly adhered to, and a hopeless impossibility when undertaken under wrong principles. Consequently we emphasized the necessity of a strict adherence to right foundation principles, rather than those of temporary expediency. The wisdom of our decision has been fully proven by the results of the two political campaigns of the past year, even beyond our clearest foresight or our most sanguine expectations.

"It was fortunate that we had two years of preparatory activity before we were put to the test of carrying on an actual campaign. The federal election came unexpectedly as an unwelcome guest, and while our people would have much preferred a rest from political activities they met the challenge to action by putting up U. F. A. candidates in ten districts, and arranging terms of co-operation with labor and independent citizens in the other two. All this was done systematically and democratically, with the result that Alberta is sending to Ottawa a solid delegation consisting of twelve apostles of democracy.

"By observing true principles of organized democracy we have succeeded politically beyond our most sanguine hopes, our organization itself has continuously gained strength, while order and system have been developed at all points.

"Perhaps the visible results of Progressive propaganda were more manifest in the results of the last election than anywhere else. Be this as it may, economic conditions continued to go from bad to worse. Prices to consumers were raised with a reckless disregard of consequences, that had no precedent. The cost of primary production quickly rose till it was above the value of the products. A burden was put on the producer that, as taxing his endurance to the utmost. His strength to bear this burden was soon sapped by a sensational slump in the prices of all his products. There is a load on his shoulders that he cannot carry. His purchasing power is practically destroyed; his producing power is weakened and will become more so unless relief comes, and comes quickly.

"The crippling of the purchasing power of the primary producer reacted in the crippling of the selling power of the distributor. The retail merchant was inveigled into the belief that the frenzy of price raising would continue indefinitely, and that the sooner he purchased his stocks the better off he would be. He finds himself stocked with goods bought at prices his customers are unable to pay. Economic stagnation, beginning at the bottom with the primary producer, spreading quickly to the consumer, working its way up through the retail trade, will continue its blighting course up through all channels of trade till it finds the seat of the primary cause. This will end the mad outbreak of trade piracy and commercial anarchy. The people will know that they have suffered greatly and it is to be hoped that they will have gained some wisdom and will be able to exercise at least some influence in the prevention of such outbreaks in the future. These outbreaks will continue to recur and the people will continue to be the chief sufferers till there is a stabilization of trade relations on the basis of equity to all and strength to the whole. These adjustments will not be made till there is a power to force them that does not at the present time exist.

"Democracy functions only in giving the greatest possible benefits to the greater possible number. f the people expect these results they will have to adhere strictly to democratic principles, stand steadfastly together, and give intelligent expression to their demands. By this method, and this method only, can you crystallize and give expression to real public opinion, and make that opinion a guiding influence in the trend of government. Do not be deceived into believing that other and very subtle influences will not be continually at work trying to create a bogus public opinion, and acting as spokesmen for that opinion. Just in proportion to their activities or your indifference they will succeed in influencing government. If the public has no intelligent opinion of its own, so that it can speak in behalf of democracy, special interests will be ever ready to misrepresent and misguide public opinion in the interests of special privilege. The development of mass intelligence is the only hope of the people in their fight for democracy. This fight is just beginning, and your responsibilities in it are just beginning. It is true you have accomplished the preliminary stage of political reconstruction, but the final stage, which includes legislative reconstruction, is just in the beginning. In the accomplishment of this there must be complete and intelligent co-operation between the government and the people. Even then political reconstruction will not solve the greater and more difficult problems of economic reconstruction but it will be a valuable and necessary handmaiden to it.

ONTARIO PREMIER SAYS MANUFACTURERS MUST DO THEIR PART

Speaking before the Board of Trade on "The Unemployment Question," Premier Drury said:

"The tendencies leading to unemployment have been checked, and manufacturers must help, as we farmers have helped by taking our losses.

"During the last three weeks we have learned relief work that can be undertaken can't meet the needs of all our unemployed, and the giving of doles, we reluctantly recognize, must be again adopted.".

The Premier detailed the appointment last year of the advisory committee, whose investigations of industrial conditions led to the present scheme to relieve unemployment. Continuing, the Premier said: "I believe that we are at the bottom of the trough now, and that business conditions from now on will continue to improve.

"A sufficient system of unemployment insurance would go far to solve the difficulty, I believe. It would help the laboring mai without doing injury to his self-respect and at the same time it would create a sentiment against voluntary foregoing of work."

