

THE EDMONTON BULLETIN

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BASE INGRATITUDE.

Now it is the Charlottetown Guardian that rises to bestow a hobbled hint on its honored leader. Says the Guardian: "And Mr. Borden ought to come, if only out of gratitude to the one province of the nine which sent three-fourths of its total representation to support him at Ottawa."

DOMINIONS.

Hereafter the self-governing division of the Empire will be known as the Dominions. Possessions that are not self-governing will be styled colonies. The new order of things has been promulgated by the Colonial Secretary, Lord Elgin. Under this new ruling the dominions are Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Cape Colony, Natal, Newfoundland, Transvaal, and Orange River Colony is likely to soon join the group. Several other possessions in Central Africa, Soudan, the West Indies and Guiana. Egypt is a protectorate. This difference in official nomenclature offers a simple and indefinite distinction between the two ranks of possessions. It will be gratifying to Canada that the name selected as best expressing our legislative status is to be officially applied to all outlying portions of the Empire possessing the powers of self-government.

"OLD LONDON."

"Old London" comprises some 673 acres of land in the heart of Greater London. Its population is placed at only 25,000, though a million and a quarter people flock into the city during the business hours of the day. The assessment is only \$25,000,000, but this represents only a trifle of the real value of its property, the city being the heart of the world's greatest metropolis and land there is probably more valuable than anywhere else on earth. Interesting comparisons might be drawn between Old London and Western Canadian cities as regards population, area and assessed valuation, but such comparisons must be largely misleading. Old London is purely a place of business, a region studded with financial houses and mercantile establishments in consequence of the fact that London does not live in London at all but outside it. The area of the city represents only the ground space they require in their business affairs; their residences probably occupy many times this area beyond the city limits. In America a city contains usually both the business places and the residences of its people and in Western Canada the tendency is to lay out cities with a broad idea of the room likely to be required for these purposes in future. The areas of our cities in proportion to their population are therefore far in excess of that of Old London. On the other hand the fact that 25,000 people can find room to live in that congested business centre suggests the liberal provision most western cities are making for future increase of population. The assessment of Old London is of course only a small fraction of the real value of its property; the tendency in Western Canada is to assess property at nearly its full value. In consequence western cities with no larger population than London have approximately as large assessed value.

"SEEIN' THINGS."

The Minister of the Interior has incurred the sore displeasure of the Montreal Star by giving voice to the "most dangerous utterance" that petulant journal has heard regarding the Japanese influx. Just wherein the "dangerous" feature lay, how imminent the danger may be and what particular form it may assume we are left to guess. Details and speculations are withheld. We have only the looming outline of some spectral calamity bearing down upon us, and all because the Minister of the Interior "purported to quote public opinion" as he found it at the Coast. Quoting such opinion the Star holds to be quite as sinful as approving it; by which line of reasoning the Star must stand guilty of approving the Quebec bridge disaster and every other calamity which has been reported in its columns. This offence can be atoned for only by reprinting, therefore the Star acclaims very heartily for a column or more. Perhaps the performance would be more interesting if the Star told us what it is swearing about. Individuals no more able to describe and analyze their terrors are commonly credited with "seein' things."

A "PECULIAR" PEOPLE.

