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By W. W. SWANSON.

Conditions in the West.

By E. CORA HIND.

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THE campaign for the new Victory Loan opened yesterday. The campaign has met with an unexpected difficulty in the epidemic of influenza which, unfortunately, so widely prevails. The public gatherings which, if they could be held, would be so helpful in the work, are forbidden by the health authorities in most places. The work of canvassing can be carried on to but a very limited extent. Patriotic citizens everywhere should remember these difficulties and meet them, as far as possible, by promptly subscribing for whatever amounts they are able to take. Don't wait to be called on. If he gives twice who gives quickly, surely he will lend most effectively who lends promptly. Make your subscription as large as possible. But whether large or small, send it promptly.

On Taking Things Out of Politics

THERE is already a wide application in Canada of the principle of the public ownership of railways. The Canadian Government have under their control in the Intercolonial Railway, the Prince Edward Island Railway, the Transcontinental Railway (Eastern section of the Grand Trunk Pacific), and now the Canadian Northern Railway with its subsidiary lines, a system of several thousand miles in operation. It is therefore too late to discuss in a general way the principle of public ownership. For good or evil we have the thing, and it is only fair to say that this application of the principle in Canada appears to be in harmony with the desires of the majority of the Canadian people. There should be among all classes an earnest desire to have the system operated to the best advantage, to have it made successful if success be possible. There should be, however, no misunderstanding as to the manner in which the scheme will be operated. Many of those who have advocated with considerable enthusiasm the new order of things have taken pains to explain that, as a matter of course, the management of these railways must be "taken out of politics." That is an expression very often used in relation to public affairs by people who have not been careful to understand what it means.

Politics, often spoken of contemptuously, really means the management of the people's business. If you take things out of politics you take from the people the control of their affairs and place it in the hands of persons not chosen by the people and not responsible to the people. If, as respects any public work, there is to be public ownership, there must inevitably be public control. If you take the matter out of politics—that is, take it away from the control of the people's representa-

tives and place it in the hands of men not connected with politics—you are setting up an autocracy which the people will not long tolerate. If these railways are to be owned by the people, if the moneys needed for their maintenance or improvement are to be found by the people's treasury, depend upon it the people will sooner or later assert their control. The attempt to take the business "out of politics" will surely fail. The advocates of public ownership of the railways who qualify their opinions by stipulating that the representatives of the people shall have nothing to do with the management of the roads are likely to be much disappointed. They may as well recognize from the beginning that in the case of every dollar's worth of property owned by the people of Canada the people will expect the politicians—their representatives in the Government and Parliament of the Dominion—to exercise control, and will not be content to be told that they must look to any body of irresponsible commissioners. The Montreal Gazette, which is avowedly hostile to the principle of public ownership, finds an illustration of this in a recent incident:

"During the recent visit to the Pacific coast of a number of Cabinet Ministers, some on business, some on pleasure bent, advantage was taken by the Boards of Trade of Victoria and Vancouver to urge upon them the construction of certain railway facilities for the promotion of trade. The incident serves to emphasize a point to which we have before drawn attention, namely, that ownership and operation of public utilities cannot be dissociated. A number of directors of the Canadian Northern Railway visited the coast cities at the same time as the Ministers, but it was to the Minister of Railways, not to the President of the company, the Boards of Trade addressed their request. These business men were not deceived by the pretence that the Canadian Northern has been divorced from politics, and is to be operated under independent management. They understand the simple axiom that the owners will shape and apply the policy of the railway, whether in respect of rates, improvements, extension of old or construction of new lines, or any other matter. So the Government is approached through the Minister of Railways with a view to securing what the Pacific Coast people consider desirable to develop trade and assist transportation.

"The Minister of Railways did not refer the delegations to the Board of the Canadian Northern, but treated the subject as one to be determined by the Government, and he took, in so doing, the only course open to him. The C. N. R. Board cannot spend a dollar on capital account