"Labor should not be asked to take the lead in bringing prices down to a normal level," declared the Premier. "At the same time labor should be willing to fall in line and take a wage cut corresponding to the drop in the price of goods and produce."

The Premier also condemned the employe who went on strike without sufficient cause and the employer who locked up his place rather than face a little loss.

Another point that needed attention was that of distribution of population. The cities were too crowded—it was almost entirely in the cities that the unemployment problem was felt so acutely. He suggested that possibly it might be practicable to have more manufacturing in the smaller centres of population. This might ease up the situation.

"I am not ready to outline any permanent policy or to give any opinion, "but I feel that we must end lead," said the Premier in conclu the strange anomaly of the land that has materials which cannot be exhausted in 100 years and tha thas more than for its need than any other such fertile nation and that suffers a condition which keeps its men from developing these materials."

ALBERTA PROVINCE AIDING UNEMPLOYED

Hon. Alex Ross, minister of public works, in a statement given out says that public works aggregating between $800,000 and $900,000 have been authorized by the Provincial government, since it took office, in efforts to provide employment during the present period of dullness.

"This amount," states Mr. Ross, represents work on bridges, buildings, roads, etc., in various parts of the province and actually is money never expended on the estimated.

The Provincial government has guaranteed the bonds of the United Irrigation district, south of Lethbridge, in hopes that thi smay create additional work. As soon as the city of Calgary agrees that the ownership of the old iron bridge at Hillcrest lies within the province, we will have it dismantled and removed in sections to other parts where smaller bridges are required.

The government has arranged to sell, as soon as possible this month, about $2,000,000 debentures for telephone extension work and $750,000 debentures for railway extension in the north. All these expenditures are over expenditures on the estimates, but it was agreed b ythe government they were necessary to help meet the situation and we rely on the legislature aproving when it meets in session.

In addition to the work outlined, and that is not by any means a final program, there will be the other public works which will appear in the regular estimates, said Mr. Ross.

SYDNEY MINERS ASK FOR REPRESENTATION

A demand for United Mine Workers representation on the directorate of the British Empire Steel Corporation which operates most of the coal mines in Nova Scotia, is embodied in a resolution which has just been endorsed by Caledonia and Harbor locals, two of the largest divisions of the United Mine Workers in District No. 26. The demand is based upon statements alleged to have been made by Hon. W. L. Mackenzie King at Sydney during his election tour, to the effect that there are four essential elements in industry, labor, capital, management and the public, and that these should have joint control.

HULL STREET RAILWAY MINORITY REPORT

George D. Kelley, representative of the Hull Electric Company on the board of conciliation which investigated the wage dispute between the company and its motermen and conductors; in his minority report handed to the minister of labor finds that the reduction in wages, ordered by the company on December 1 last, was fair and equitable. This reduction, according to Mr. Kelley's report, brought the maximum wage down to 43 cents an hour. The majority report, which was filed with the department earlier, sustained the wage scale in force prior to the reduction of December 1st. This scale ran from 40 to 60 cents an hour according to the class and length of service of the particular employe.

TRADES AND LABOR CONGRESS PLATFORM OF PRINCIPLES.

1—Free education and compulsory school attendance.
2—Maximum legal working day of eight hours and 44 hours per week.
3—Insertion and enforcement of fair wage regulations (based on established union conditions) in all government work, direct or indirect.
4—Public ownership and democratic management of all public utilities.
5—Government control and fullest development of all natural resources.
6—Establishment of a Tariff Board on which labor will be represented.
7—Revenue by direct taxation.
8—Abolition of non-elective legislative bodies.
9—Exclusion of all Asiatics.
10—The demand fo rand use of the union label.
11—Prevention of employment of children under sixteen years of age.
12—Equal pa yfor equal work for men and women.
13—Voluntary arbitration of labor disputes.
14—Proportional representation with group constituencies.
15—The encouragement of establishment of Workers' o-operative Societies.
16—Unemployment insurance.
17—Old age pensions, State insurance for sickness and disability.
18—Uniformity of labor laws throughout the Dominion.
19—Disarmament.

CHARGE BUILDING COMBINE

Washington.—There is a building combine in the nation's capital, and the price for building material has jumped 100 to 150 per cent, is the view of Senator King, of Utah. This solon avers that the Sherman anti trust law "seems" to be a dead letter.