The Montreal Gazette continues to be taken to task for its handling of the Department of the Interior decided figures are impressive, but when the present conditions of the country are considered they become absolutely convincing that Canada cannot afford rural delivery at the present stage of the game. The cost of such system varies of course with the extent of country over which it has to be extended, while the revenue which it would offset the cost depends on the density of the population served by the system. The larger the country the greater the cost of rural delivery and the smaller the population the less the revenue with which to bear that cost. Compared with the United States Canada is a country of vast distances and sparse population. The United States contain a population of 100,000,000 people; Canada has a population of 6,000,000 people scattered over a territory half as large. The United States system must therefore be profitable beyond all likelihood before its success can afford any evidence that a similar system would be financially even practicable in Canada. A service which the dense population of the New England States would easily support might be ruinous if saddled on the scattered settlers of Saskatchewan or Alberta. Whether or not the American system will return any considerable dividends when applied to the entire country appears to be a matter of opinion. The system is now only in process of establishment, and it is natural to suppose it has been established first in those sections of the country where population is dense and the need most urgent. The cost of the service in comparison to its revenue should now be at the minimum and will steadily increase as the service is extended in territory having smaller population in proportion to area. Yet having established the service in one State it is difficult to see how it can be denied another. In Canada for example, there would be trouble coming to the postmaster General who gave rural delivery to Nova Scotia and denied it to Alberta, unless provision were made for assessing the cost of the service on the district benefited by it. And such adjustment is fraught with obvious difficulties, if indeed it is not confronted with actual impossibilities. The future does not promise to amend the sparseness of population which makes rural delivery impossible at present. The majority of our immigrants are prospective settlers, and the trend of national thought and enterprise is to open more country to settlement. The National Transcontinental and the Hudson Bay railways, by opening up enormous areas hitherto uninhabited will tend rather to broaden the area of settlement than to densify the population in the territory now scattered with people. The people Canada is endeavoring to attract and who are coming to our shores in thousands are wanted and ready to settle in the cities already established or to crowd into already settled and cultivated sections, but to build homes for themselves in the wilderness and to found cities in the solitude. The tendency during the next few years is therefore much more likely to be to increase the sparseness of Canada than to congest settlement in the area at present occupied. It does not appear unreasonable to suppose that in comparison to the territory occupied Canada's population ten years hence will be as sparse as it is today. The effort now is to "open up" the country by the "filling up" process must follow later. And until the filling up takes place, rural mail delivery must be numbered among the desirable but unattainable things. Our effort at present must be directed to the betterment of the service we have rather than yearning for one we cannot afford.

THE MONEY SCARCITY.

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The Weekly Sun of Toronto cordially supports Mr. Borden's proposal that the public lands should be turned over to the provincial governments of Alberta and Saskatchewan, and is far more frank in saying what it means. The Sun says: "The transfer proposed should be made as soon as possible, accompanied, of course, by a reduction in the Federal subsidies to the Provincial Governments—subsidies which are based largely on the retention by the Dominion of the control of these lands." The Sun is more outspoken than Mr. Borden. It wants our subsidies reduced and says so, and that and wants us turned out to find provincial pickings on the vacant prairie. Mr. Borden wants to throw us upon the wilderness for provincial subsistence too, only he has not the courage to say he would withdraw our present source of supplies. It is not necessary for him to say so however; the one involves the other. The Opposition which attacked the Government because it gave too much subsidy does not need to explain to us its desire to reduce the subsidies. This is the proposition that Mr. Borden has sugar-coated with phraseology about turning over the public lands to the provinces. He is deceiving himself if he imagines the West will swallow a hook so poorly baited. A domain which we could not administer without bankrupting ourselves and crippling development would be a mighty poor exchange for annual cash subsidies that we need in our business. Western business acumen has not fallen so low an ebb that a deal like that can be palmed off on us.

FOREORDAINED JUDGMENT.

The Mail and Empire does its best to attach responsibility to the Government for the fall of the Quebec bridge. It has no right of criticism when there is no proof of the credit of its readers says plainly that it wishes to good-naturedly the Government had been building the bridge. Doubtless it would then have been so easy to talk of errat and incompetence. However, the Mail will make the best of the situation—witness its present performance. Whatever may be the findings of the commission we may rest assured that to the Mail one party and one only is and will be held responsible—the Government. And that though the truth must be stretched longer than the central span of the bridge itself and the process of reasoning reduced to a tangled web like that now lying at the bottom of the St. Lawrence. The architect may have erred, the material may have been faulty, the contractors miscalculated, or even nature may have introduced an unexpected force—but by one self-appointed tribunal these will be dismissed and the Government held up to censure for not possessing omnipresence.

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THE MONEY SCARCITY.

The expected has happened in the failure to obtain a satisfactory tender for the city debentures, for as yet there is no sign of relaxation in the tightness of the money market. Municipalities are still looking for funds and looking in vain, while business enterprises are being postponed or delayed because the needed money is not available. Nor is there in the financial journals any ray of hope of capital in large amounts coming on the scene in the near future. Whatever the cause may be the fact remains that money for investment shows no signs of becoming more plentiful. Whether it be that the capitalist has no funds left or that for reasons of his own he is withholding them, the important fact is that he is not looking for investment.

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