

WEEKLY LEADER

THE LEADER PUBLISHING CO., LIMITED.

SUBSCRIPTION: \$1.00 per annum, if paid in advance; \$2.00 if in arrears. Contributions, articles and letters intended for publication must be addressed to the Editor.

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ENGLISH REPRESENTATIVE.—S. J. Hardy & Co., 30 Fleet Street, London, E.C. 4, England.

Vol. 24 - - - - - No. 2

Regina Sask., Wednesday, Feb. 20, 1907

THE HOUSING PROBLEM.

The City Council and the Board of Trade are doing all they can at the present time to encourage the establishment of wholesale houses and manufacturing concerns in the city.

The exceptional advantages enjoyed by Regina as a railway center for distributing purposes, coupled with the unique track site facilities which the Council is able to offer to all genuine concerns, constitute two very important considerations in favor of wholesalers locating here. The ability of the city to offer manufacturers power at rates substantially lower than those at present obtaining would undoubtedly add another powerful factor in favor of Regina.

One other question, however, will sooner or later—and the sooner the better—have to be taken seriously into consideration if the city is to attain that importance as a wholesale, manufacturing and distributing centre which it undoubtedly appears marked out to attain. We refer to the housing problem.

For the last two years now rents have soared and are still soaring, until a point seems to have been reached when the question menaces the well-being and growth of the city.

A large industry coming to this or any other city requires several things. It needs a large and growing market for its products. That Regina can offer. It needs facilities for distributing its products with the least possible loss of time. It needs a track site at a reasonable cost. That Regina is offering to all firms desiring to locate here. It needs power supplied at fairly moderate rates. And that also the city will undoubtedly be able to supply.

But in addition to all these things a firm has to consider the question of whether or not its employees will be able at the wages paid to them to live in that state of comfort and respectability, which, however indirectly, must have a bearing upon their workmanship. Does Regina at the present time afford any justifiable grounds for an affirmative answer to that question? We are bound to confess that we do not think that it does.

Take the average workman earning in the neighborhood of from \$14 to \$20 per week, with a wife and several children to maintain, and what living accommodation does the city offer him? Can he rent a house or cottage for \$15, \$20 or even \$25 per month?

We know that the problem is an extremely difficult one. We believe, however, that it has to be faced, and the sooner it is resolutely grappled with the better it will be for the city. Until we can assure workmen of the possibility of obtaining comfortable homes at reasonable rentals, it will be difficult to induce large manufacturing concerns to locate here.

The housing problem, apart from the needs of workmen, presents food for serious consideration, though hardly perhaps coming within the province of such bodies as the City Council or Board of Trade in the same way, or to the same extent. The average clerk earning perhaps from \$50 to \$60 per month, finds himself up against a serious proposition when he has to pay anything from \$30 to \$50 a month for rent. That such a state of things will eventually right itself is undoubted. But meanwhile it presents a serious handicap to the city's progress and the enterprising individual or company who would come forward at the present juncture with a large scale building scheme on a large scale which would result in providing decent dwellings at reasonable rentals, would assuredly not only make a profitable investment but earn for themselves the gratitude of the community.

THE C.P.R. SURPLUS

After the payment of working expenses, fixed charges and dividends now declared, it is stated that the C.P.R. has a surplus of \$6,600,000 for the half year ending December last.

Giving evidence before the Grain Commission here a few weeks ago, Walter Simpson, at that time President of the Regina Grain Growers' Association, stated that the car shortage with the consequent inability to market last year's crop had cost the farmers of Saskatchewan between one and two million dollars.

Meanwhile, the C.P.R. has a surplus for the half year of \$6,600,000.

Progress in the West for a year past now has been hampered, and to some extent crippled by the lack of transportation facilities afforded by the C.P.R. to the territory served by its system. Merchants complain that goods ordered by them months and months ago are undelivered and the market lost. Building operations are retarded, in some instances altogether stopped, through the inability of contractors to get the necessary material.

Meanwhile, the C.P.R. has a surplus for the half year of \$6,600,000.

Apart altogether from such details as lumber combines, the enormous tolls which the C.P.R. levies in the way of freight upon such prime necessities as coal, lumber, etc., raises the prices of those articles to such an outlandish pitch as to very seriously handicap the settlement of the country and inflict grievous hardship upon its people.

Meanwhile, the C.P.R. has a surplus for the half year of \$6,600,000.