CHIEF COMMISSIONER WITH USUAL HAPHAZARD STATEMENTS HAS SHORT WAITING PERIOD FOR REPLY

That the labor situation in Canada would never be helped by such statements has those attributed to Hon. F. B. Carvell, at a sitting of the Board of Railway Commissioners in Montreal, and that Mr. Carvell "was not shouting the other side of the question from the house-tops," was the warm reply made to the chief commissioner b yHon. James Murdock, minister of labor.

A despatch from Montreal quoted Mr. Carvell as stating: "The railways are in the hands of these labor unions," and that: "These men need some one behind them continually with a yard stick."

"The labor situation in Canada will certainly never be helped by men, placed in the position Mr. Carvell is in, making statements such as he has been repeatedly making in matters of this kind, if he has been correctly quoted in the press," Mr. Murdock declared.

"Mr. Carvell," the minister added, "would be doing Canada a splendid service if he maintained a timely supervision over the things he is supposed to deal with and leave the supervision of other problems to those who have a sympathetic understanding of both points of view, which Mr. Carvell's utterances show he has failed to acquire.

"There is no doubt but that some of the things done by labor and those representing labor have been inconsistent and perhaps unfair, but can anyone in Canada truthfully say that much more unfair acts have not been committed by those holding views opposed to labor? We don't find Mr. Carvell calling attention from the housetops to his side of the question."

Mr. Murdock is a former vice-president for Canada of the Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen.

C. P. R. PLANNING FOR WORK

It was learned that appropriations totalling over $25,000,000, designed for road extensions and general improvements are now before the principal executive officers of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company. They represent the 1922 construction budget of the company, and it is expected that within the next two weeks details of the year's work will be given to the public.

Detail of Western Canada claims are being taken up first, and when they have been disposed of, appropriations for Eastern Canada lines wil be gone into. In the absence of definite information, projected work is a matter of conjecture, but it appears reasonably certain that there will be little construction work lieved that the total budget will be pared to the vicinty of $20,000,00 before it is accepted.

FISCAL RETURNS FEDEDAL GOVERNMENT

Complete statistics available show that during the last fiscal year the department of public works spent $20,970,874.21, of which $1,217,892.-07 is chargedit o demobilization. As compared with the total for the previous year, even with a reduction in the war expenditure of over $2,000,000, there is an increase of $515,-214.46, due principally to the expenditure made on harbor and river works at Courtney Bay, St. John, N.B., Toronto, Fort William and Port Arthur, and Esquimault, B.C., where the most important works of this class are in progress; an increase in the cost of dredges and dredging operations of about $250,000 and in telegraphs of nearly $200,000, while the expenditures on other works remain about the same as last year.

Revenue for the year amounted to $725,129.30, an increase over the previous fiscal year of $92,039.04.

SIGN UNION AGREEMENT

Joliet, Ill.—The Commonwealth motor company has signed a union agreement.

ONTARIO MINIMUM WAGE LAW FOR WOMEN

Mr. H. G. Feeter, a member of the Minimum Wage Board, gives the following resume on the work and functions entailed.—

To understand the value of minimum wage legislation it is necessary to keep two important factors in mind. First of these is, that a minimum wage is just what the name implies and nothing more. Trade Unionists very often confuse a minimum wage with a trade union fair wage or a wage that will represent adequate compensation for services rendered. This conception is erroneous; a minimum wage is simply a low line below which wages must not fall. It is the duty of all minimum wage administrators to ascertain the lowest possible level of decent living and there draw a line. Very often the prevailing wages paid in an establishment are in excess of any minimum wage which may be fixed. With this condition minimum wage administration has nothing to do, and its authority ceases with anything in excess of the low line of decent living.

Secondly, it is essential to know something of the conditions generally prevalent prior to and following the application of a minimu mwage. Only in this way can the beneficial effects of such legislation be fully appreciated.

It is very doubtful if minimum wage administrators anywhere have ever been confronted with the tremendous problem which at the moment confronts the Minimum Wage Commission of the Province of Ontario. It entered upo nits duties on the eve of one of the worst industrial depressions that the world has ever known. After a year of painstaking effort coupled with a most thorough study of the living conditions prevailing throughout this province, as it affects women workers, and the law in Ontario only applies to women and girls; the net result has been the establishment of minimum wage rates in fourteen industries in the cities of Toronto, Hamilton, Ottawa and London and the commission is now engaged in extending these orders, with certain modifications to the rest of the province.

