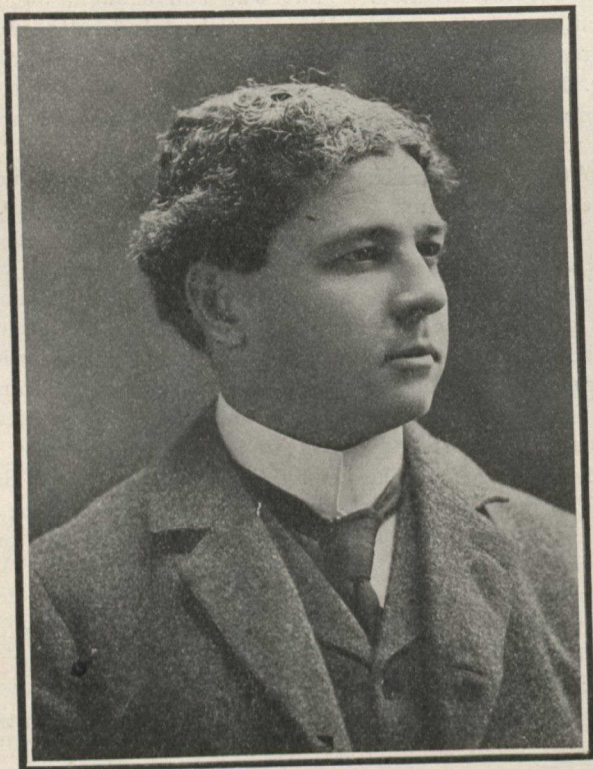


The Victor in British Columbia

SINCE party allegiance was introduced into British Columbia politics, the issues and conflicts have been more easily understood and followed. Under Hon. John Turner, Hon. Mr. Semlin and the Hon. James Dunsmuir there was non-party administration. It may have been best for the province, although opinion is divided even upon that, but it certainly seemed chaotic viewed from the outside. The Hon. Richard McBride was the first premier to rule as representative of a party, in this case the Conservative party. He believed, with many on both sides of politics, that party discipline was necessary to keep a cabinet together, to prevent shuffling both in the ministry and in the Legislature, and he declared for it. Whether he was selfish in his reasoning or not is outside the issue.

Four years ago the first battle on party lines occurred and Mr. McBride, a native son of the province, became the first party premier. Strangely enough, on that occasion, the City of Victoria, long known as a Conservative stronghold, returned four Liberals. This so weakened McBride's majority, that he was more or less dependent on the small but united Socialist Party. From 1898 to 1903, British Columbia was "a seething cal-



Hon. Richard McBride,

Premier of British Columbia.—Re-elected on February 2nd.

dron of political unrest," but since then it has had some peace—not profound peace, but simply peace.

When the recent Legislature was dissolved the standing was, Conservatives 23, Liberals 16, and Socialists 3. After the election held last Saturday, the standing will probably be Conservatives 26, Liberals 12, Socialists 4. Victoria has turned over and returned four Conservatives; Vancouver returns five of the same stripe and New Westminster adds another. The smaller towns—Rossland, Nelson and Nanaimo—each return one Liberal.

Whatever the reasons for the result, whether it be good or ill from the standpoint of what is best for the province, the Hon. Richard McBride is premier for another term with a solid support behind him. Not yet forty years of age, he is the youngest of our provincial premiers. He was born in New Westminster on December 15th, 1870, and while still a youth he graduated LL.B. from Dalhousie University, Halifax. At twenty-six he entered upon his first political battle and his first political defeat. In 1898 and 1900 he was more successful, but this time in provincial contests, and with other opponents than the well-known Auley Morrison. In the latter year, he became a cabinet minister, but only for a short period. He remained in opposition until called upon by Sir Henri Joly to form a government of which he is still the head.

Mr. McBride is tall, massively built, boyish-looking, with a grayish crop of curly hair which adds dignity to a dignified and well-groomed figure. He is said to re-

semble somewhat Sir Wilfrid Laurier, who is said to resemble Sir John Macdonald, who is said to resemble Disraeli who—but why carry it further?

Mr. McBride was opposed by Mr. J. A. Macdonald of Rossland, leader of the Liberal party and Mr. W. W. B. McInnes, who resigned his position as Governor of the Yukon to enter the campaign. These gentlemen announced themselves in favour of an eight-hour day and a "white" British Columbia. No yellow race—no dregs from Asia. They complained, perhaps justly, of certain deals in land and certain arrangements with leading railway corporations. They wanted more economical government with few favours to the influential.

Mr. McBride's followers dilated upon the prosperity of the province and upon the inadvisability of a change of government at this time, of the bold way in which Premier McBride stood up for the claims of B.C. at the Ottawa conference of provincial premiers.

The result will be pleasing to some and displeasing to others. It is the way with elections. The Socialists made the poorest showing, thus showing that the insanity which has shown itself strongly among B. C. workmen is beginning to work itself out. British Columbia will soon be able to devote its whole attention to the development of its wonderful natural resources. It is on the edge of a wonderful future—in which one of the greatest features will be a magnificent trade with the much despised Orient.

British Columbia's Problem

By a Special Correspondent

HAVING got over the general election excitement, British Columbia now has time to look its real problems in the face. The greatest of these undoubtedly is the labour question. Is this season going to see a shortage of men like 1906? It is rather early to attempt a definite reply to that query, but the outlook certainly is not comforting to the big railway companies, the canneries, and to the farmer who wants temporary help during the rush season.

Being the real "farthest west," not alone of Canada but of the Empire, it is a case of last come last served with the Pacific Province. Whichever way British Columbia looks for labour it is to the east—the Far East across the Pacific Ocean, the near East on the other side of the Rockies, and Eastward still it must gaze when it directs attention to Europe and the horde of out of work people there.

Naturally enough the suggestion of Salvation Army leaders that they can bring out a number of immigrants—for a consideration—has given the Province a fruitful subject of discussion. While a great many people would welcome labour, no matter where it came from and what were its antecedents, no small number of British Columbia citizens look askance at the Salvation Army scheme.

The British Columbians are a peculiar people. There is something about the Province which seems to make them, shall one say more particular or more crochety than fellow-Canadians on the other side of the Rockies. Once the barrier of mountains is passed, ideas seem to change rapidly—whether for the better or the worse will be answered differently by the Westerner and the Easterner. A class of people who might obtain a friendly welcome from Eastern Canadians would receive little encouragement on the Coast except from the employer who was desperately in need of help. The Salvation Army scheme is bound to encounter bitter opposition and its success is in doubt from the very start. Already some of the labour bodies have condemned the bare proposal.

Joseph Chamberlain once said at a colonial banquet in London, "Get population and all else will be added unto you." British Columbia, speaking generally, feels that it has got nearly everything else but population and with regard to the latter the majority of the people—the real people as distinct from the merely rich—insist that great discretion must be exercised in the matter of bringing people immigrants here if the British Columbia distinctions, of which Coast residents are quietly proud, are not to be lost. It is expected that General Booth himself will visit the province this spring and will confer with the local government on the subject of state aid to selected immigrants. He may be able to overcome the local prejudice against the type of people he wants to bring out, but it is doubtful if even he will be able to reconcile the majority of the present population to the scheme proposed by his chief Canadian officials.