While it is generally considered that the weather conditions of the last two months were altogether exceptional and such as to materially hinder railway operations, it cannot for a moment be doubted that the practically absolute tie-up that existed on the C.P.R. which was the cause of so much hardship and actual suffering, was in a very large measure attributable to the shamefully inefficient provisions made by the company for operating their line under winter conditions.

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PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT AND COAL LANDS.

Elsewhere in today's issue we publish extracts from the message recently sent to Congress by President Roosevelt dealing with the vastly important question of the conservation of the coal lands of the country.

In the past the United States Government has been making the same mistake as was made by Conservative Governments at Ottawa for many years—that is, they sold coal bearing lands outright to private parties and corporations without retaining control of the mineral wealth. And after a careful study of the problem President Roosevelt has come to the conclusion that the proper policy of dealing with the fuel resources of the country is the identical method which the Liberal Government at Ottawa has pursued, namely, to lease such lands and to impose a small royalty on the output.

It will be remembered that at the time the Crown's Nest Pass railway was being projected, one of the conditions upon which the Laurier Government agreed to assist the C.P.R. Co. to build the road was that the railway company should deed back to the Dominion Government some tens of thousands of acres of coal lands in British Columbia which had become the property of the C.P.R. by reason of their having acquired a charter which carried a huge land grant from British Columbia with it. By this act the Laurier Government accomplished in part what President Roosevelt points out many of the Governments of the Old World are now endeavoring to do.

Furthermore, whereas former Conservative Governments made free grants and unconditional sales of coal lands—not even imposing a royalty on the output—the Liberals have followed the policy, now so strongly recommended to Congress for adoption by President Roosevelt, of leasing such lands subject to a royalty on the gross output.

Some people who, during the coal famine this winter, have been inclined to lay the blame for that famine on the shoulders of the Dominion and Provincial Governments, shut their eyes to these facts. Where lands had already been unconditionally sold or given away, the Government was powerless to interfere unless it stooped to repudiation of the acts of its predecessors. At the same time the Leader is free to say that the experience of the West during the present winter has been such that some steps must be taken without delay to safeguard our people from a recurrence of such a desperate and dangerous state of affairs. If any blame attaches to past or present Governments it should be proved and corrected; if the railways are at

fault—and we are of opinion that here lay the chief difficulty this year,—that should be made clear and a remedy effected; if the mine operators or coal dealers are in any way responsible, that responsibility should be fixed and the cause of the fuel shortage removed.

Despite all our difficulties and shortcomings, President Roosevelt's message indicates that we are in advance of the neighboring republic, and that it only needs to be properly worked out to solve the problem we were called upon to face this winter.

CHEAP POWER

The question of cheap power is one that it is at the present time occupying the attention of not a few municipalities throughout the length and breadth of the Dominion.

Cheap power means prosperous and numerous manufacturing industries, and those again mean prosperity and firmly established communities.

Regina holds a unique position as the chief distributing centre of a vast territory in the heart of the richest wheat growing country in the world. If to that advantage could be added the ability to offer manufacturers reasonably cheap power, the city's future would not merely be assured—it is that already—it would be raised to a point placing it on a level with any city in Western America.

Inasmuch as The Leader uses the power at present supplied by the municipality, we speak with diffidence upon a subject in connection with which it might be considered that we have an axe to grind. We feel, however, that we are justified in the public interest to suggest that the question of power might well occupy the attention of the City Council if it has not already done so.

At the present time a large local industry is considering the question of power and, while inclined to the adoption of electric power, is hesitating on the ground of cost, considering that \$90 per horse power per annum would unduly handicap them with similar industries elsewhere in the West working with cheaper power.

The question is—can power be supplied at a cheaper rate than at present without incurring a loss? If it can, then undoubtedly it will be to the advantage of the city. The Council is just now considering the question of a municipal gas plant and in conjunction with that it might well direct its attention to that of power.

A British Royal Commission has recently declared that tuberculosis in cows can be transmitted to man through milk, thus finding that Professor Koch is wrong in his theory that bovine and human tuberculosis are distinct and practically reciprocally incommunicable diseases.

Senator Ferguson's statement in the Senate that Fort Churchill harbor should be right belong to a western province is one now generally agreed to by all fair-minded people. His further contention favoring the Canadian Northern route for the Port leaves little doubt as to which of the Western provinces Fort Churchill should be attached. Saskatchewan's just claim to the northern port appears to be incontrovertible.