The minimum wage rate for Toronto is $12.50 for experienced female help, with a somewhat lower rate for inexperienced adults and young girls. In the latter instances, the learning period is fixed in th eregulations with suitable increases every six months until the full minimun wage is attained.

For Hamilton, Ottawa, and London the rate for experienced female help is $12.00 per week, with the exception of a small group of industries in which very unusual conditions obtain. For th elatter the full minimum is $11.50. For all of these the same modifications apply to inexperienced help and young girls as obtains in Toronto.

For cities of less than 50,000 population and more than 5,000 population a rate of $11.000 has been established. Towns of less than 5000 population are now under consideration and it is not unlikely that lower rate may be established for these. In addition of any criticism of these rates it is only fair to state that thousands of young girls at women have secured very considerable increases in wages as a result of them. In many industries proposed reductions have been checked.

In all of its investigations and decisions the Wage Commission has had the wholehearted co-operation and support meant actual sacrifice to these men, who because of the general depression in industry, were operating at a loss. They cheerfully agreed to meet an increase in wages, recognizing that it was socially wholesome that the women workers of this province should at least receive sufficient from their work to enable them to live in reasonable comfort and decency. Considerable credit is also due to certain labor organizations and individual employees, who because of their interest in the work of the commission, largely facilitated its work and simplified its problem.

The commission has done a very large and effective piece of work to date, only made possible because of the wholehearted co-operation and support that it has received from all classes in the community. The work that remains to be done is of even greater magnitude and it is the earnest hope and desire of every member of the commission that its future efforts will meet with the same friendl reception and good-will that it has met with in the past. It is only i this way that its work will benefit not only the women workers of th province but also the industries tha employ them.

Items of Interest from Overseas

TRADE SLUMP.

According to figures issued by the British Ministry of Transport, and as reported by the London Daily Herald, there has been an enormous slump in British trade during the past year.

A drop of 20 per cent. in freight tonnage reveals the extent of the slump and it is further added to by the fact that nearly 21 millions less passenger journeys were taken.

The Herald states that the small concessions in English and Welsh railway rates announced in December are criticized as inadequate, and special criticism is directed against the companies' plea that wages must be cut still further. While the cost of the concessions is estimated at ten million pounds sterling, it is pointed out that railwaymen have lost over £15,000,000 in wages in one year. At the same time, dividends are guaranteed by the government, and in addition the companies are to receive £60,000,000 from the public funds.

On the subject of the present freight concessions, union leaders were prepared to give them full welcome. Frank Hodges, secretary of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain, said: "In my opinion, the railway managers have taken a step in the right direction and their action will undoubtedly increase to some extent the volume of traffic in coal and coke. The reduction should have been greater, because only in that way can you get anything like the pre-war volume of traffic that the revenue should come."

As to the threat to wages, Mr. Hodges said: "There is no doubt that the railwaymen themselves are quite capable of maintaining their own agreement as to wages, and would not lend themselves to any increase of the working hours."

On the question of coal prices, "the reduction in freight rates," said Mr. Hodges, "will have some effect in stimulating the demand for coal, both for inland and export purposes. The pit prices of coal are practically at a minimum, and in the exporting districts the present prices do not allow a living wage to the miners nor a sufficient profit ta enable the owners to keep up the proper extension of the industry."

The reduction in freight rates represents a cut of 12 1-2 per cent. for coal, coke, patent fuel, limestone for chemical works, lime for iron and steel making, an diron and steel in Class B.

Much dissatisfaction is expressed by the directors of the Federation of British Industries, who claim that only the iron and steel and shipbuilding trades will be benefitted by the reduction of rates while agriculture and the other industries will be left out in the cold and nothing is proposed for the special purpose of stimulating exports.

ACCEPT UNIONS.

Four of the London hospitals have now abandoned their resistance to trade unionism. Two others have notified the unions that they are considering the matter.

This is the biggest result yet of the exposure of the Daily Herald, coupled with the workers' decision to cut off contributions to the hospitals.

