

differing from the other, and which were gulped down with astonishing ease by candidates as a bid for support. These platforms, with their extraordinary and impracticable planks, were foisted upon the workingmen as a class, and an endeavor was made to fasten them to a support of principles with which they had no real sympathy, and which were presented to them in terms expressly cut and dried by professional agitators and platform makers. It was the introduction of what all sober-minded well-wishers of the commonwealth must deplore, the recognition in practical politics of the dangerous principle of absolutism.

The Government foresaw the danger of blindly arraying the forces of society against each other, as had been accomplished elsewhere with disastrous results, and which, if allowed to take shape, might at any time impend in British Columbia.

The Premier and his colleagues, in a series of vigorous addresses throughout the country, appealed to the labor elements to consider well the relations which should exist between capital and labor, not only on account of their own interests, but of the prosperity of the Province. To antagonize the investing class, and to drive away capital, where so much depended upon its introduction and its successful operation, was unwise, unpatriotic and suicidal. They pointed to the lesson of events in Australia and the United States, and counselled their audiences, whatever criticism they might pass on the policy of the Government, as a policy, not to be led away by the specious appeals to class prejudices, and the theoretical dogmas of agitators inexperienced in governing, who appreciated neither the responsibility attaching to it nor the practical application of their own doctrines in connection therewith. The people, as a whole, were asked to rise superior to considerations placed before them by demagogues in pursuit of place and power, whose hope of success lay alone

in playing upon the prejudices and passions of the electors.

The appeal was entirely successful. The Government was returned strong numerically and strong in the confidence of the country, and backed up by the support of the labor element, where it was the most largely represented. The result of the campaign in this respect is all the more conspicuous from the fact already alluded to, that of unusual depression, which invariably militates against the government of the day, and especially among those whose daily bread and butter are directly and keenly affected thereby.

The result of the elections has been to restore the confidence of many who had looked with distrust and anxiety to the possible success of a combination of diverse forces which threatened to undo the work of years in amalgamating the various interests in a mutual effort of development, and which extended to every section of the Province, the most satisfactory feature of the whole campaign being the almost entire failure of the endeavor to arouse hostility among the working men against the employers of labor.

For several years an insidious policy of the latter character had been pursued, but the good sense of those whose interests were most involved prevailed, and a salutary lesson was conveyed to the politicians responsible for its introduction. As a striking illustration of the way the programme, which included the eight hour a day law, single tax, Chinese exclusion, government ownership of railways, etc., worked out, the fact may be alluded to that the leader of the Opposition, who for years coquetted with the labor agitators, and supported strongly many of their so-called reforms, was not only defeated, but lost his deposit in the city of Victoria, which he had represented continuously since 1871. Three of his colleagues, one of whom represented himself as a Single Tax