One of the big Atlantic steamship lines has announced that a new vessel it has under construction will be equipped with a tennis court on upper deck and with a swimming pool, 75 by 25 feet, on one side of the lower decks. This is an interesting development that will result, no doubt, in rivalry in supplying accommodations, but it suggests that a fine rivalry might spring up also in the provisions for the steerage. How would it do to turn over 1,857 square feet extra space to the steerage? And what a valuable thing a swimming pool would be for the steerage passengers!

William Jennings Bryan appeared by special invitation before both houses of the Iowa legislature recently, and made an address nearly two hours in length, in which he talked of swollen fortunes and commended President Roosevelt for arousing public attention to the subject.

Calgary expects shortly to be in a position to supply power to manufacturers and others at a rate not exceeding \$24 per horse power per annum. While it may not be possible for Regina to equal that figure, a great improvement upon the present rates is surely within the range of possibility. As Mr. A. T. Hunter pointed out at last Friday's Board of Trade meeting, the question is, a vital one for local industries like the flour mill and others considering the advisability of locating here. The whole matter of cheap power is well worth the careful attention of the City, Light and Power committee of the City Council.

COMMONS DISCUSS NORTH LINE RATES

McCRANEY MOVES FOR A THREE CENT PASSENGER RATE.

Minister of Railways States that Rail-way Commission is Now Considering With Question of Rates.

Special to The Leader.

OTTAWA, Feb. 18.—When the Qu'Appelle, Long Lake & Saskatchewan Railway bill reached the Commons, Mr. McCraney (Saskatchewan) moved that the passenger rate be 3 cents per mile. It was 4 cents, but he wanted it made 3 cents.

Mr. McCraney explained that he had no intention of imposing a rate that would not pay. Three cents was high enough. He gave a brief history of this road, and said that, while he wanted to see the bondholders paid, their past indebtedness should not be charged up to that district. He favored a 3-cent fare rate all over. He did not believe in leaving this question to the Railway Commission. There was other important work for the commission to do in straightening out the tangle of railway transportation in the West.

Mr. Turfitt (East Assiniboia) did not want to discuss this question until the motion of Dr. McIntyre (Strathcona) on the subject had been reached, but as it had come up he would like to say a few words. He pointed out that Manitoba had a 3-cent rate and Saskatchewan, lying alongside of it, should not have a higher rate. The trains were filled with passengers in Saskatchewan, as they were in Manitoba, and the distances were longer. He did not want to see one railway discriminated against by having to charge a lower rate than the others. He desired to see a 3-cent rate all over.

Mr. Emmerson said that the Railway Commission had the matter in hand. It would not be fair to treat one railroad differently to others. Three cents was not an unreasonable rate, and the commission were now dealing with the points with the best of motion of McCraney was defeated and the bill was passed.

DOUKHOBORS ATTACK RAIL.

IFF.

YORKTON, Feb. 18.—Last Saturday Bailiff Scott, of the local improvement district south of Yorkton, seized the goods and chattels of 198 Doukhobors for taxes due on as many homesteads, amounting to \$3,000.

It is reported that the seizure amounted to about one hundred head of stock and other chattels. Later Mr. Scott and his deputies were attacked by the Doukhobors, overpowered and the goods taken away. Twenty more deputies were seized and the property again seized. The Doukhobors again attacked the bailiff and at the present time have possession of the disputed goods.

The assistance of the Mounted Police has been asked for.

LOW BIRTH RATE IN ENGLAND.

Is Offset by Low Mortality, Declares Sir William Dunbar.

LONDON, Feb. 18.—Sir William Dunbar, the Registrar General, in a report on British vital statistics for 1906, generally held to be a sign of a nation's decay. There is some ground, for the opinion that moderate birth rates, associated with low mortality among children, may be more effective toward keeping up the population than high rates associated with high mortality. In too many cases high birth rates are associated with excessive sickness and mortality during the first few years of life. Only four European countries had lower birth rates in 1906 than Great Britain. A fact that stands out prominently in the report is that the death rate in England and Wales in 1906 was the lowest on record.

King Edward's Horses.

King Edward has in training this year at Newmarket, under the care of Richard Marsh, two score of the best racers in the world. As the owner of the peerless Persimmon, who led the list of winning stallions in 1906, the King is able to mate with that famous horse each year at least a score of the extremely valuable mares which compose his stud, which is under the management of Lord Marcus Beresford.