It will be recalled that the hospitals decided to scrap on December 31 the Industrial Court award which fixed a minimum wage of £3 and a working week of 48 hours. In addition, it was elicited by the Daily Herald that some of the hospital authorities refused to have anything more to do with the trade unions and intended to fix wages and hours without consultation of the unions.

The four hospitals which have abandoned the position are the Royal Waterloo, Westminster, Kensington and Fulham and King's College.

They have told the unions that they now intend to observe union rates and conditions, and if at any time they want to change these they will not do so without meeting the unions.

But this is only the beginning. Every hospital in London must be brought into line, and there must be a discussion and settlement on the union's proposal for grading, covering the whole of the staffs (other than nurses). For several months the unions have been trying to get that discussion and only recently have they got a reply from the Hospitals' Association.

There is a prospect of such a conference. The Ministry of Labor, under pressure from outside influences which feared the result of the workers' boycott, has promised to arrange a conference early this year.

LAYING BLAME.

Frank Hodges, secretary of the Miners' Federation, has issued a statement emphasizing the extremely low wages in many coal mining districts. He admits the pit-head prices of coal does not warrant a decent wage, though the industrial and domestic consumers are paying fabulously high prices. The executive of the federation is approaching the coal mine owners with a view to making representation to the Board of Trade to secure an investigation into the cause of the present situation, particularly with regard to the spread of prices.

JOINT DEFENCE.

The general council of the trade union congress has sent a manifesto to the executives of affiliated trade unions on the matter of promoting common action on general questions and of organizing a joint defence for the preservation of trade union standards.

The manifesto raises the question of action by the unions on a national basis to resist efforts of employers to secure an increase of the number of working hours in the week. It suggests consideration of the question of empowering the general council to impose a levy on the whole movement to assist individual unions to resist any attack on its national standards.

It is admitted that immediate application of the scheme is impracticable owing to the depleted condition of the union's funds and to the general unemployment, but the manifesto suggests that, before the present industrial crisis is past, a special effort may be required to defend a vital principle of unionism. The members are requested to reply by March 24.

AGAINST COALITION.

In an appeal issued by the General Council of the Trades and Labor Congress of Great Britain agricultural workers of the country are urged to express themselves effectively at the next general election on the recent abolition of the Agricultural Wages Board.

"Attempts are now being made," the appeal says, "to force the workers back into the degrading conditions of the past.

It was announced from London that a deadlock had been reached in several agricultural districts where farmers were offering 22 shillings per week for farm help, while the Agricultural Union was demanding 33 shillings.

WANT BOATS.

At a conferen ceof mayors of northern towns of England held at Newcastle it was decided to urge the British government to proceed with the building of battleships in order to mitigate the unemployment situation caused by the suspension of warship orders.

It was declared that as the United States and Japan were building battleships Great Britain should do the same.

Another suggestion was that the government should advance ten million pounds sterling to shipping companies in order that they might start the building of passenger ships.

FOREIGN COMPETITION.

The Aberdeen granite workers have ben notified that their wages will be cut three pence hourly. It is asserted that the war graves commission declined to give orders to this district because of the cost of stones. German competition is said to be severe.

HOLD JOBS.

The shipping slump is not only responsible for the laying-up of many steamers, but has created a class of crews which never comes ashore if it can be avoided. There are so few ships now going into commission that a crew once aboard elects to stay there on the return to the home port rather than risk not being engaged again.

It is asserted by officials of the Mercantile Service that one-fifth of the British seamen are unemployed, including 2,000 captains and ship officers. Many of the latter have endeavored to take subordinate positions on vessels rather than not be employed at all.

Many ships are said to be running at a loss in th ehope of keeping the carrying trade between certain ports in English hands.

AGAINST OVERTIME.

A party of unemployed took possession of the Ediswan lamp factory at Enfield while the employes were still at their work.

The visit was paid in order to protest against the fact that for a fortnight overtime had been worked. The demonstrators marched in the main gates, which they seized and held.

They also took possession of the telephone exchange and entered the main shops, where the workers were called together and a meeting held.

While this was in progress the management asked to see a deputation of the demonstrators.

Orderly Demonstrators.

After a lengthy interval the management agreed that the overtime should cease, and that before any further overtime was decided on application should be made for suitable workers to the employment exchange.

During the interview a force of nearly 200 police arrived, but the demonstrators conducted themselves in an orderly manner.

All the workers left the factory without doing overtime.

The unemployed visit lasted an hour and a half, after which they marched away, singing the "Red Flag" and the "Internationale."

MAKING PREPARATIONS.

In preparation for a general election the Labor party an dthe Trade Union Congress have decided to financially support the Labor paper, the Daily Herald, to enable publication at a penny instead of twopence, beginning with January 23rd. In return for financial help, the Labor party will have a voice in the paper's policy. It has been carried on at considerable loss for some time.

HARD HIT.

Last year, in the opinion of the official journal of the Trades Union Congress, was the most disastrous for labor organizations in the United Kingdom. It is estimated that for the year reductions in wages aggregated eight million pounds weekly.

During the year the Amalgamated Engineers' Union distributed over two million pounds towards alleviating distress among its unemployed members and the executive council has issued an appeal to all branches of the union calling for drastic economies.

According to figures collected by labor's general council up to September 30 of last year, the total amount distributed by all unions in unemployment relief then had been over seven million pounds.

Besides, the unions have had to contend with a falling off in membership due also to unemployment.

Next month the wages of men employed in the building trades will be reduced by a halfpenny an hour.

MAY SETTLE.

Negotiations to settle the long outstanding problems in connection with conditions in the railway shops in Great Britain are to be commenced with the unions concerned soon. The matters in dispute have now been long outstanding for over two years, though under the 1919 agreement shopmen's conditions and classification were to be the subject of immediate consideration and settlement. Delay has arisen owing to various circumstances.

Consideration is also to be given early this year to the companies' action in withdrawing the 12 1-2 and 7 1-2 per cent. engineering bonus, despite their pledge not to do so until the outstanding claims were settled.

As a result of a meeting between representatives of the unions and of the managements of the companies in December, many serious difficulties have been overcome, and it is hoped that th ethreatened crisis has now been averted by the companies' changed attitudes in regard to meeting and discussing the matter with the men's representatives.

POSTPONE STRIKE.

The strike of railwaymen called for Saturday midnight has been postponed as the result of a prolonged conference between the railway managers and the minister of labor in the northern cabinet, as far as it would affect the Midland Railway and the Belfast and County Down Railway.

The manager of the railways agreed to postpone puting into operation changes in wages and hours of work of the men for another week and to meet representatives of the National Union of Railwaymen early next week. The meeting will be under the chairmanship of the minister of labor.

SUPPORT PARTY.

According to the Times, the Civil Service Clerical Association possessing a membership of 4,500 and largely recruited from minor clerical grades of the civil service has definitely allied itself with the Labor party and intends to advise its members to vote for Labor candidates in the next general election.

The Labor party has made advances towards political comradeship with the civic servants ever since the civil servants first organized, but these negotiations proved unfruitful, mainly because it was doubted whether the Labor party would concern itself actively with the cause of the clerical workers.

The Labor party has persistently refused to for man alliance with the Independent Liberals and, has announced plans for entering straight Labor candidates in several hundred constituencies in the next election.

HAMILTON WORKERS IN FOR CUT.

Friday the 13th was unlucky for every employe of the Dominion Power and Transmission Company, as they received a 93-day notice of a reduction in pay. It affects all employes of the Hamilton Street Railway and the suburban lines, including shopmen. This follows a cut in the service caused because the people refused to sanction a straight five-cent fare. The wage cut is seven cents an hour.

MONTREAL GATHERING REACH AGREEMENT

Wage quotations affecting 140,000 employes of Canadian railways were settled harmoniously at Montreal as a result of a conference between union leaders and railway officials. Representatives of the running trades agreed to accept "permanently" the 12 1-2 per cent. reduction introduced by the railways last July, and which were accepted under protest at that time.

The degree of permanency [illegible] by the clause which provides that the agreement is terminable within thirty days' notice from either party to it. It is not anticipated, however, that any move for its termination will be advanced before July next, and the entire situation hangs upon the degree with which railway traffic increases or recedes.

CAR MEN HOLD LINES.

Atlanta, Ga.—Organized street car men have signed last year's agreement with the local traction company.

ONTARIO BANKER SAYS PROSPERITY RETURNING

Reviewing business conditions generally, and in Canada particularly, in his address to the sixty-sixth annual meeting on the shareholders of the Bank of Toronto, President W. G. Gooderham, while expressing confidence in the future, laid stress on the necessity for caution and thrift during the coming year, both in public and private expenditures.