In 1906 less than \$15,000 was won by the King's horses, but this season great hopes are entertained that the twenty-four racers will roll up a respectable total of winnings. Marsh also has in training at Newmarket, under the care of Richard Marsh, two score of the best racers in the world. As the owner of the peerless Persimmon, who led the list of winning stallions in 1906, the King is able to mate with that famous horse each year at least a score of the extremely valuable mares which compose his stud, which is under the management of Lord Marcus Beresford.

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WHAT THE PRESS IS SAYING.

The Rent and Housing Problem.

(Montreal Witness.)

It is doubtful whether there has ever been a year when houses rented more rapidly than in this one. The majority of landlords have reason to congratulate themselves that what used to be a period of anxiety to those who owned many dwellings is gone for another year—a year in which the only regret of some of them will be that they did not demand more than they did. The building of dwellings since last spring has not it seems been equal to the demand. The population of Montreal is increasing so fast that the housing of the people has become a serious problem.

Engineering Feat Recalled.

(Ottawa Free Press.)

In the sale of the White Pass and Yukon railway to the Guggenheims, perhaps the most costly railway both in construction and operation in the world has passed into other hands. This line of railway was conceived when the Yukon gold fever was at its height, to meet the want of that district in the transportation of miners and their supplies through the mountains lying between Skagway and Lake Bennett.

Telephone Policy.

(Edmonton Bulletin.)

Hats off to the Alberta government! Hats off to the Hon. W. H. Cushing! The telephone policy enunciated by the Minister of Public Works in the legislature yesterday marks an epoch in the history of Alberta. It is the most important step in the public ownership ever taken by any government in Canada, and is a knock-out blow to the Bell Telephone monopoly in this province. There is no provision to buy the Bell company out or to do business with them in any way, the government policy is clear—business proposition to build and operate telephones for the public.

The Car Shortage and the West.

(Montreal Star.)

The incisive force of the observations made by Chairman Kilham of the Railway Commission touching the future policy of that puissant body toward car shortages, will make good reading in Western Canada, and might be read with the best of attention in all railway headquarters. The Railway Commission have not taken up this matter without cause. There have been almost as many "snowed under" with complaints of car shortages at various points in the West as have these points with the material snow which has made the car shortages so literally tragic.

Rapid Transit by Canal.

(Chicago Tribune.)

When the state of New York decided to spend a hundred million dollars in modernizing the Erie canal, so that it would form a twelve-foot channel connecting Lakes Erie, Ontario and Champlain and the Hudson river, there was a chorus of derision largely from the railroads. It was asserted that canals were obsolete and that canal traffic was too slow for modern conditions. The experience of last fall, however, when freight trains all over the country moved as fast as the Red River carts of the olden days used to, has brought about a change of opinion. Barges of 1,000 tons capacity each will be able to move on the Erie canal with a celerity that will quite distance the modern freight train, unless there is a radical change in railroad conditions.

The Press Men of Canada.

(The Globe.)

The interest of the public in the work of the newspaper men is quite unique. It is different from the interest taken in any other commercial undertaking. The difference is because the press is not altogether—is not even mainly commercial. A newspaper ordinarily cannot do its whole duty or render the service required of it by the public if it is a commercial failure, but, on the other hand, if its supreme purpose, its ideal, is commercial, it puts itself outside the circle of journalism altogether.

The Wrong Sort.

(Wolsley News.)

The C.P.R. is putting on ten new dining cars on the western section this season. The people would prefer more engines, coal and freight cars.

The Western Woman.

(Calgary Albion.)

A Presbyterian minister, now in Toronto, but previously in Winnipeg, tells the young Toronto Presbyterians of the merits of the western women. He called attention to their loyalty, their devotion, and their optimism under circumstances that might seem trying.

The "Wise Guy."

(Lumsden News-Record.)

Frequently of late, the Regina Standard has predicted a flood in the Qu'Appelle valley the coming spring. Many forecasts, predicted by our content in the course of eighteen months, have been as far off as Foster's weather announcements, that the public pay little or no attention to the "wise guy."

The Reason Why.

(Carlyle Herald.)

It is becoming more and more evident that the inability of the railway to handle traffic has been responsible to a great extent for the coal shortage. We are told, on authority of Mr. V. B. Hutton, that at one time over a hundred cars of coal were standing loaded in the yards at Estevan.

IMPORTANT NOTICE TO READERS OF THE WEEKLY LEADER

The second session of the First Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan convenes at Regina tomorrow. The sessional programme promises to be both lengthy and interesting, as much