The past year has been a trying one. Readjustment and deflation had been necessary, and on top of these the purchasing power of the country had been much curtailed.

The returns from the grain crop and from cattle had both been disappointing showing heavy decreases.

While foreign trade, bank clearings, deposits, loans and circulation all show heavy decreases, indicating a marked lessening in the volume of trade both foreign and domestic, the general manager, Mr. Thos. P. How, did not regard these comparisons as a matter of discouragement. On the contrary, he expressed the opinion that they indicated progress towards a healthier condition of business.

There had been an increase in failures in the past year, he said, but there were due not so much to economic conditions as to the usual causes—inadequate capital, over-expansion and bad management.

In his address Mr. How squarely faced the situation, taking note of all the conditions which had confronted the business of the country during the past year, and while he said a prediction of the future could not be ventured upon, he believed business would improve as the free exchange of services and commodities improved, and that progress was being made in this direction.

Mr. How also pointedly referred to the country's borrowings, the commitments of provinces and municipalities last year totalling $400,-00.00, a sum exceeding the national debt before the war. He urged retrenchment in this respect.

Speaking of the bank's business during the past year, he pointed out that while profits showed a decrease from those of 1920, an increased amount had been carried to profit and loss after providing for the surplus in rest and profit and loss is now $2,000,000 in excess of the capital, of $7,000,000.

Pointed reference was made to the valuation of the bank's assets, the general manager referring to the bank's usual conservative policy in this respect. The uncertainties of the present situation had been taken into consideration this year and ample provision made for all contingencies.

CALGARY'S COUNCIL TO MAKE AGREEMENT

By a vote of 7 to 3 the new Calgary city council passed a motion rescinding the actio nof the 1921 council which authorized a wage cut for civic employes to take effect on January 1, 1922. The new council has agreed "that the agreement between the city and the civic federation as on December 31, 1921, be re-established and dthat this council further instructs the commissioners to meet and negotiate with representatives of the civic federation and also heads of departments the question of wages of all employes who receive either by hourly or monthly rate, in excess of $150." This means that pending a new agreement civic employes will be paid on the 1921 basis.

With Ald. Hugill and Arnold absent the Labor aldermen had things their own way. Mayor Adams declared that the commissioners were not bound by the action of the council on Monday night. He said that the council could merely suggest a line of action. The mayor then announced that according to the rules of the council, it was necessary to have a notice of motion presented to rescind action of a previous meeting. However, he also stated that notice of motion could be waived by a two-thirds vote. This was done and the motion was carried, the aldermen lining up in the same manner as they did on the vote.

In the discussion of the matter, Ald. White declared that the action of the council on November 23 was illegal, inasmuch as it was in direct violation of the agreement which the city had with the federation, for that agreement specified that no wage schedules shall be put into effect unless by agreement of both parties.

Ald. McNeigart declared that the aldermen had been misled in the matter when it was brought before the council on November 23. He said that it was understood that the action of the council was merely to be taken as a basis of negotiations.

Ald. Webster, who was on the opposition, said he didn't believe the people of Calgary were prepared to gor further than last year's council desired. His statemen twas challenged by Ald. Davison, who said that the voice of the citizens at the polls on December 15, when four candidates running on a no-wage-reduction platform, were elected, one with decided labor sympathies, and only one who had supported the wage cuts.

ONTARIO FIREFIGHTERS FOR GROUP INSURANCE

Plans whereby it is hoped that all the firefighters of the province will be able to take advantage of a scheme of grou phnsurance were discussed at the annual meeting of the executive of the Provincial Fire Fighters in the Labor Temple. Under special arrangement with one of the large life insurance companies members of the fire brigades will be eligible for insurance corresponding in general to that offered by benevolent organizations. The scheme provides for poyment of benefits at death or in cases of total disability.

Delegates were in attendance at the meeting from the principal cities of the province. P. S. Herd, president of the Toronto Firemen's Union, headed the delegation.

OPPOSE PRESS CENSOR.

Washington.—Postmaster General Hays has announced his opposition to a bill which would prohibit newspapers from making any reference to betting odds on horse racing or any athletic or sporting event.

The postal official stated that while there are worthy sections of the bill the proposal should be defeated to check the tendency of press control.

"I am reminded," he said, "of Voltaire's statement: "I wholly disapprove what you say and I will defend with my life your right to say it."